ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL HEARING, 5:30 P.M.
(CONTINUED FROM MARCH 8, 2006)

Commission Vice President Khero called the Administrative Appeal Hearing to order at 6:02 P.M. Present were Commissioners Khero, Brown, and Knaan. Commissioners Riordan and Atake were absent.

1. Appeal of the General Manager’s Decision in Dangerous Animal Case – DR 05329NC
   Appellant: Jeffrey De La Rosa
   Complaining Witness: Marjorie Kaye
   District Manager, North Central Animal Care and Control Center: Karen Stepp

   Pursuant to Section § 53.18.5 (q) 8 of the LAMC, the members of the Commission voted to uphold the General Manger’s original decision to revoke your dog “Maeve’s” License, Number L06-850912.

2. Appeal of the General Manager’s Decision in Dangerous Animal Case – DA 05331NC
   Appellant: Jeffrey De La Rosa
   Complaining Witness: Tatiana Edwards
   District Manager, North Central Animal Care and Control Center: Karen Stepp

   Pursuant to Section § 53.18.5 (q) 8 of the LAMC, the members of the Commission voted to uphold the General Manger’s original decision to declare your dog “Stu” License, Number L06-850912 dangerous.

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COMMISSION MEETING

Commission Vice President Khero called the Commission meeting to order at 6:12 P.M. Commissioner Riordan joined the meeting at 6:15 P.M. Commissioner Atake joined the meeting at 6:40 P.M.

1. REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER – EDWARD BOKS

- For March to date, adoptions have increased (17%), New Hope placements have decreased (28%), and euthanasia has decreased (38%). For the year to date, adoptions have increased (10%), New Hope placements have decreased (27%), and euthanasia has decreased (31%).
- Mr. Scott Sorrentino and the Rescue and Humane Alliance have agreed to organize a public hearing to address questions and concerns on the New Hope Program.
- The Senior 4 Seniors Program is providing a makeover program that includes grooming services. The Department is recruiting volunteers to perform the grooming.
- The Matchmaker Program is now available on the Department Website for the public.
- The Safety Net Program aims to help owners and pets stay together. Currently the program focuses on providing support for pet owners with sucklings.
- City Council’s “Pet of the Week” continues to be a success. All animals have been adopted thus far.
- The Department is close to posting the Foster Care Program on the Website. The Department is working to enhance the program to include training for neonate and sick/injured care.
- The Department is working with an advertising agency willing to provide pro bono services.
- A request for a Public Information Officer position has been submitted in the Budget.
- The General Manager is gathering a variety of experts within the community to help in developing its training programs for staff.
- District Managers are holding meetings more frequently to communicate what needs to be done and to reiterate the goals of each program.

Public Comments

Lori Golden: Willing to publicize the Foster Care Program’s need for volunteers in the Pet Press. Has yet to hear a response from the Department.

Daniel Guss: Willing to assist the General Manager in any capacity in implementing his programs. Training is critical to the success of the Department. Proposed that Ms. Jane Garcia be hired as a groomer.

2. OLD BUSINESS

A. Board Report: Increase in the Number of Cats Allowed (Held Over from Feb. 27, 2006)

The Department recommended changing City Codes to allow an unlimited number of cats for City residents. However, households with four or more cats would be required to obtain a non-commercial, multi-cat permit. Commissioner Riordan commented that lifting the limit on cats would bring the focus on the living conditions. As a result, responsible cat owners would no longer have to hide their cats. She felt that including the requirement for a permit would greatly increase the likelihood that the ordinance would be accepted by City Council. Commissioner Riordan suggested holding an informal meeting for those opposed to the idea of permits to discuss their concerns before the Board delivered a final decision.
Public Comments

Scott Sorrentino: Many people in the humane community are against the idea of permits. All however agree on lifting the limits on cats.

Lori Golden: Needs to be a provision clearly stating whether an individual is a homeowner or a renting tenant who has obtained permission from the landlord to house cats.

Phyllis Daugherty: There is no way to monitor the number of cats that residents will keep on their property. Lifting the limit would increase dumping and have a significant impact on homeowners.

Daniel Guss: There is a history of the Department using the cat limit to monitor individuals who spoke out against the Department.

Ben Lehrer: A permit is an open invitation to investigate an individual’s property at any time. Suggested that field officers use the conditions for the permits as the guidelines for conducting investigations.

Sue Freeman: Cat owners have hidden in the past because limits focus on the number issue.

Jacky De Haviland: The Department has used the investigations as a weapon in the past. Department abuse of investigations needs to be addressed in regards to the board report requiring permits.

