MINUTES
BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Monday October 23, 2006
10:00 A.M.
CITY HALL
200 N. Spring St.
Room 1060
Los Angeles, CA  90012

Commissioners:  Tariq Khero, President
                Kathleen Riordan, Vice-President
                Marie Atake
                Glenn Brown
                Deborah A. Knaan

COMMISSION MEETING

Commission President Khero called the Commission meeting to order at 10:15 A.M. Present were Commissioners Khero, Brown, and Knaan. Commissioner Atake joined the meeting at 10:20 A.M. Commissioner Riordan joined the meeting at 10:30 A.M.

1. ORAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER – EDWARD BOKS

- Thru the end of September, the Department has experienced a 2.1% decrease in the number of dogs and cats coming into the shelters. Over the past year, adoptions have increased 8.3% with a total of 14,341 adoptions. The Department has also shown the second highest increase in New Hope placements. Euthanasia has decreased 5% with fewer than 20,000 animals being euthanized.
- The General Manager reported that he was working with the neighborhood councils and the Directors of Animal Welfare in being an outlet to help recruit more fosters.
- The October 15 Best Friends Super Pet Adoption event at the La Brea Tar Pits resulted in 80 animals being adopted.
- The General Manager introduced the new Assistant General Manager, Ms. Linda Barth.

Public Comments

Phyllis Daugherty: Commented that two members of the Directors of Animal Welfare who were recently arrested on animal cruelty charges. Asked the General Manager what measures the Department has taken to monitor the individuals it is attempting to partner with. Asked if the City would be incorporating a pet census to account for the animals that would need to be saved in case of a disaster.
2. OLD BUSINESS INCLUDING MATTERS FOR BOARD ACTION

A. Erika Meadows Personal Services Contract:

Approval of proposed Personal Service Contract for programmatic improvements to the Volunteer Program and direction to staff.

Mr. Jeff Brill, Sr. Management Analyst II, presented the Board Report on the Personal Services Agreement with Erica Meadows for the evaluation of the Department’s Volunteer Program. Mr. Brill clarified that the timeline for the scope of work was broken down into three stages. Stage I – Evaluate and analyze current volunteer program/structure: approximately 200 hours; Stage II – Provide recommendations: approximately 80 hours; Stage III – implementation of recommendations: approximately 120 hours. Assistant City Attorney Dov Lesel added that Ms. Meadows would be working twenty hours per week for a period of twenty weeks with the Department.

Ms. Erica Meadows spoke on her experiences managing and coordinating volunteer efforts. In addition to her work as the Executive Director for Pet Orphans, she worked twenty years with the Tri-Valley Special Olympics, serving several terms on the Board of Directors. In the late 90’s she assumed the position of Area Director and helped reorganize and expand the program. Ms. Meadows also served in a variety of Executive Board positions for the Buckley School Parent’s Association. Commissioners Atake and Riordan expressed their concern that the current Director of the Volunteer Program was not performing their job duties in reviewing the Volunteer Program. Ms. Meadows responded that the Department was bringing in an area of expertise to collaborate and work with the staff. She hoped to share her successful experiences from Pet Orphans and provide solutions to the Department to help resolve their more problematic issues. Mr. Lesel mentioned that the Department would focus on utilizing the suggestions given by Ms. Meadows to be incorporated into an updated volunteer handbook.

The General Manager commented that one of the challenges with the Volunteer Program would be to find a way to drive out the fear that separates the volunteers, the staff, and the Commission, and to get everyone working together towards the same goals.

Public Comments

Phyllis Daugherty: The problems of the Department often have to do with the volunteers wanting to do things that are dangerous for the employees, the animals, the public, and the volunteers themselves. The risk management issues of the City cannot be compared to the risk management issues of a volunteer organization.

Commissioner Knaan motioned to approve the Personal Service Contract with Ms. Erica Meadows to provide consulting services in evaluating and improving for the Volunteer Program. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown and passed on a vote of 4-0. Commissioner Riordan abstained.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 A.M. for the scheduled Administrative Appeal Hearing of License Revocation Case - BR 06351EV.
ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL HEARING

Commission President Khero called the Administrative Appeal Hearing to order at 11:20 A.M.

