



MINUTES
BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Monday August 28, 2006
6:30 P.M.
CD 10 District Field Office
1819 South Western Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90006

Commissioners: Tariq Khero, President
 Kathleen Riordan, Vice-President
 Marie Atake
 Glenn Brown
 Deborah A. Knaan

COMMISSION MEETING

Commission President Khero called the Commission meeting to order at 6:40 P.M. Present were Commissioners Riordan, Atake, Brown and Knaan.

1. REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

Captain Nancy Moriarty, Director of Shelter Operations, gave the General Manager's report.

- National Dog Day on August 26 was a success. Free microchipping was provided for all dogs adopted out, as well as for any other dogs that owners brought from home. 292 free microchips were distributed among the Department's shelters, with 106 being implanted at the North Central shelter.
- The decision on the hiring for the Assistant General Manager position is still pending. The General Manager is still reviewing the candidates.
- In regards to the Noah's Ark impound, there were a total of 106 animals adopted by this organization from the Department, reaching as far back as the year 2001 to the current day.
- The Department lost another veterinarian with the departure of Dr. Alagato from the South Los Angeles shelter.
- The City strike that occurred on August 22 and 23 did impact the Department RVTs. However, the ACTs and the officers present were able to successfully respond and provide medical attention for the animals, in place of the absent RVTs.

Public Comments

Phyllis Daugherty: Mentioned that the County veterinarians have a starting salary of \$96,000.

Zsuzsa Blakely: If the Department wants to attract more veterinarians, it must stop the killing.

2. OLD BUSINESS INCLUDING MATTERS FOR BOARD ACTION

A. Board Report: Sam Simon and Amanda Pet Foundation Contracts

Mr. Jeff Brill, Sr. Management Analyst II, reported on the contracts for the Sam Simon and Amanda Pet Foundations. Mr. Brill informed the Board on the latest negotiations and agreements reached with the Sam Simon Foundation in regards to providing spay and neuter services for the South Los Angeles clinic. The most recent issue pending involved the Premise Permit. Due to the fact that the clinic and the normal medical facilities operate in two separate locations, the State allows for multiple premise permits, so long as the facilities operate independently from each other. However when the veterinarian holds the premise permit, that individual is not only responsible for providing medical treatment for the animals, but also becomes responsible for ordering the drugs. In the best interest of the employees and the City, the Department has requested that the Sam Simon Foundation hold the premise permit for the upstairs clinic, while the Department holds the premise permit for the downstairs area of the facility. The Department has given the Sam Simon Foundation the deadline of August 29 to agree to the Department's terms. A rejection by the Sam Simon Foundation would cause all negotiations to be suspended.

Public Comments

Sue Freeman: Commented that she had found errors and inconsistencies in the report.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Commission Recommendations For New Agenda Items

- Commissioner Knaan confirmed that Lt. Michelle Roache would be reporting on the Department's transfer policy and providing transfer statistics at the September 11, 2006 Commission meeting.
- Commissioner Knaan asked that Mr. Russell Core and Dr. Katie Rainey report on the Department's recruiting efforts to hire more veterinarians for the September 11, 2006 Commission meeting.
- Commissioner Knaan wanted a new policy to increase the medical expenses allowed with the Department's contracted veterinarians.
- Commissioner Knaan requested that the General Manager provide a complete explanation on the Animal Behavioral Assessment Areas for the shelters.
- Commissioner Riordan requested for an updated report on the unsterilized animals that were released by the shelters.
- Commissioner Brown wanted to investigate the feasibility on police training for shelter dogs.
- Commissioner Brown requested for an update from the Animal Cruelty Task Force for the September 11, 2006 Commission meeting or for a meeting in the near future.
- Commissioner Khoro requested for a close session in which the General Manager would brief the commission on the leading candidates for the Assistant General Manager position.

Public Comments

Zsuzsa Blakely: Commented that on the past Saturday, Dr. Rainey had ordered the killing of over 70 dogs at the South Los Angeles shelter.

Phyllis Daugherty: There are no citable offenses written for the anti-tethering ordinance. There are other things that have been passed by the Commission and have yet to be put into effect in the field. Wanted to know about the internal procedures of the Department for implementing approved policies.

Teri Austin: Supported Commissioner Brown's suggestion to investigate the feasibility for providing service

training for the shelter dogs.

4. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Approval of the Minutes for July 24 and August 14, 2006

Commissioner Knaan indicated that on page 2 of the minutes for July 24, 2006, she had mentioned that the City would be conducting an investigation into the Nelson case in conjunction with the Personnel Department. She also indicated that under Commission Business, it had been Commissioner Atake who had attended the meeting for a discussion on the Department Logo. Knaan motioned that the minutes be approved with her requested changes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Riordan and passed on a vote of 5-0.

Commissioner Riordan wanted to include on page 6 of the minutes for August 14, 2006 that she had asked for the Commissioners to reconsider before she requested to step down and that none of the Commissioners did so. Commissioner Knaan motioned to approve the minutes with Commissioner Riordan's requested change. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atake and passed on a vote of 5-0.

B. Meetings/Events Attended

Commissioner Atake volunteered at dog adoption events on August 16 and 26. Commissioner Riordan had been working on a script for a spay/neuter commercial for the mobile vans. The commercial may now go national. Commissioner Knaan attended an Actors And Others benefit on August 26, 2006. Commissioners Khero and Brown had nothing to report.

5. GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR BOARD ACTION

A. Board Report: Acceptance of Nellie Rhode Newman Trust Bequest

The Los Angeles Administrative Code, Section 5.200.1 (receipt of Property) states that any gift or bequest to be utilized by a Department, that exceeds \$25,000, must be accepted by the City Council. Ms. Nellie Rhode Newman, a resident of the City, created a trust named the Nellie Rhode Newman Trust. Trust documents provided for the annual income from a bequest in the amount of \$172,000, to be distributed to the City of Los Angeles and used for the purpose of spaying and neutering of cats and dogs. The Since the City did not have a process for holding the money, the trustee deposited funds in April 2006 with the California Community Foundation, a California charitable corporation. The California Community Foundation would then distribute an annual income of funds to the City's Animal Sterilization Fund. On April 2, 2006, the Department received the initial donation of \$5,000.

Commissioner Riordan motioned that the Commission accept the \$5,000 donation and all subsequent annual payments into the donation in the Department's Animal Sterilization Trust Fund, and recommend approval of the gift by the City Council. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atake and passed on a vote of 5-0.

B. Board Report: Rooster Ban

The Commissioners decided to table the Board Report on the Rooster Ban to the next Commission Meeting on September 11, 2006 when Commander David Diliberto would be present and available to respond to

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questions and concerns.
Public Comments

Phyllis Daugherty: The Commission should wait until after the spay/neuter ordinance. The Rooster Ban would impact people's pet roosters, mainly the cock farms in Sun Valley. These individuals would take their roosters out of the City and into the County. The Department in the past has failed to enforce the existing laws that prohibit housing roosters within 100 feet of the adjoining dwelling.

Zsuzsa Blakely: Roosters are considered birds and to discriminate against them is ridiculous. This law would prevent rescuers from successfully rescuing chickens or roosters.

Teri Austin: Has had a neighbor who has maintained chickens and roosters for over 20 years. There are areas in the City in which roosters are living in healthy environments.

Tina Clark: Saw the ban on roosters being similar to the dog breed ban. The ban would not solve the cockfighting problem in the City. The ban does not make any sense.

Scott Sorrentino: The law is going to punish the innocent in this case and do nothing to the guilty. The problem is that the Department is not enforcing current laws. Most bans in general, rarely do what they are meant to do.

Action Item: The Board Report on the Rooster Ban to return as an agenda items for the September 11, 2006 Commission Meeting.

6. REGULAR AGENDA DISCUSSION ITEM

A. Discussion: List of Concerns For Future Agenda Items

Mr. Ross Pool, Management Analyst II, created a list of concerns from past agendas for the Board of Animal Services to address during the coming year. Commissioner Knaan expressed a desire to make a completed spay/neuter ordinance a high priority for the Department. She wanted to set definite goals and time constraints with moving the ordinance along. She also wanted a specific detailed plan on how exactly the Department intends to enforce the new law. Commissioner Knaan also wanted to set definite goals for licensing, being that less than 20% of the dogs in the City are currently licensed, as well as for increasing adoption numbers among the public. Commissioner Riordan mentioned customer service as a main concern with a clarification on Department policy. She also wanted to see how the Department addresses staff burnout. Commissioner Khero agreed that spay/neuter, licensing, adoptions, and customer service should be the Department's top categories to keep focus on throughout the year.