Action Item: Approval of the Board Report for the Increase in Number of Cats to return as an agenda item for the April 24 Commission Meeting.

B. Board Report: Procedure for Handling Abused or Neglected Animals Impounded at Shelters (Held Over from Feb. 27, 2006)

At the February 13 Commission Meeting, a request was made for statistical information on abused and neglected animals turned in to the shelters. The Department found that existing procedures did not provide the means to determine the information requested. As a result, the Department developed a more detailed shelter policy. Commissioner Knaan expressed her concern that the procedures needed to be made more specific and clear. The General Manager responded that the Department would review the report and present an updated version at the next Commission meeting. Deputy City Attorney, Dov Lesel mentioned that he had forwarded the procedures to fellow prosecutors at the City Attorney’s Office, and was awaiting their feedback. Commissioners Riordan and Khero suggested to table the approval of the board report to the next Commission meeting until they could review and consider the recommended changes from the prosecutors.

Public Comments

Teri Austin: There is too much lag time between the animal turn-in and examination. Asked about the involvement of the Animal Cruelty Task Force and how they respond to signs of abuse or neglect.

Daniel Guss: Disagreement with the killing culture of the Department is another reason for the difficulty in hiring veterinarians. Commented that more security cameras would prevent animal dumping.

Tiffany Krog: Documented her personal experience of difficulty in trying to obtain the release of a dog held for four months as an evidence animal.

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Commissioner Atake commented that when people dump animals at the shelter, their driver's license information should be recorded because an animal may very well have been abused, neglected or mistreated, although the symptoms may not be apparent at the time of dumping (internal bleeding and such will show at a later time).

**Action Item:** Approval of the Board Report for Procedures For Handling Abused or Neglected Animals Impounded at Shelters to return as an agenda item for the April 10 Commission Meeting.

3. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Commission Recommendation For New Agenda Items

- Commissioner Riordan wanted an update on the animals that have left the shelters due to injury and health reasons, and how staff has been following-up on their sterilization.
- Commissioner Brown asked what the Department has done to address the Puppy Mills issue.
- Commissioner Riordan asked for a discussion item on the incentives offered to pet shops that take on shelter animals to be placed on a future agenda.
- Commissioner Riordan wanted a monthly listing of donations made to the Department.
- Commissioner Knaan requested that the Assistant General Manager qualifications be placed on the agenda as a discussion item for the April 10 Commission Meeting.
- Commissioner Knaan requested that the report on the Do Not Adopt Policy return to the agenda for the May 8 Commission Meeting.
- Commissioners Brown and Knaan wanted an independent audit of the Department to be placed on the agenda as a discussion item for the April 24 Commission Meeting.
- Commissioner Brown asked that the issue of illegal dogfights be placed on the agenda for the May 8 Commission Meeting.

Public Comments

*Jane Garcia:* Requested if Dr. Katie Rainey could come in and speak on the medical staff training.

*Lauri Lando:* Wanted to have a report on licensed breeders.

*Scott Sorrentino:* Asked that the Department statistics be placed as a future agenda item.

*Daniel Guss:* Commented that he has been collecting information on backyard breeders with the IRS and would gladly share that information with the Department.

4. **COMMISSION BUSINESS**

A. Approval of the Minutes for March 13, 2006

B. Meetings/Events Attended

Commissioner Knaan motioned that the approval of the March 13 minutes, along with the update on the meetings and events attended by the Commissioners be tabled to the next Commission meeting on April 10, due to time constraints. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Riordan and passed on a vote of 5-0.

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Action Item: Approval of the Minutes for March 13, 2006 and the report on Meetings/Events Attended to be tabled as agenda items for the next Commission Meeting on 04/10/06.

5. GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR NEW BOARD ACTION

A. Board Report: Support of SB 1806 “Protecting Companion Animals in Unattended Vehicles”

It was recommended that the Board accept the General Manager’s recommendation to support California State Senate Bill 1806 and send it to City Council for their support. Commissioner Riordan expressed her concern for harsher penalties with SB 1806 and whether the Senate Bill would take over existing legislation. Mr. Lesel commented that individuals who leave companion animals in unattended vehicles could theoretically, be prosecuted under the cruelty statute, 597.1 of the California Penal Code. The purpose of SB 1806 is to empower field officers to take immediate action against pet owners if they witness companion animals being left in unattended vehicles.

Public Comments

Phyllis Daugherty: The bill has had very little consideration. Asked why the Department is not also supporting AB 2862 and a statewide anti-tethering law.

