1. REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER
   A. Distemper Outbreak: Dr. Casandria Smith, Chief Veterinarian, reported that the Department has
noticed an increase in the number of dogs in City shelters with upper respiratory problems, nasal and ocular discharge, and neurological symptoms. Smith reported that post 9/11/2001, Federal Law requires Animal Care Officials to observe such clusters in outbreaks as possible Bio-Terrorism. Smith also reported that the intake of animals with the disease may be decreasing in City shelters, but it is still too premature to tell. Smith stressed prevention as the best cure for the disease as there are no known cures for Distemper. The approach is only symptomatic treatment for the disease, and there is no evidence that this disease is transferable to humans.

B. Rendering Plant: Regina Adams, Assistant General Manager, reported that recently, Westcoast Rendering Plant, a City of LA and LA County Contractor, was reported in the media that animal stockpiles were being formed at the plant’s facilities due to restrictions on imports to Asian Countries. Adams reported that there would be no interruption to City services by the contractor. The firm has resolved the problem and gotten rid of its backlogged inventory by selling inventories elsewhere in the United States.

C. Wildlife Committee Formation: Adams reported that Commissioner Riordan and others would be contacted as early as Friday to schedule a meeting for those who’ve expressed interest in this area of our operations. The item is scheduled to appear on the Agenda for the May 10, 2004 Commission Meeting.

D. Auction Policy: Adams reported that the Department would not be reporting back on this issue. The Department has been advised to stay with the auction process currently in place.

E. Credit Card Implementation: Adams reported that the Department is no longer going to contract with US Ban. Instead the City will now contract with Bank of America. This means that roll-out implementation will be scheduled for the end of the month. Training in each shelter will occur over the next 3-4 weeks by the 4th week of this month. The charges will be handled through the Treasurer’s Contract.

F. Feral Cat Complaint – Adams reported that the Department has addressed the specific complaint. The customer service issues that gave rise to the complaint have also been addressed, and the Department’s policy on feral cats will be discussed at the May 24, 2004 Commission Meeting.

Public Comment:

1. **Zsuzsa Blakely** re: Item 1A: Feels there is no more of a this is a scare tactics There is no higher rate of URA’s in the

2. **Phyllis Daugherty** re – Item 1F: Feels the Department’s Feral Cat Policy is illegal and poses a dual standard. Claims that Cat Trappers do not have to notify residents that they are trapping cats but private citizens are cited if they post their private information and inform local residents that they are trapping feral cats.

3. **Jo Ann Wagner** – re - Item 1A: Feels the animals in animals are not being sent out to pet adoption event Suggests that there is a false-positive test for Parvo. Asked Department Veterinarians to confirm.

4. **Mary Catalano** – re - Item 1A: Feels the South LA shelter is never properly sanitized. Feels bleach must be used in both the dog and cat areas. Claims cats are not being sent to pet adoptions due to Distemper.

5. **Dr. Rutgard**: re – Item 1A: As a licensed chiropractor for 35 years, stated “to look at a
6. **Jeff Fleiss:** Feels there may be an outbreak of Distemper sure to an abundance of birds getting into the shelter animal food supply.

7. **Daniel Guss** – Announced that a local television station is doing a report on sanitation in City shelters. Also announced that a website called, [http://www_CORruptLA_com](http://wwwCORruptLA.com) is being created to present information to elected officials and to hold Mr. Hahn and the people he hires accountable.

8. **Julie Chadwick:** Reported that a Mini-Mobile van Pet Adoption lost 2 ½ hours to adopt out animals when dogs from South LA shelter were not allowed out of the shelter due to Distemper. Complained that shelter staff failed to inform them ahead of time of the problem.

2. **COMMISSION BUSINESS**

   A. **Approval of Minutes for the meeting of March 22, 2004:** Commissioner Metz moved to have the minutes for the meeting of March 22, 2004 approved. Commissioner Riordan seconded the motion. The minutes for the meeting of March 22, 2004 were approved by a 3:0 vote.

   B. **Meetings/Events Attended:** None to report.

   C. **Consideration of Future Agenda Items:** Riordan requested that Item #1 on “Matter to be Calendared” re – Modifying Zoning Laws, be scheduled for the May 24th or June 28, 2004 Commission Meeting. Riordan also requested Department publish a press release reminding people about the upcoming rise in Coyote sightings.

   Commissioner Rubalcava requested that the Department publish the dates that its Public Service Announcement relative to Coyotes will be aired. Rubalcava requested that the Evidence Animal Policy be scheduled for discussion for the meeting on June 14, 2004. Rubalcava proposed that the Department begin publishing an Annual Report on animals and other materials. Rubalcava asked that this matter be addressed at the June 14, 2004 Commissioner meeting to discuss the parameters of that report.

**Public Comment:**

1. **Zsuzsa Blakely:** Objects to the title relative to the Rescuer License Deposit exemption. Feels the deposit should not apply to anyone adopting animals from the shelter.

2. **Daniel Guss:** Asked who exactly is going to be in charged of finding the new General Manager? Claims that Commissioner Rubalcava has told him that he (Rubalcava) is personally leading the search for a new General Manager. Claims he has two other people who will corroborate this allegation.

3. **Mary Catalano:** Wanted to make sure that the licensing fee exemption to rescuers discussion is not going to be pushed back any further. Asked if the licensing fee exemption can apply to members of the public as well.