1. **Appeal of the General Manager’s Decision in License Revocation Case – BR 06351EV**
   
   Appellant: Barbara Sue Daniels  
   Complaining Party: Harold Unger  
   District Manager, East Valley Animal Care and Control, Wendell Bowers, Captain  
   Hearing Coordinator, Department of Animal Services, Helen Brakemeier, Captain  

   Commissioner Khero motioned to uphold the General Manager’s decision to revoke License Number L06-062421, for dog “Tando”, License Number L06-062420, for dog “Toque”, and License Number L06-062419, for dog “Taca”. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown and passed on a vote of 4-0. Commissioner Knaan abstained.

   **Determination: License Revoked**

Commission President Khero called the Commission Meeting back to order at 11:50 A.M.

2. **OLD BUSINESS INCLUDING MATTERS FOR BOARD ACTION**

   B. Request For Proposal for Spay & Neuter Clinics:  
   Approval of solicitation of proposals to operate Spay and Neuter Clinic at North Central and South Los Angeles Animal Care Centers and direction to staff.

   Ms. Barth reported on the Request For Proposal (RFP) for licensed operation of the South Los Angeles and North Central clinics. As an interim solution to the vacancy at South Los Angeles, the Sam Simon Foundation entered into an agreement to operate the Clinic and perform spay/neuter procedures and other ancillary medical procedures associated with sterilization. The successor to the Sam Simon Foundation however, would be fully responsible for all post-operative and emergency care. Ms. Barth explained the RFP would work like a personal services contract with the contractor agreeing to meet a certain standard of requirements. The benefit to the Department in having a contractor operate the Clinics is that it will augment the Department’s ability to provide spay/neuter services to adopters and residents and utilize the Clinics in a way that brings the public into the shelters. The terms of the contract would be for five years, with four One Year extensions. The goal is to put the RFP by next week and receive proposals back after the Thanksgiving holiday. A panel of experts would be assembled to evaluate the prospective contractors with the hope of coming back to the Board in January for action, and ready to begin operating the Clinics in the spring.

Public Comments

**Phyllis Daugherty:** Said that the Department would be luck to perform 20,000 procedures. Commented that time expected to perform certain procedures would place the animals in danger. Questioned whether there were qualified individuals to monitor if the procedures were being performed properly.

**Mary Catalano:**

Please join us at our website: www.LAAnimalservices.com
Suggested that the clinics provide additional services to spay/neuter.

**Daniel Guss:** Wanted the vendors to be very clear in giving them the opportunity to address previous relationships with the City. There has to be disqualifying factors to eliminate from consideration.

Commissioner Riordan motioned to approve the solicitation of proposals to operate Spay and Neuter Clinics at North Central and South Los Angeles Animal Care Centers with the changes emphasizing more outreach to the public. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Knaan and passed on a vote of 5-0.

**C. Oral Report on Transfer of Animals Between Shelters:**

Report on progress in meeting Commission’s Policy of transferring animals between shelters.

The General Manager informed the Board that the staff member assigned to attend the meeting and give the report was absent. Commissioner Knaan specified that the Board wanted an update on whether the policy of transferring animals was being implemented, and if so, how it was being implemented in terms of a daily protocol. The Board also wanted to know whether or not the policy was feasible in practice. The General Manager responded that in the past, the Department had implemented the policy on a very limited basis, as there was a lack of space at the shelters. With the opening of the new and replacement shelters however, the Department would now have the room to transfer animals and keep them in quarantine areas until it could be determined that the animals are disease-free and ready to be adopted. Commissioner Khero pointed out that the goal of the Transfer Program would be to get more animals out to the West Los Angeles shelter and to the other shelters with higher adoption rates. The General Manager said that he would bring the transfer statistics to the next Commission Meeting for the Board to review.

**Mary Catalano:** Asked if animals being transferred to the North Central shelter were being kept in quarantine.

(The General Manager responded that the original 67 kennels at the North Central shelter were now being used as quarantine areas, and that the medical staff was limiting the number of animals kept in each kennel space.)

