Commissioners: Kathleen Riordan, Vice-President
Tariq Khero
Ken Metz
Alex Rubalcava

SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING, 9:00 A.M.

Commissioner Riordon called the meeting to order. Commissioner Khero, Metz, Riordan and Rubalcava were present.

1. REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

General Manager Sharon Morris, reported as follows:

A. South Los Angeles Community Meeting: A community meeting was held at West Angeles Church with Los Angeles County Vector Control and the Department to discuss the rodent situation.
B. Pet Insurance: Pet Insurance information is available on the counter at the shelters and in the adoption packages.
C. Gift Certificate Refund Policy: Gift Certificates state they are not redeemable for cash and no refunds are made on the unused portion.
D. West Los Angeles Cat Issue: Someone sent out flyers regarding cat mutilations. The Department is only aware of one incident of cat mutilation that was done by another animal.
E. Events Attended: The Department attended two events: 1) The Animal Wellness Event at the Rose Bowl where 40 animals were adopted; and, 2) Best Friends Event where 79 animals were adopted.
2. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Approval of minutes for the meeting of April 26, 2004 – Commissioner Rubalcava made a motion to hold the minutes until the next Commission Meeting, motion was seconded by Commissioner Khero. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Approval of Minutes for the meeting of May 10, 2004
Commissioner Rubalcava made a motion to hold the minutes until the next Commission Meeting, motion was seconded by Commissioner Khero. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Meetings/Events Attended
Commissioner Rubalcava attended the Rose Bowl and Best Friends Events. In addition, he rode along with the Special Enforcement Unit.

D. Consideration of Future Agenda Items
Commissioner Metz requested an update on the West Nile Virus for the July 12, 2004 meeting. Commissioner Rubalcava would like a website update to be schedule for the July 26, 2004 meeting. Commissioner Riordan would like an update on the current coyote attack.

Public Comment

Phyllis Daugherty, Animal Issues Movement: Health Fair in the Eight District last weekend had no Department representation, the Department was not notified of the event. Another event coming up in South LA appears that no Department staff will be present. Would like to reform the volunteer committee.

3. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

A. Nominations for Board President & Vice-President of the Board of Animal Services Commissioners
Commissioner Rubalcava made a motion to wait until a full commission is present before nominations are made, Commissioner Metz seconded the motion. Motioned passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Daniel Guss, Stand Foundation: Concerned that Ms. Riordan is the only person on the Commission having more than one year experience. Commented on Mr. Metz’s attendance.

B. Discussion: Proposed Increase of the $5,000 Donation Limit a General Manager Can Accept
Ms. Morris presented a copy of the Administrative Code that limits the General Manager from accepting donations over $5,000. Ms. Morris indicated she would be back in the future to request the Commission to support the increase of donation limits.

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GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR BOARD ACTION

C. Board Report: Revisiting the Doggie Daycare Decision

Representatives from the Planning Department and Building and Safety were present to discuss the duties of their respective Departments in regards to grooming centers, doggy daycare and variances. At this time both Departments see no need to change any codes or regulations. If a variance change was requested from the Planning Department, it could take two to three years for something to happen due to their staff shortage and workload.

Public Comment:

Michelle Rivera, Chateau Marmut: Has a very successful dog daycare, grooming facility, training facility, and boutique store. They are successful because they are conveniently located. Not possible to operate a successful facility in a commercial zone.

Phyllis Daugherty: When doggy daycare is located in professional centers such as dentist or accountants it is hard to do business with the noise that doggy daycare cause. Don’t change the zoning.

Michelle Dorann, The Dog House: The term “kennel” means overnight boarding, we are not an overnight boarding facility. If daycare is to be regulated there are important points that should be heard. Daycare provides help to people who work all day.

Don Schultz, President of Van Nuys Homeowners Assoc: Testifying on behalf of the Valley Village and Van Nuys Homeowners Associations. Both Associations are requesting to retain the current zoning ordinance. Doggy Daycare should remain in the same category as a kennel. Regarding 3D opposed to change in laws to increase the number of animals allowed.

Teri Austin, Amanda Foundation/Sam Simon Foundation: Would like some sort of discretion, addendum, or temporary measure with the current ordinance. The solution for many barking dogs is doggy daycare.

Michael Dorann: Is a business a kennel? The question is whether the Department is willing to make a determination if a place is a kennel. The Commission can’t say they can’t make a decision on doggy daycare services.