3. **REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS**

   A. **Memo: Customer Service Training** – Adams reported that this report reveals some of the various policy nuances that are practiced at some of the City shelters. Adams reported that the Department would look at these nuances to see which ones were valid and which ones require standardization. The Department will use data from this report to enhance the implementation of its Staff Training Protocols.

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Commissioner Rubalcava requested that each Board member receive a copy of the Department’s Adoption Agreement. Rubalcava also asked that a Department Checklist be developed to outline the essential elements and terms of the Adoption Agreement. Rubalcava requested that the 1st Qtr FY 2003-04 Customer Service Complaints and their Resolutions be discussed at the May 10, 2004 Commission Meeting.

Public Comment:
1. Daniel Guiss: Reported an incident about an animal owner’s dog being euthanized while the man was present at the South Central Animal Shelter to redeem his pet.
2. Zsuzsa Blakely: Expressed her opinion that Department staff really does not care about adopting animals out of the shelter.
3. Julie Chadwick: Gave an example where she was told on the phone with staff from the North Central shelter that they could not help her and look up an animal impound number. Stated that she has been told that Department staff at North Central has no time to do Adopters Alerts and to look up animal impound numbers.
4. Jo Ann Wagner: Feels the Department should stop misleading the public by stating that we have Staffordshire Rescue.
5. Mary Catalano: Asked that Department staff be instructed to stop discouraging pet adoptions. Feels staff needs to do a better job informing adopters that they can get their animal sterilized and have their sterilization deposit returned.

B. Memo: Review of Animal Checkout Procedure – Addressed during discussion of Item 3A.

C. Memo: Update on the Pilot License Canvassing Program – Adams reported that from January 1 – April 3, 2004, 1,429 dog licenses have been collected for a total of $17,161 in revenue. Adams reported that it was initially anticipated that more unsterilized pet licenses would be issued in the targeted area. Preliminary findings suggest that there are more unlicensed altered animals. This reduces our initial revenue projections. These projections are being revised for the Mayor’s Office.

Rubalcava asked if we have tracked the number of sterilizations that have been performed as a result of our Canvassers encouraging people to have their animals altered. Adams will look into this query.

Public Comment:
1. Mary Catalano – Asked if Canvassers carry sterilization information with them? Asked if Canvassers are paid on commission? Are there sterilization bonuses attached to their pay?


Commissioner Rubalcava requested that the actual number of sterilizations attached to expenditures be calculated and reported back to the Board.

Public Comment:
1. Phyllis Daugherty: Asked if the Department can obtain a grant from PetSmart to help sterilize rabbits.

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2. **Mary Catalano**: Suggested that some of the money that the Department receives from public donations be set aside exclusively to help fund the mobile pet adoptions.

3. **Zsuzsa Blakely**: Opposed to the Department spending $13,000 on Pet Care Coloring Books. Instead recommends that more money be spent on funding the Mobile Pet Adoptions.

4. **Jeff Fleiss**: Announced that he is starting an organization called United Animal Rescuers. Questions that expenses the Department made on the shelter kiosks. Asked why the kiosks are not working at the South LA shelter.

5. **Jo Ann Wagner**: Questions the Department’s computer expense purchases. Hopes the Department considers placing personal property and evidence animals that are available to be placed on the website.

**GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR BOARD ACTION**

No Board Actions Requested

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

A. Dr. Rutgard – Requested that the Board reinstate his license. Feels he was deceived at the Plummer Street shelter. Feels he was sold an aggressive animal unknowingly.

B. Phyllis Daugherty – Feels Department staff deserves a great amount of credit for the success of Saturday’s Mobile Pet Adoption. Reported that there is a problem with dead chickens from Texas being bought and sold in a Valley area pet shop. Announced that the Animal Issues Movement is working on getting a State law passed to prevent any kind of fowl from being transported by mail. Hopes the City will support her organization.

C. Michelle Dorum – Feels Dog Care Facilities are not kennels and should not be viewed as such. Proposed that the Department create guidelines to allow Doggie Daycare Services in commercial zones.

D. Michael Dorum – Hopes to meet with the General Manager and revisit this issue. Emphasized that the absence of business input has led to poor “business-sense”. Feels the Department has made a law causing unnecessary zoning issues and conditional permits issues with the Department of Building and Safety.

E. Daniel Guss – Provided commentary about alleged Department staff misconduct.

F. Jo Ann Wagner – Revisited the issue of the Isolation Animals. Animal in isolation need kennel cards in the front. Requests permission to photograph the animals in the Isolation Unit to put the animal’s picture on a website.

G. Mary Catalano – Endorsed Jo Ann Wagner’s fine photography skills. Put the impound number so that the animal can be searched for more easily. Also asked that the South LA shelter be provided more change on Sunday. Can something be done bout staffing more people in the shelter on the weekend. Suggested that the Department host Family Night Adoptions at the shelters.

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H. Zsuzsa Blakely - Appalled to hear the Commission’s decision during Dr. Rutgard’s Administrative Appeals Hearing despite his attempts to rehabilitate his dog. Feels the Department needs to stop functioning as the enemy of the people and animals. Complained that a Department Animal Care Technician (ACT) accosted her after she stood in front of the medical room door to prevent him from taking the animal into the room to be euthanized.

I. Julie Chadwick – Reported on an incident when once again puppies were not held until Friday at 5 PM following a Special Mobile event. Complained that a Department staff person verbally mistreated her.

J. Jeff Fleiss – Reported on two events he has attended since the last Commission Meeting relative to spay/neuter and a musical event. He also attended the City’s Mobile Pet Adoption at Farmer’s Market.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Rubalcava adjourned the meeting at 12:33 PM.