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Commission Recommendations For New Agenda Items**

- Commissioner Atake wanted a discussion on the outreach and possible help desk programs to interface with the public to be placed on the agenda.
- Commissioners Atake and Riordan wanted a discussion and explanation on the Hearing process to be placed on a future agenda.
- Commissioner Riordan wanted to look into incentives for pet shops taking in shelter animals.
- Commissioner Riordan wanted a discussion making the Euthanasia List available to the public again to be placed on the agenda for the November 13, 2006 Commission Meeting.
- Commissioner Knaan requested to see a draft on the spay/neuter ordinance.
- Commissioner Knaan proposed that the Department draft a letter and work with Council Member Dennis Zine to urge a pet shop in Arcadia to stop selling live unaltered animals to the public.
- Commissioner Brown wanted a review and update on the Animal Cruelty Task Force to be placed on
Daniel Guss: Spoke on the comments republished by Mr. Boks on the Department website about the Jewish practice of “kapparot.” The comments resulted in a protest at a synagogue on Pico Blvd. that required LAPD interference. Wanted to find out the criteria for posting information on the Department Website. Mentioned that the Department Website currently contained an article written by the Barbi twins on hoarding.

4. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Approval of the Commission Meeting Minutes:

Commission Approval of Minutes for the Meeting of September 25, 2006

Commissioner Riordan motioned to approve the minutes for September 25, 2006 with her requested changes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atake and passed on a vote of 4-0. Commissioner Knaan abstained.

B. Oral Report by the Commission on Meetings and Events Attended

Commissioner Atake volunteered at dog adoption events on September 30, October 2, and October 21. She participated at the Best Friends Super Adoption event on October 15. Commissioner Atake also attended the recent Del Rey neighborhood council meeting, in which a member of her organization was named to the Directors of Animal Welfare. Commissioner Knaan made a recent visit to the West Valley shelter and also volunteered at the Best Friends Super Adoption event on October 15. Commissioners Khero, Riordan, Atake and Knaan attended the grand opening of the North Central Animal Care and Control Center on October 5. Commissioner Brown had nothing to report.

Public Comments

Daniel Guss: The Department missed out on the Sherman Oaks Street Fair during the weekend of October 21-22. The Department needs to find out about the big events in Southern California and have their presence there to reach out to the thousands of people in attendance.

5. GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR BOARD ACTION

A. Fiscal Year 2007-08 Draft Budget Packages:

Presentation by staff on proposed requests on Fiscal Year 2007-08 Budget and direction to staff.

Ms. Barth presented to the Board a summary of the packages the Department is proposing to submit to the Mayor for consideration for the FY2007-08 Budget Year. She noted that one of the priorities was to get the regular funding for the new and replacement Prop-F facilities, which accounted for over $2 million of the request being submitted. Commissioner Brown wanted to see the actual figures for the packages in the request. Ms. Barth responded that she would present the completed packages with the detailed dollar amounts within two weeks for the Board to review and make suggested changes and additions.

6. REGULAR AGENDA DISCUSSION ITEM
7. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mary Catalano: Commented that the staff has been the main reason that many of the volunteers have decided not to stay with the Department’s program. The staff has often abused the volunteers. Suggested contacting the past volunteers for their input. Felt that the younger bilingual volunteers would be better assisting as interpreters for the public, asking questions about reasons for relinquishing animals at the shelters. Wanted to know if the isolation rooms at the shelters would be open to the public.

Phyllis Daugherty: Commented on a new puppy mill bill in the process of being passed in the state of Ohio. Mentioned the recent County adoption event in which 97 animals were adopted out. Suggested that the Department consult with the County on organizing adoption events. Updated the Board on the success of Animal Trafficking Task Force meetings. Indicated that there was still no wording on citations for animal tethering. Upset that the North Central district was taking over one of the busiest areas of South Los Angeles for patrol and felt that it would decrease redemptions for the South Los Angeles district.

Daniel Guss: Expressed his frustration with the lack of attentiveness among the young volunteers upon his recent visit to the North Central shelter when he attempted to adopt a red listed pit bull. Distributed to the Commission a copy of an email from the Anti-Defamation League regarding the anti-Semitic comments republished by Mr. Boks on the Department website about the Jewish practice of “kapparot.” Also asked why there was a posting from the Barbi twins that appeared on the Department website. Questioned the responsibility and common sense being used regarding the information that is being posted on the website.

8. CLOSED SESSION

The Board of Animal Services Commissioners met in closed session at 12:12 P.M., pursuant to Section 54957(b)(1) of the California Government Code to discuss the vacant Assistant General Manager – Operations position.

No action was taken in Closed Session.

Commission President Khero called the Commission Meeting back to order at 1:30 P.M.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Commission Meeting was adjourned at 1:30 P.M.