



MINUTES

BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS

CITY OF LOS ANGELES



Monday, May 9, 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.

Commission President Riordan called the Commission meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. Commissioners Riordan, Rubalcava, Khero and Knaan were present. Absent was Commissioner Brunson.

1. REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

A. Presentation of 20 Pin to Patricia Kellogg, Animal Care Technician Supervisor

Commander David Diliberto, Director of Field Operations introduced Ms. Patricia (Pat) Kellogg, Animal Care Technician Supervisor and presented her with a 20 City employee pin. Ms. Kellogg was described as an employee who always has a smile on her face. Furthermore, she has acted as a mentor to many of the Animal Care Technician Supervisors currently on the job. Ms. Kellogg then thanked the Department and her co-workers who had helped her through the years.

B. Senior 4 Seniors Program

Guerdon Stuckey, General Manager described concept behind the Senior 4 Seniors program and introduced Ms. Heidi Hubner, Volunteer Coordinator, who designed and oversees the program. Ms. Hubner described how the program is operational and the advertising for the program is scheduled to begin. Commissioner Knaan asked about the advertising campaign that will accompany the program. Ms. Hubner indicated that a radio station that is aimed at the senior market would broadcast spots encouraging older residents to embrace the program. In addition, fliers will be distributed to senior shelters and assisted living centers along with advertising in senior magazines. Commissioner Riordan asked Ms. Hubner to describe the program. The program is designed to enable senior citizens 62 years or older to adopt animals that are seven years old or older. All animals adopted must be altered and have a microchip implanted in the animal. The program is at no cost to the seniors. Commissioner Khero asked if the seniors were provided any information regarding the care and welfare of adopted animals. Contained in the adoption package is information that assists the seniors in the care of the animal.

C. Adopt-a-thon Statistics

Mr. Stuckey reported that the Department had been involved in the National Adopt-a-thon weekend. During the event a total of 220 animals adopted including rabbits, goats and hamsters. All six shelters were involved in the program. Mr. Stuckey also gave thanks to some of the businesses that took part in the event including the face painting business Enjoy your Face, Breeders Choice Pet Food, Petsmart from Alhambra and Big Nicks Pizza from the Harbor area.

- D. Mr. Stuckey reported on the death of a horse during the filming of the movie "Flicka". The Department has an ongoing investigation into the events leading up to and including the death of the animal. Due to the high profile case and the fact that other actions may be taken, the General Manager has instructed staff to speak to no one, without a need-to-know, regarding the case. Commissioner Rubalcava asked about other agencies that are working with the Department on the Case. Currently there are no other outside agencies involved in the investigation. Commissioner Riordan thanked the Department for making this a top priority investigation.
- E. Mr. Stuckey reported on efforts by Captain Karen Knipscheer, Public Information Officer to showcase the Department. Some of the events the Department will be involved with include Public Recognition Day on May 12, in the food court at City Hall; Community Jamboree on May 14 in Exposition Park; in partnership with the Post Office a "Dog Bite Awareness Month" on May 15; and a toy gun exchange for books on North Figueroa on May 21. A second item reported is that the South Los Angeles Clinic will open on May 19. In addition, the Department has hired three new veterinarians. The Los Angeles Times Sunday Magazine section contained a very positive article and interview with the Department's General Manager. Commissioner Knaan asked if the South Los Angeles Clinic would care for animals that are sick or injured rather than sending them outside. Mr. Stuckey indicated that, if appropriate, the animals would be cared for.

2. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes For April 25, 2005

Commissioner Riordan asked the minutes be amended to include a sentence on the Unweaned Pilot Program that "we had also added the importance of the T&R with the unweaned programmed that additional fliers and paperwork were distributed for the Department to rearview those fliers to include them when people come into the shelters." Commissioner Knaan made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Khoro seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes was passed 4-0.

B. Meetings/Events Attended

Commissioners reported no meetings or events attended.

C. Consideration of Future Agenda Items

Commissioner Knaan requested an update on the change in shelter hours. Mr. Stuckey reported that the Board Report would be presented at the May 23rd meeting. Commissioner Knaan also requested the Veterinary Forensic Report be presented at the meeting of May 23rd. Commissioner Riordan asked that Trap, Neuter and Return be scheduled for the May 23rd meeting. A Board Report for the Tethering Ordinance will be scheduled for June 13th.

Public Comment:

Zsuzsa Blakely: Questioned why the Shelters were still charging the \$100 adoption fee to 501(C)(3) and the public. Mr. Stuckey has sent a letter to stop charging the 501(c)(3) but not the public.

3. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

A. Board Update on the Prop F Bond Fund Program

Linda Gordon, Senior Management Analyst II provided an update to activate related to the Animal

Please join us at our website: www.LAAnimalservices.com

Facilities Bond Program. In conjunction with the Department of Public-Works, Bureau of Engineering, the Department is constructing two new shelters in South Los Angeles and the Northeast Valley; renovating North Central and West Valley; and replacement of the East Valley, Harbor and West Los Angeles shelters. Two-acre sites were acquired for West Los Angeles and Harbor Shelters. Three acres sites were chosen for East Valley, Northeast Valley and South Los Angeles. All properties are located on major streets for visibility. The new South Los Angeles Shelter project has been on hold since August 2003 on the order of the Administrative Oversight Committee. All projects are to be delivered to the voters within seven years. Only the new South Los Angeles shelter will not meet the delivery schedule.

