



MINUTES

BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Monday, February 28, 2005
9:00 a.m.
CITY HALL
200 N. Spring St.
Room 1060
Los Angeles, CA 90012



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

COMMISSION MEETING, 9:00 A.M.

Commissioner Riordan called the Commission meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. Commissioners Khero, Knaan, Riordan, and Rubalcava were present. Commissioner Brunson joined the meeting at 9:12 a.m.

1. REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

A. General Manager's Report

1. March Spay & Neuter Month

Captain Karen Knipscheer provided a detailed explanation on the activities the Department has planned for the month of March in conjunction with Spay and Neuter Month and provided a sample of the logo being used on all printed materials and special pins that are being created. Commissioner Knaan requested the Captain to return to the Commission the first meeting in April to provide an update on the program.

Public Comment

Phyllis Daugherty: Attended the Department press conference on Friday and was surprised that Mr. Stuckey was not present. Indicated the City Council was concerned with the press conference and the Department.

Daniel Guss: Happy with the plans the Captain presented. Would like to see information translated into Korean and would like publicity done with the Korean media. Can provide the Department with the names of automotive businesses that should be looked at.

Lisa Edmondson: Aggressively speaks to people about spay and neuter. Commission meetings mostly deal with dogs. Was told that the Pet Overpopulation Ordinance only deals with dogs and would like an explanation of the ordinance. Commissioner Riordan provided the explanation.

2. Isolation Animals

Chief Veterinarian Dr. Casandra Smith provided the Commission with an explanation on animals placed in isolation and the reasons they are placed there. A discussion occurred regarding the current employee guidelines for dealing with isolation animals and how things will change with the new shelters.

Commissioner Knaan was concerned with the isolation room at East Valley because most people do not know where it is which may keep them from looking at those animals. The Commission was concerned with the way all the available information at the shelter is presented. General Manager

Guerdon Stuckey explained how the Department is currently working on making it easier for the public to read signs in the shelter and eliminate the clutter. The Commission suggested that the Department hold animals longer after they are taken out of the isolation room. Dr. Smith indicated that this is already being done. The Commission suggested the Department look into placing plexi glass in front of the cages in the isolation room so people can see the animals without touching them.

Commissioner Riordan suggested that the Department let the public know that one month of free pet insurance can come with isolation animals.

Public Comment

Phyllis Daugherty: Explained the reason why animals are in isolation and why the public should not be allowed in the isolation room.

Zsuzsa Blakely: Animals need to be seen by everyone.

Mary Catalano: Important that isolation animals are seen. Problems getting into isolation to take pictures of the animals. Consistently finds that there is no paperwork on the animals.

Daniel Guss: Change the name of the isolation room to hospital room or recovery room. When the Department obtains its 501(c)3 it should inform veterinarians of the tax deductions they will be eligible for.

Scott Sorrentino: Animals were killed immediately after the Sweetheart Event.

3. Stationary Spay and Neuter Clinic

Dr. Smith indicated that the Department is advertising for veterinarians to operate the South Los Angeles Spay and Neuter Clinic. Dr. Smith explained that veterinarians do not want to work for the City due to the less than friendly atmosphere and afraid of getting carpal tunnel from doing a high volume of surgeries. There will be a group that will be using the clinic one day in March to provide sterilization of animals for the low-income residents.

Public Comment

Mary Catalano: Thinks it is great the Department is working so hard on this.

Zsuzsa Blakely: Dr. Girgis was good and was suppose to run the clinic but he ran off and opened his own clinic.

Melanie Pozez: Dr. Smith has done very good outreach. Western University wants to get involved with the Department. Sam Simon has part-time veterinarians that might want to work part-time for the Department.

Daniel Guss: Suggested the Department look into using chemical castration.

Scott Sorrentino: The groups that are using intimidation are not Los Angeles based groups.

A break was taken from 10:44 a.m to 10:54 a.m.

4. Evidence Animals

Commander David Diliberto explained the various situations by which animals are taken and held as evidence animals and the procedures for handling them. Commissioner Knaan was concerned with the animals that are held for long periods of times. Commander Diliberto will look into this issue and report back to the Commission at the next meeting.

Commissioner Rubalcava was concerned with the time it takes for hearing cases to be adjudicated. Commander Diliberto and Captain Knipscheer explained the hearing process. Commissioner

Rubalcava indicated that the Department should have a standing policy of expediting Department hearings in order to get the animal out of the shelter.

The Commander will assign a person to oversee evidence animals and provide weekly reports to him.

Public Comment:

Melanie Pozez: Was involved in the Animal Mercy Unit in Chicago will refer the Commander to the person in Chicago to obtain information on the program. Rescue groups will be able to help.

Mary Catalano: Shelter personnel are taking in abused animals without pursuing the owner.

Zsuzsa Blakely: The Department is thugs taking animals away from owners. Most are not dangerous animals.