The Commission decided that Mr. Kim of the Department of Building and Safety could attend a Commission Meeting to clarify an e-mail he provided to the Commission.
D. Board Report: Modifying Zoning Laws to Increase the Number of Animals Allowed on Residential Property

The Planning Department and Department of Building and Safety informed the Board that in order to change the current ordinance it would be a lengthy process, taking up to several years.

E. Board Report: Service Animals

The Department requested the Commission to draft a letter of support for AB1801 for the Mayor to send to the State Legislature. AB1801 would raise the penalties for crimes committed against service dogs to misdemeanors and increase the monetary penalties.

Shirley Manning: Reported on how her service dog was attacked and the process by which she reported the incident to Animal Services.

Zsuzsa Blakely: You don’t take the dog and impound them. The solution is to work with people.

Teri Austin, Sam Simon Foundation: The foundation has a service dog program. Money that goes into training a service dog is substantial. The fines being asked for are low and should be taken seriously.

Mitch Pomerantz, City employee: His guide dog was attacked in front of Parker Center by a pit bull. Animal Services impounded the dog. Homeless people get big dogs for protection, this dog ran away from its owner.

Scott Sorrentino: The penalties are not high enough for this type of violation. This is also a leash law issue.

Commissioner Metz made a motion to ask the City of Los Angeles to back the Department by sending a letter from the Mayor to Sacramento, regarding passage of AB1801. Also, that the Department gets a response on protocol on what order is to be followed in the case of an attack on a service animal. Commission Khero seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

F. Board Report: Proposed Amendment to the Pet Overpopulation Ordinance

Commander Diliberto returned to the Commission, as requested, with amendments to the Pet Overpopulation report presented at the May 24, 2004 meeting.

Public Comment:

Sue Freeman: Has problems with Item 4, rescue is not defined. Six occasions is a lot.

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Maybe people who are not rescuers can obtain a special permit. Sees this as a major loophole for breeders.

**Mary Catalano:** Agrees with going after the breeders. Has been denied a rescue card and thrown out of the shelter for trespassing by the Los Angeles Police Department.

**Phyllis Daugherty, Animal Issues Movement:** Would like to make sure animals cannot be transferred if they are under eight weeks of age. Six incidences are too many.

**Zsuzsa Blakely:** Has a problem limited it to six occasions or six animals. Also being denied a rescue card. Fines slapped on people don’t work.

**Daniel Guss, Stand Foundation:** Wanted to have Mary and Joanne on his rescue cards, but was denied. Politics and personnel issues get in the way of rescuing dogs.

**Teri Austin, Amanda Foundation:** Comments regarding Draft Amendment #2. Concerned with fines. Would like fines per animal rather than occurrences.

**Bill Dyer, In Defense of Animals:** Encourages support of the amendment.

Commissioner Rubalcava made a motion to accept the amendments as they stand with the exception of “per occurrence” being changed to “per animal” and that the Department collects the address of the ultimate owner of the animal. Commissioner Khero seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**G. Board Report: Streamlining the Adoption Partner Rescue Card Process**

Mr. Salmasi’s report was based on a complaint from an Adoption Partner complaining they have to submit too much paperwork to renew their rescue cards. The Department is recommending that the process remain as is. Two changes have been made to the required paperwork: 1) The Adoption Partner form is requesting a physical address rather than a P.O. Box; and 2) Change of Ownership Form, first occurrence will be a call and letter follow-up. Second occurrence group can be removed from the program.

**Public Comment:**

**Teri Austin, Amanda Foundation:** Asking where the animal is going requires a lot of paperwork. People do not want to provide personal information to the Department.

**Scott Sorrentino, Rescue Humane Alliance:** Disappointed that we are moving in the direction of more paperwork. The Adoption Partner Program needs to be revisited.

**Zsuzsa Blakely:** Doesn’t know where 60 organizations come from. This is the problem with groups not renewing.

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Mary Catalano: Rescuers have to pay a license fee.

Daniel Guss, Stand Foundation: Does not find the process cumbersome as is. Would like to put Mary and Joanne on his rescue cards. Was not at any of the protests this weekend.

Commissioner Rubalcava does not see the Department requesting anything unreasonable.

Ms. Morris indicated that the information is needed and rescuers want to have it both ways. They don’t want to be the owner of the animal and responsible for the license and they don’t want to tell us where the dog is to make sure it has a license. The Department still has an interest in the disposition of the animals.

Commission agreed to support the Department.

H. Board Report: $100 Unaltered Dog Licensing Fee

Commissioner Riordan requested the issue tabled since the Participant Shelter Task Force was going to be discussing it.

Public Comment:

Teri Austin: Waived her right to speak.

