MINUTES
SPECIAL OFF-SITE MEETING
BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES
Monday, November 8, 2004
6:00 p.m.
COUNCILMEMBER GREUEL’S OFFICE
7747 Foothill Blvd.
Tujunga, CA  91042

Commissioners:  Kathleen Riordan, President
                Alex Rubalcava, Vice President
                Erika Brunson
                Tariq Khero
                Deborah A. Knaan

Commissioner Riordan called the meeting to order at 6:18 p.m. Commissioners Brunson, Khero, Knaan, Riordan and Rubalcava were present. Councilmember Wendy Greuel made an opening statement welcoming the Department to her district.  Items 3B & 3C were taken out of order.

COMMISSION MEETING, 6:00 P.M.

1.  REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

A.  Service Awards:  Service Award pins were presented to Commander David Diliberto for 15 years of service to the City of Los Angeles (City), Captain Keith Kramer for 20 years of service to the City, and Captain Tim Goffa for 30 years of service with the City.

B.  Best Friends:  The Department participated in the Best Friends adoption event at the La Brea Tar Pits on Saturday and Sunday November 6th & 7th.  A total of 112 animals were adopted, a successful event for the Department.

C.  Articulated Horse:  Animal Control Officer Hugh Briefman, a member of the Department Animal Rescue Team (DART), gave a brief presentation on the 400 pound articulated horse that was on display and discussed how it is used to practice horse rescues.  The articulated horse was purchased with the money donated by the Chatsworth Neighborhood Council.

Public Comment:
None

2.  COMMISSION BUSINESS

A.  Approval of Minutes for the meeting of October 25, 2004

   Commissioner Knaan made a motion to approve the minutes with the changes made to the Microchip Request For Proposal, Commissioner Khero seconded the motion.  Motion passed unanimously.
B. Meetings/Events Attended
Commissioner Knaan thanked Commander Diliberto for the shelter tours. Commissioner Rubalcava attended the Best Friends Adoption event on Sunday and was one of the judges for the Much Love Animal Rescue Bow Wow Ween event. Commissioner Riordan attended the In Defense of Animal Award Ceremony and the Singita Fund Raiser Event.

C. Consideration of Future Agenda Items
None

3. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

A. Update: Activity Report on East Valley Care and Control Center

Captain Karen Stepp, District Manager for the East Valley Shelter, reported on the activities at Shelter. The East Valley Shelter services over 125 square miles including Sherman Oaks, Studio City, Van Nuys, Panorama City, Sylmar, Lake View Terrace, Pacoima, Arleta, Sun Valley and Sunland Tujunga. The field operations include 10 animal control officers to cover these areas 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. The Shelter handles all animal related calls including stray injured, dangerous, nuisance and animal cruelty calls and is currently number one in adoptions and redemptions. Linda Gordon, Senior Management Analyst II, explained the funding for the new shelter.

Public Comments:

Linda Fullerton: Inquired about the future status of East Valley Shelter.

B. Update: New Horse Trails

Mr. James Combs, Assistant General Manager for Recreation and Parks, reported on Recreation and Parks responsibilities in relation to the horse trails and explained how the money collected from the equine fees are spent. Recreation and Parks currently has no dedicated funds for the horse trails. Recreation and Parks has never taken money from the Equine Trust Funds. Currently there are only three (3) crews to improve the trails in the Valley area. A study in 1986 done by City Administration Office estimated a cost of $1,000 per linear mile to maintain the trails. Recreation & Parks collects $23,000 annually for equine care. Mr. Combs also explained future plans for the equine trails.

Councilmember Greuel wants to find gaps in trails and determine where gaps are located in private or public residences and make a continual path.

Public Comments:

Margie Beeson: Design of the trail seems backward.
Debra Baumann: Horse trails are used by walkers, joggers, and etc. The trails are not just for horses. The cost should be shared by everyone who uses the trails.
Bonnie Mason: Shadow Hills Home Association charges for the horse trail. City should cover the maintenance cost of the trail and the Home Association fee should be returned to the residents of the Shadow Hills.
Mary Benson: Complained of the lack of maintenance in the Foothill trails in Hanson Park.

C. Discussion: Equine License Increase

Agnos Ko, Senior Management Analyst II, explained how the Department is requesting an equine fee

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increase of $6.00, raising the equine license fee from $14.00 to $20.00. The $6.00 additional increase will cover the administrative cost of the Department. At present the entire $14.00 equine license fee is forwarded to the Recreation & Park Department. There has not been a fee increase for over a decade.

Public Comment:

Mary Benson:  Equine encephalitis required horses to get license.
Fritz Bronner:  Against the fee increase as it is increasing by 50%.

D. Update:  Wildlife

Captain Wendell Bowers updated the Department Statistics from June 2002 to October 2004. The Department has received a total of 2,779 complaints: 2,409 coyotes and 370 other wildlife. The Department is working on two (2) pamphlets: one on skunks and one on possums. The Department just finished the second Public Service Announcement video on urban wildlife. It will be airing this month on the City Channel 35. Commissioner Brunson pointed out that there is a new program through Fish & Game implemented in Utah and Colorado to spay/neuter coyote via vaccination.

Public Comment:

Mary Cummins:  The wildlife program is moving on well. The new flyers are great. However, not all employees are referring calls to wildlife rehabilitation center.

E. Update:  Animal Cruelty Task Force

Commander Diliberto reported that Councilmember Cardenas made a motion for the Department to get together with Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) to handle this issue. The Department will assign five Animal Control Officers to work with LAPD to investigate animal fighting and cruelty. This will be a six month pilot program.

Public Comment:

Phyllis Daugherty:  A lot of people need to be thanked regarding this motion including City Attorney, Rockard Delgadio.

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.)

Tama Lockwood:  The Department needs to focus on the horse rescue due to fire and other disasters since Fred Michael is retiring from the Department and no longer working on this.
Stephanie Lacy:  Thanked the Department for a good job. Also requesting a microchip-a-thon.
Kathy McHugh:  Animal Services is doing a good job in her area. Inquire where will the equine fee increase go.
Charlotte Laws:  Ideas to make the Department a no kill shelter and submitted the report to the Commissioners.

5. ADJOURNMENT  Commissioner Riordan adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

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