5. Shelter Transfers

Commander Diliberto indicated he will be taking charge of the animal transfers by obtaining daily reports on each shelter on the number of animals in each shelter and cage availability. Commissioner Knaan would like the number of animals transferred. The Commander will return to the Commission on March 29, 2005 and provide an update on this issue.

Public Comment

Zsuzsa Blakely: All pit bulls are placed alone in South Los Angeles. The policy needs to be changed.

Mary Catalano: The transfer list should be made before animals are euthanized. Animals should be sent to West Los Angeles. Educate staff to encourage people to take cats and not kittens.

Mr. Stuckey requested that the Commission think about the factualness of comments made by community. Misinformation is being conveyed and the Department should have an opportunity to correct a nonfactual comment.

Dr. Smith clarified that animals that are coughing or sneezing are put on antibiotics for about seven to ten days and are not put down as soon as they start coughing or sneezing.

2. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes For February 14, 2005

Commissioner Rubalcava made a motion to accept the minutes; motion was seconded by Commissioner Knaan. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment:

Zsuzsa Blakely: The minutes from January 2005 cannot be accessed on the Department website.

B. Meetings/Events Attended

Commissioner Rubalcava attended the Best Friends Exhibition with Mr. Stuckey.

Public Comment:

Zsuzsa Blakely: Best Friends is having an adoption event and wants the City to send as many animals as possible to the event.

Mary Catalano: Please send as many animals as possible to the Best Friends events.

C. Consideration of Future Agenda Items

Nothing at this time.

Public Comment:

Zsuzsa Blakely: The Department computer should keep permanent records on all the animals. The isolation rooms have “no admission” signs, this policy should be changed.

Mary Catalano: There are 35 dogs on the website with no pictures. The staff should provide education to the public on the adoption of small animals.

Scott Sorrentino: If the Department wants to have an evening meeting in South Los Angeles the Rescue Alliance will pay to run an ad in the Sentennial to advertise the meeting.

3. **REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS**

None

GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR BOARD ACTION

A. Board Report: Authorization to Continue the Pilot Feral Cat Coupon Program as A Regular Program

Management Analyst II Mary Carbajal, presented the final report on the Pilot Feral Cat Coupon Program. The Department is recommending the Commission to make a Feral Cat Coupon Program part of the already established sterilization programs the Department currently offers.

Commissioner Rubalcava made a motion to continue the Pilot Feral Cat Coupon Program as a regular program, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brunson. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment:

Scott Sorrentino: Supports the program, wanted to know the maximum amount of coupons a person can receive.

Mary Catalano: Staff should educate the public when they trap cats they can return them to where they found them. Feral cats should be returned.

Zsuzsa Blakely: Department policy should be changed to TNR feral cats.

Phyllis Daugherty: Wonderful program. TNR not advisable in every area. Not everyone wants a feral cat colony.

B. Board Report: Authorization to Negotiate and Execute a Service Contract with AVID Identification Systems Inc. For an Electronic Animal Identification System

Ms. Carbajal asked the Commission for authorization to negotiate and execute a Personal Services Contract with AVID Identification Systems Inc., for microchips to be implanted in dogs and cats.

The Commission expressed a concern with the AVID microchip being able to be read internationally. The Department will obtain a letter from AVID explaining the microchips ability to be read internationally.

Commissioner Rubalcava made a motion to negotiate and execute a Personal Services Contract with

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AVID, Commissioner Khero seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment:

Scott Sorrentino: AVID is prominent in the Western United States. Should not hold up approval of the contract because the chip could not be read internationally.

Zsuzsa Blakely: Vital to have a universal scanner. Chip tends to travel in the animal.

Mary Catalano: When a person brings a stray without a chip the staff makes the person leave it. Knows of an incident where a chip was found right before an animal was to be euthanized.

Jeff Fleiss: Commission should be notified that contracts are to expire.

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

Scott Sorrentino: Isolation animals should be on the website. Some animals that don't look good do not have their pictures taken. All animals should be on the website. ISO animals should be spot lighted.

Phyllis Daugherty: Discussed the conference she attended in San Diego. Animals can be taken from North Central to South Los Angeles. South Los Angeles has a lot of good people that can provide good homes.

Jeff Fleiss: Daniel Guss had a good suggestion of changing the name of the isolation room. There are no street signs to indicate there is a shelter in South Los Angeles. Discussed the incident where a homeless man had his dog killed.

Zsuzsa Blakely: On Sundays you cannot find an ACT. The animal right community is grateful to the General Manager and the Commission. She always checks the figures she presents at Commission. After the Sweetheart event 60 animals were killed.

Mary Catalano: Banner at WLA is missing. Medical does not have paperwork on the animals. Encourages people to take pictures in the ISO room. Evidence animals released should be held longer. Fractious cats should be reevaluated after they have been in the shelter for a few days. People should not be told when cats are pregnant.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 1:09 p.m.