Commissioner Knaan motioned to approve SB 1806 with the caveat that it did not undercut or undermine the anti-cruelty statutes that already exist in the California Penal Code. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atake and was passed on a vote of 4-0. Commissioner Brown abstained.

REGULAR AGENDA DISCUSSION ITEM

B. Discussion: Questions and Concerns Within Council District 2

The representative from Council Member Wendy Greuel’s Office was not present at the Commission meeting to address the questions and concerns within Council District 2.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Commissioner Knaan motioned to reduce public speaker comments to a minute and a half per person due to time constraints. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Riordan and passed on a vote of 5-0.

Phyllis Daugherty: Laws apply to all people and passing laws regarding the number of animals allowed on one’s property will create more abuse. Asked that the Department work on handing pallet donations for the shelters.

Daniel Guss: Thanked the General Manager for his accessibility. Said he would be available to share his information on backyard breeders. Suggested that the Department report more on the positive things that they are doing in the community.

Pam Wilkes: Pleased with the hiring of Ms. Michelle Kelly as the Rabbit Program Director. Concerned about the implementation of Department policy at the shelters.
Patricia Rudisill: Noted that Pet Press is often present in the shelters and can notify the proper volunteers and rescue groups to provide the care needed by the wildlife animals that are turned in.

Michelle Kelly: Disturbed that the recommendations for the new rabbit holding areas were not implemented in the Prop-F shelter plans.

Vivian Edmondson: The housing for the rabbits at the shelters should be indoors and include flat flooring.

Laura Beth Heisen: The Humane Society offers training for field officers on pit bull fighting and cock fighting investigation and prosecution. Indicated that the Department has difficulty in hiring veterinarians due to the lower salary offered by the City. Asked that the Department honor the memory of Mr. Rocky Lisa.

Jane Garcia: Commented on the dogs that were not adopted at the mobile adoption events.

Evelyn Walton: Concerned that the new shelters will not have improved conditions for rabbits.

Teri Austin: Felt that more events held outside of the shelters would increase community involvement.

Debbie Diederich: The new shelters do not accommodate for the expected increase in the rabbit population. Urged the Commission to work with the General Manager to house rabbits humanely.

Loria Roberson: Noted the specific needs of the rabbits at the new shelters.

Angie O’Neal: Asked that the rabbits receive indoor air-conditioned housing, proper dieting, flat flooring within their cages, and a safe exercise space at the new shelters.

Hanna Miller: Commented on the poor rabbit facilities at the West Los Angeles center. Advised the Commission to direct the Department in making the necessary modifications.

Margaret Tucker: The Department has failed in their promise to provide humane housing for the rabbits.

Scott Sorrentino: Wanted to see the reasons posted for animals placed on the kill lists. Asked that an independent audit be performed on the Department.

Esther Alary: Emphasized the importance of community outreach with events such as Pimp Your Pit.

Lisa Edmondson: Questioned why the $50 rabbit adoption fee has yet to be implemented.

Adam Siegler: Supports SB1806 and compared it to leaving rabbits in outside cages. Also compared the increase in cats to providing rabbits with the proper housing conditions at the shelters.

Lori Golden: Wanted the Department to follow-up on a pet shop in Tarzana that claimed to be licensed breeders. Had a friend who owned a very busy feed store and would gladly participate in a program that encouraged pet owners to license their pets.

Sharon Lydell: The proposed rabbit holding areas must be mobile and separated from the other animals. The
General public should not adopt bunnies until they are old enough to be spayed or neutered.

Jere Guldin: The plans for the new shelters are not in the best interest of the safety for the rabbits.

Alinda Lord: Pleased with the appointment of Ms. Kelly. Wanted others to see how to care for the rabbits.

Periel Stanfield: Informed the Commission that they are looking to provide homes for Mr. Lisa’s dogs. Commented that there is inadequate information on the kennel cards.

Nina Stewart: Demanded that the Department grant suitable housing for the rabbits.

Susan Hee: Reiterated that the new plans for the rabbits are not humane and not safe. Stated that the adoption fees for guinea pigs and rabbits are still too low.

Liz Ziegler: Pointed out that you cannot leave rabbits outside in the San Fernando Valley during the summertime due to the heat. Rabbits also need to be isolated from dogs to prevent them from shock.

Sue Freeman: Thought that limits and permits would prevent individuals from coming forward with their cat numbers. Suggested that something needed to be done for these individuals who owned a large numbers of cats.

Belinda Berdes: Observed an incident in which she helped rescue cats from poor conditions in Sylmar. Department field officers did not conduct a follow-up on the owner.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:44 P.M.