Scott Sorrentino, Rescue Humane Alliance: Does not agree with the City Attorney’s opinion that the $100 unaltered license fee cannot be waived for rescue groups.

Daniel Guss: Waived his right to speak.

Bill Dyer, In Defense of Animals: Fee should be waived for rescue groups.

Mary Catalano: License fee is not transferable. Should waive fee for rescue group.

Commissioner Khero made a motion to receive and file the report, motion was seconded by Commissioner Metz. Motion passed unanimously.

I. Board Report: Proposal to Increase Voucher Redemption Value

Mary Carbajal, Sterilization Program Manager, requested the Commission to increase the value of the sterilization program as follows: Discount Coupons to $30, Free Certificates to $60, Pilot Feral Cat Program to $30, and Senior/Disable Coupons to $50. In addition, income requirements for the Senior/Disabled Coupons to be removed.

Sue Taylor with Actors and Others does support everything the Department is doing. The one problem is that the $30 coupons are discriminating against dogs. The dogs should have a $40 coupon. Requested the Commission to ask the Department to provide veterinarian prices for

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sterilization to the resident as well as provided information on how to use the coupons.

Ms. Carbajal indicated that the Department’s number one concern is towards the low-income. The Discount Coupons were never intended to cover the entire cost of a surgery.

Public Comments:

Teri Austin, Amanda Foundation: $30 is not enough to have a large dog sterilized.

Scott Sorretino: Agrees with everything Sue said.

Judy Cairns: Surprised redemption is low. Department should make the groups obtain information on the veterinarians.

Bill Dyer, In Defense of Animals: Agendas are too long. Supports what Sue has said.

Susan Taylor: Consider putting out an educational flyer.

Sue Freeman: Veterinarian’s prices have increased over the years. Should not be paying $100 per animal on the van.

Zsuzsa Blakely: Most veterinarians charge $75 to $200 for neutering a dog. Not sure what is going on with the voucher program.

Phyllis Daugherty, Animal Issues Movement: Doesn’t believe that $30 is enough to spay or neuter a large dog. Provide information sheet with every voucher issued.

Mary Catalano: Support Sue Taylor’s proposals. Appreciates the increase for feral cats. Increase for the dogs make sense.

Ms. Carbajal pointed out that the City of Los Angeles is the only City in California that offers sterilization programs of these types.

Commissioner Metz made a motion to hold the issue over until the July 12, 2004 meeting because he was not ready to vote on this issue. There was no second on the motion.

Commissioner Metz made a second motion to accept the report with the new voucher prices given, Commissioner Riordan seconded the motion. Motion passed three to one.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD - (Comments from the public on items of public interest within the Board’s subject matter jurisdiction.)

Phyllis Daugherty, Animal Issues Movement: Educational sheets need to be passed out with the vouchers. Recycling business are selling animals. Cockfighting a big problem. Kittens being born.

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under houses and apartment buildings in low-income areas are being boarded up. A person should be able to trap animals where lives are in danger.

Irene Ponce: Supports increasing the amount of a donation that a General Manager can accept.

Kim Lindemoen: Concerned with a bulldog that was in West Valley Animal Shelter. The puppy had been dropped which resulted in brain damage. Puppy needs 24 hour a day care. Don’t let the dog fall through the cracks.

Joy Nadell, Rescue Me: Victoria at the shelter is fabulous. Dr. T and the shelter were not qualified to take care of the puppy. Would like the puppy released to her care.

Scott Sorrentino, Rescue Humane Alliance: Supports Joy taking the puppy.

Jeff Fleiss, United Animal Rescuers and Doggy TV: Denied his rights in City Hall. Department has failed to respond to his request to video tape Commission meetings.

Teri Austin, Amanda Foundation: Suggested the new shelters obtained mobile clinics to be able to perform private and shelter sterilizations.

Sue Taylor, Actors and Others for Animals: Believes the Commission was blackmailed into making a decision regarding the vouchers. Disappointed with decision Commission made.

Sue Freeman: Frustrated with the decision Commission made regarding the coupons. The big offender animals are not being targeted.

Mary Catalano: Agrees and supports Sue Taylor and Sue Freeman. Believes information should be provided with the certificates. Wonders what happened to the South Los Angeles spay/neuter clinic. Staff discourages people from adopting sick/injured animals.

Zsuzsa Blakely: Feral cats are killed in the pound. South Los Angeles sent 10 animals to the Best Friends event.

Judy Cairns: Wants to know what the hiring status is for the General Manager. Concerned with the person the Mayor chose to head the committee.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Riordan adjourned the meeting.

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