Mr. Pool said that he would create an agenda item for goals and objectives for the forthcoming year to be placed on the agenda for the September 11, 2006 Commission Meeting.

Action Item: A Discussion Item on the Goals and Objectives For the Forthcoming Year to be placed as an agenda item for the September 11, 2006 Commission Meeting.

Public Comments

Jane Garcia: Commented that she was concerned about the vet crisis, enforcement by the Animal Cruelty

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Task Force, and her particular situation with shelter staff.

Scott Sorrentino: Questioned whether the Department had the staff capable of accomplishing the tasks they have been delegated to do. If not, where are the personnel going to come from?

Laurie Gold: Interested in the Increase In the Number of Dog Licenses. Commented that she knew of the largest pet supply store in the San Fernando Valley who would like to assist the Department with licensing animals.

Zsuzsa Blakely: Increase adoptions by stopping the killing. Concerned about TNR and that the public needed to have access to it for free. Felt that mandatory spay/neuter was unconstitutional and unenforceable. Providing incentives would be a better alternative.

B. Discussion: New Hope Alert Reporting Criteria

Captain Moriarty clarified that the staff is to approach the New Hope Alert based on what they deemed to be the most at-risk animals. The only ones who can make that determination are the animal control technicians, the shelter managers, and the medical staff. With any animal coming into the shelter, it is up to the medical staff to determine whether that animal is irretrievably suffering. The intention with the New Hope Alert is that animals deemed to be adoptable would remain on the first phase without being considered as “at-risk,” to where there is the availability for the New Hope partners to receive the animals at no-cost for a period of 7-10 days. After that period, the animals would automatically be placed as “at-risk.” The Red Alert is designed to target those “at-risk” animals based on the time spent on the New Hope Alert or their age being twelve years old or older. The Red Alert is not intended to mean that the animal has been signed off for euthanasia. The Red Alert List gives the rescuers an opportunity to focus on the animals the Department feels that are the most at-risk and need to get out, and makes the adoptable animals available to the public.

Public Comments

Scott Sorrentino: Rescuers are asking for a separation between those animals most at-risk and those animals with the highest probability of being euthanized. Rescuers are unsure when animals on the Red Alert List would be euthanized. In the past, it had been much clearer.

Jane Garcia: Mentioned that the General Manager had conceded in a conversation with her that animals on the Red Alert List would be animals that had been signed off for euthanasia.

Zsuzsa Blakely: There is nothing wrong with most of the animals appearing on the New Hope List and are being killed. There is no willingness from the staff at the South Los Angeles center to work with anyone. They are determined to kill everything.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Zsuzsa Blakely: Commented that the population has decreased at South Los Angeles over the years, as there are many empty cages. There is no reason that more animals can be adopted out. It is a matter of strategy and stopping the killing. Shared with the Commission that the General Manager escorted her out of the South Los Angeles shelter over the weekend for allegedly mistreating staff.

Mary Catalano: Informed the Commission that a member of the public had been denied entrance to the isolation room for cats at three different shelters. Advised that the Department take more advantage of using

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public service announcements to make the public aware that animals are being killed at the shelters. Commented on volunteers being abused by the staff.

Teri Austin: The Department needs to look more carefully at all the funds that are available to use. There is a spay/neuter crisis that needs to be addressed with the highest priority now. The Department needs to look at where the highest number of animals is being picked up, and use its resources to target those areas.

Sue Freeman: The cat numbers are extremely high at the South Los Angeles shelter, while they are relatively low at other shelters. Found a several inconsistencies in the shelter statistics and animal descriptions. Also commented that some of the pictures on the website appeared darker due to the backgrounds used. Many appeared distorted.

Scott Sorrentino: There are many people from the public whose expertise would be of great service to the Department. Encouraged the Commission to look into directing a more collaborative effort between the Department and the public. Pleased with the availability of the New Hope List on the Internet, and would like to see a searchable database as the next possible task to be completed.

Jane Garcia: Heard that the South Los Angeles Annex had remained empty during kitten season. Mentioned that the City of Long Beach does not allow for the fostering of evidence animals. Was thankful that the General Manager had been ready to testify on the benefits of allowing the fostering of those animals.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Knaan motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atake and passed on a vote of 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 P.M.