The East Valley Shelter began construction in December and is approximately 12% complete. Northeast Valley groundbreaking is scheduled for May 25, 2005. The Harbor facility groundbreaking was in January 2005. Over 50 residents attended the groundbreaking for the Harbor facility. North Central renovation was begun in October and is 50 % complete. The West Valley renovation is underway. The West Los Angeles facility broke ground in December 2004 and is located next to a Best Buy store.

Each facility will have its own spay and neuter clinic, a grooming room, separate facilities for rabbits, small animals and reptiles and community cat rooms with upgraded air flow standards to ensure fresh air to the rooms. Each facility is built to energy efficient "green building" standards.

Commissioner Riordan asked about rumors about animals being "put down" due to construction at West Valley. Ms. Gordon indicated that she had responded to these rumors as untrue.

Public Comment:

Mary Catalano: Asked what percentage of the animals could be seen through the glass as far as the isolation ward and would the isolation ward would be called hospital wards versus isolation wards that would scare people. It is important for people to see the animals. Asked if quarantine animals could be seen also.

B. Update on Procedures for Evidence Animals

Commander David Diliberto, Director of Field Operations reported on the Evidence Animal Procedures. Commissioner Riordan asked about formal training have officers had as "humane officers". Commander Diliberto indicated that officers receive twelve weeks of training that include investigations and how to conduct them. Commissioner Riordan was interested in the cost of individual training of officers versus training officers in mass and is it feasible. Commander Diliberto indicated that the five officers assigned to the cruelty task force would get the training. These five officers could then train the remainder of the officers. Commissioner Knaan asked about additional training for officers. Commander Diliberto indicated that additional training in report writing by Rio Hondo (College) was received by officers last year. Commissioner Knaan indicated that there are two Sheriff's detective that was willing to provide training in report writing and investigative techniques. Commander Diliberto asked for the names so he could pass them to the training unit. Commander Diliberto, in response to a question from Commissioner Knaan about officer assignment, indicated that officers will be assigned to a specific area and thus make it easier to perform follow-up on investigations. Commissioner Riordan asked about the inability of the Department and City Attorney's computer to communicate and share information. Commander Diliberto indicated that a meeting has been set up with the City Attorney's Office to address this problem.

Mr. Stuckey questioned whether the problem was an operational or policy question regarding the assignment of officers to specific cases. Commissioner Rubalcava indicated the Commission was not into assigning officers, but rather the concern over the lack of efficiency in which it has been handled. Commissioner Riordan indicated it was an outgrowth of the problem associated with the holding of

evidence animals for prolonged periods of time. Commissioner Knaan questioned whether the Department was working with the Office of the City Attorney to meet the guidelines for filing cases. Mr. Guerdon indicated the Department would work with the City Attorney's Office but had no control over when they filed the cases. Commissioner Khero indicated that the Department should educate the City Attorney and assert the animal's interest when communicating with the City Attorney's Office.

Public Comment:

Terri Auston: Is happy with the direction this issue is going. She hopes the task force will be supplied with equipment needed such as cameras. Described a case where a resident brought an animal to the Spay and Neuter Van for care. The Amanda Foundation paid for care of the animal only to find out that the person had other dogs that had been purchased from a pet store. The Department followed up on the case and the resident improved his care of the animal.

Commissioner Knaan asked if a vet has a responsibility to report animal cruelty to the proper authority. Commander Diliberto indicated that it was not a mandated regulation. Mr. Guerdon asked how the Department could create a City ordinance that required veterinarians to report the cruelty.

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.)

Terri Auston: Reported on the spaymobile. In January 220, February 440, March 468 and April 496 surgeries were performed. The program works provided the word is given out in the areas of the community. A program with Roosevelt High School regarding resistance to the spay and neuter process. As a result of the effort in April 101 animals were altered as a result of appointments set up by the high school students. This outreach could be done into every area of the City. Also the Watts Youth Employment Agency is interested in doing something for the Spaymobile such as outreach. Ms. Auston wanted it on record that the Spaymobile is completely operated by the Amanda Foundation.

Commissioner Knaan asked about the Spaymobile issuing dog licenses. One of the problems is that a private organization would be collecting money on behalf of the city.

Mary Catalano: Wanted to bring up the \$100 fee for injured animals. Rescue does not pay the fee but private residents continue to pay the fee. Feels there is a problem that people drop off older dogs and adopt a puppy. Not sure anything can be done about this. The staff has been wonderful about the unweaned kittens. Picked up 15 unweaned kittens on Saturday. There is still a problem with respiratory problems in the cat room. A problem that rescuers are not allowed to go into the isolation ward.

Joe Navaro: Started a new program entitled Preserving Animal Care for the Elderly (PACE) for people who are over 65 years of age who have a life threatening disease. The program pays for vaccines and surgeries. If the owner has to go to the hospital the program will provide limited boarding. They also educate the elderly on their rights concerning companion animals who are threatened with actions by a landlord. Can also provide free food from a food bank. Will also walk a dog if the owner is unable to do it. Will sponsor a seminar on the healing properties of animals in June.

Pam Wilkerson: Happy that a lot of people are working with the Department to make our City a better place for animals and a no kill city. We are all in the battle together to work for the animal welfares. Regarding licensing at the Spaymobile, when a service is provided free, charging for a license is deceptive.

Roland Vincent: Was a witness of the death of a horse at Hansen Dam on a movie set of My Friend Flica. Was disappointed regarding the statements to the media by an animal control officer. Was contacted by Captain Morarity and is happy to see an investigation is being conducted. Believes this is a waste of time and the Department could spend the time better. If the Department has an officer on the set of movie production companies, you would not have to rely on the self-serving words of the movie industry. The cost of having an officer on the set should be borne by the movie companies.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 11:10 A.M.