Commission Rubalcava called the meeting to order at 9:22 a.m. Commissioner Brunson, Knaan and Rubalcava were present. Commissioner Riordan joined the meeting at 9:24 a.m. Commissioner Khero was absent.

1. REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

   A. Ms. Adams, Assistant General Manager, representing the General Manager, updated the Commission on the current situation with LAUSD wanting to acquire the site the Department has obtained to build the East Valley Shelter for a new elementary school to be built.

   B. Reviewed the status of the Department’s Action Items.

      Commissioner Rubalcava requested that the Department present the response to the Controller’s Audit regarding dog license fees to the Commission before it is provided to the Audit and Governmental Efficiency Committee.

      Ms. Adams discussed the problem with obtaining Department veterinarians.

Public Comment

Daniel Guss, Stand Foundation: Mentioned an article in the Los Angeles Times regarding high employee turn over in the City and indicated the report for the Parks/Ludlow motion was late.

2. COMMISSION BUSINESS

   A. Approval of Minutes for the meeting of September 13, 2004. Commissioner Riordan requested a correction to the minutes. Commissioner Rubalcava made a motion to accept the motion, Commissioner Brunson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
B. Meetings/Events Attended

The Commissioners attended no meetings or events.

C. Consideration of Future Agenda Items

Commissioner Brunson requested that the licensing increase report, the employee hiring process and the volunteer appeal process be placed on the Commission Calendar.

Commissioner Riordan requested that Commissioners be allowed to have commission comments at the end of each meeting to discuss items not on the agenda, but were brought up during the meeting. Commissioner Riordan indicated her request was to avoid new questions and comments being calendared as agenda items. Assistant City Attorney Dov Lesel indicated that per the Brown Act, Commissioners can only comment, or engage in a discussion on items that have been agendized. If something occurs in a Commission meeting that a commissioner would like to discuss, the item would have to be placed on the agenda.

Public Comment

Phyllis Daugherty, Animal Issues Movement: Confirmed what City Attorney said regarding Commissioner’s comments during commission meetings.

Daniel Guss, Stand Foundation: The Department should review who is currently working for the Department. Would like to know why the Departments does not have Chinese and Korean programs.

3. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

A. Update: Medical Services

Dr. Smith, Chief Veterinarian, provided an update to the Commission on the medical services of the Department. Dr. Smith updated the Commission on the staffing, the requirements to be on the medical staff, and treatments animals receive. Dr. Smith also discussed a program that the Department and Pierce College are working on and the sanitation and cleaning of the shelters.

Commissioner Knaan suggested the Department have an area on the website that shows sick/injured animals describing what special needs the animal has and what is required to care for the animals.

Commissioner Brunson inquired as to the process by which a veterinarian position is unfrozen. Ms. Adams explained the process to unfreeze a position.

Public Comment:

Daniel Guss, Stand Foundation: Cited the Los Angeles Times article and mismanagement.

Phyllis Daugherty, Animal Issues Movement: Damage done to legislatures and to veterinarians by violent activism has caused us not to have veterinarians but also not to have permanent animal control directors in various cities and counties. They have been run out by threats and difficulties.

Julie Chadwick, HELP The shelter is still discouraging the public from adopting sick animals. HELP
will assist people with paying half the medical bills for sick animals.

B. Update: Volunteer Program

Heidi Huebner, Volunteer Coordinator, updated the Commission on what has been done since she became the coordinator and what her plans are for the future such as greeters at the shelter and organized volunteer areas.

Commissioner Riordan expressed her concerns for insurance for volunteers. Ms. Adams indicated the Department continues to work with the City Attorney on this issue.

A discussion ensued between the Commissioners and the Department on an appeals process for volunteers that have been terminated. Dov Lesel suggested the Commission provide the Department the time to create an appeals process. Anyone unhappy with the process could then appear before the Commission. This item will be discussed in a later commission meeting.

Ms. Adams explained to Commissioner Brunson that the Department always responds to items requested by the Commission in a timely manner. If for some reason the Department is not able to respond quickly to a request, it will be explained to the Commission. Many times a request requires the Department to work with other City agencies, which sometimes results in the request not being responded to in a timely manner. Commissioner Rubalcava stated that the Department has always been responsive to him when he has made requests in the past, and have responded to him in a timely manner. Commissioner Brunson stated the issue is not the Department not providing the Commission a response in a timely manner, they are restrained and do not have enough personnel and they do have to seek outside guidance by City Attorney, etc.

Public Comment

Julie Chadwick, HELP: Feels there should be an appeal process for volunteers who have been fired. Requested to be reinstated as a volunteer and to have her adoption rescue card returned.

Daniel Guss, Stand Foundation: A tally should be kept on employees that are being complained about.

Phyllis Daughtery, Animal Issues Movement: Issues involving volunteers involve liability and safety issues, affecting the safety of employees and Department. Those decisions need to be made by the Department and the General Manager who have the facts and not the Commissioners that listen to gossip.

GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR BOARD ACTION:

NONE

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

Periel Kaczmarek, LAAS Volunteer: Requested clarification on why volunteers could not drive Department vehicles and the problem with LAUSD.

Please join us at our website: www.LAAnimalservices.com
Daniel Guss, Stand Foundation: Upset that the Department issued a memo regarding videotape. Indicated the memo violates employee’s rights.

Phyllis Daugherty, Animals Issues Movement: The Commission is the head of the Department. If the Department is being poorly managed, it is the Commission fault. The Department is a City agency and has rules and regulations they have to follow.

Lisa Edmondson: Approves of the fee increase for rabbits.

Julie Chadwick, HELP: Has no problem with being terminated from the volunteer program, just does not like the manner by which it was done.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m.