



MINUTES
BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Monday March 12, 2007
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
 Archie Quincey, Jr.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL HEARING

Commission Vice President Riordan called the Commission meeting to order at 10:10 A.M. Present were Commissioners Riordan, Atake, Brown and Quincey. Commissioner Khero was absent.

1. Appeal of the General Manager's Decision in License Revocation Case – DA 06320WV

Appellant: Roberto Espinoza

Complaining Witness: Kevin Reaux

District Manager, West Valley Animal Care and Control, Jan Selder, Captain

Hearing Coordinator, Department of Animal Services, Keith Kramer, Captain

Commissioner Atake motioned to uphold the General Manager's decision to reissue **License Number L06-200726**, for dog "**Kaiser**" and **License Number L06-200727**, for dog "**Franklin**", subject to terms and conditions set forth in the Notice of Order, which was dated May 9, 2006. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Quincey and passed on a vote of 4-0.

Determination: License Reissued with Terms and Conditions

2. Appeal of the General Manager's Decision in License Revocation Case – DA 06578WV

Appellant: Marcell and Samy Yosef

Complaining Witness: Walter Sweeney

District Manager, West Valley Animal Care and Control, Jan Selder, Captain

Hearing Coordinator, Department of Animal Services, Keith Kramer, Captain

Commissioner Quincey motioned to uphold the General Manager's decision to reissue **License Number L07-997640**, for dog "**Rudi**" subject to terms and conditions set forth in the Notice of Order, which was dated January 12, 2007. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atake and passed on a vote of 4-0.

Determination: License Reissued with Terms and Conditions

COMMISSION MEETING

Commission President Khero called the Commission Meeting to order at 11:22 A.M.

1. ORAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER – EDWARD BOKS

- The Department is working to develop a strategic plan to address the three key issues facing the Department in respect to achieving No Kill.
 - Orphan Neonate Kittens: Of the 19,263 dogs and cats euthanized during the past year, 5,624 were orphan neonate kittens. With the Bottle Baby Program and the Spay/Neuter Program in place, the Department hopes to reduce the number of euthanized dogs and cats to 13,612.
 - Feral Cats: Cats represent 64% of the animals euthanized. Of the 12,279 cats were euthanized during the past year, 2,329 were feral cats. The Department will be conducting an environmental impact study to address the feral cat problem.
 - Pit Bulls and Pit Bull Mixes: Pit bulls account for 41% of all dogs euthanized. Pit bull adoptions have increased by 90% during the past year due to the rapid success of the New Hope Program.

Public Comments

Phyllis Daugherty: In 1993, the LAPD claimed that dog fighting did not exist in the City. The Animal Cruelty Task Force is not structured to identify it. The shelters are full of pit bulls because the non-game dogs are sold off as guard dogs or family pets. There is much money involved in dog fighting. Simple legislation can be enacted to prevent dog fighting, but no one knows how to identify it. Links on the Department website to fighting dog breeders is proof.

Daniel Guss: Commented that the Department website contained links to pit bull breeders. Indicated that the issues mentioned by the General Manager were not strategic planning issues, but micro issues. Suggested that the Department work with Mr. William Fujioka, City Administrative Officer, on a formal strategic plan.

2. OLD BUSINESS INCLUDING MATTERS FOR BOARD ACTION

A. Approval of the Commission Meeting Minutes of February 26, 2007

Commissioner Atake requested that changes be made to the minutes of February 26, 2007. She also suggested that the Department review the minutes of February 12, 2007 to reflect changes previously requested by the Commissioners. Commissioner Riordan motioned to table the approval of the minutes for February 26, 2007 to the next Commission meeting on March 27, 2007. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atake and passed on a vote of 5-0.

Action Item: Approval of the Minutes for February 26, 2007 to return as an agenda item for the Commission Meeting on 03/27/07.

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

Commissioner Atake volunteered at dog adoption events on March 2 and March 10. Commissioners Riordan, Atake, and Brown attended the Voices For Animals event on March 3. Commissioners Khero and Quincey had nothing to report.

3. GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR BOARD ACTION

A. None

4. REGULAR AGENDA DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. “Headin’ Home” Adoption Program (Held over from February 26, 2007 Meeting)

Assistant General Manager Deborah Knaan gave a brief overview of the Headin’ Home Adoption Program. The goal of the program is to save the at-risk animals from the overcrowded City shelters by transporting them to recognized animal care agencies outside the immediate Los Angeles County area to participate in known adoption programs. The defining protocol of the new program would be that any dogs selected for Headin’ Home Adoption would remain available to any citizen or New Hope Partner up until the time the dogs are transported. Ms. Knaan assured the Board that upper management before participation in the program would personally review all organizations. Signed contracts would be required to guarantee that no animal would be euthanized, unless for irremediable suffering. Ms. Knaan added that the Department would have the right to demand medical records for animals euthanized by participant organizations for medical purposes. Commissioner Atake suggested exhausting the Red List for the Headin’ Home Adoption Program. Ms. Knaan agreed that the Red List as the first source of animals for the program would be a good idea.

Public Comments

Daniel Guss: The kill rates should be known for any partner reviewed in the application process. Concerned about the transporting of animals over to Riverside County during the warmer months of the year. No other vehicles other than those designated should be used in the transport. An explanation should be provided for any Red Alert listed animal that did not get adopted at the Riverside shelter. Inquired about the follow-up process for these animals. Suggested that a professional trainer outside of the Department perform behavioral assessments and temperament testing. Stressed the important to exclude the young animals from the program.

Action Item: Discussion on the “Headin’ Home” Adoption Program returns as an agenda item to be tabled for the Commission Meeting on 03/27/07.

B. Fostering of Adoptable Animals

Ms. Knaan reported that there would be three Department Programs in place to address the fostering of adoptable animals: the Bottle Baby Program, the Evidence Animal Foster Program, and the regular Foster Program. Recently, the Department appointed Ms. Leslie Dorticos to head the Bottle Baby Program. Under the leadership of Ms. Dorticos, the Department forms have been revamped and training for the entire staff has begun. She has continued work to expand the foster list. With regards to the Foster Program, animals kept in the shelters for two weeks will be eligible for fostering. Information on the program would soon be posted on the Department website to encourage community participation. Staff would interview all

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applicants, and the Department would conduct a home inspection. Animals in foster care would remain property of the Department, and would be turned over to the Department at anytime upon request. Ms. Knaan mentioned that she had revamped the foster agreement for the Evidence Animal Foster Program, and that the City Attorney had already approved it. Copies of the agreement would be forwarded to the Board.

Commissioner Atake shared with the Commission that an evidence animal receiving foster care in December 2005 was recently adopted.

Commissioner Khoro supported the programs, but expressed concern that the Foster Program might limit the opportunity for adoption because the animal would not be present to view at the shelters by the public. Commissioner Riordan suggested that the fosterers continue monitoring and recording the behavior of the evidence animals, especially behavior indicative of cruelty.

Public Comments

Daniel Guss: Wanted to know what the Department would be doing to increase the chances of adoption while the animal is being held in foster care. Concerned that the program would limit the opportunity for the public to view these animals in person. Stressed the importance of partnering with rescue groups.

(Assistant General Manager Deborah Knaan responded that animals in foster care would be displayed on the Department website with its own special link. Currently, the foster care animals are linked to Pet Finder. Ms. Knaan added that the program would require foster care participants to bring the animals to mobile adoption events.)

Phyllis Daugherty: Commented that the main reason animals bite is due to shyness. Mentioned that in the past, Bottle Babies were not adopted out because of the high mortality rate and the instance of disease. With this program, the Department will be keeping more babies alive and the shelters will continue to have large numbers of mature animals without any way of countering the problem. The Program is defeating its purpose.

C. Proposed State Legislation, Assembly Bill 1634

The General Manager reported that the Department had been involved in the drafting and development of Assembly Bill 1634: the California Healthy Pets Bill. The Bill requires mandatory spay/neuter of dogs and cats in California with the goal of eliminating euthanasia. Over the past ten years, 3 billion dollars have been devoted to the rescue and care taking of animals, in which ultimately, over 400,000 animals have been euthanized. Of the Department's 20 million dollar budget, 13 million is spent on animals that are ultimately euthanized. The General Manager assured the Commission that a provision in the legislation would allow municipalities to enact ordinances that are equal to or more stringent than the State's statutes.

Commissioner Riordan expressed her concern that "stringent" in ordinances be defined as it often differs in the eyes of persons perceiving what "stringent" means. Assistant General Manager Linda Barth indicated that "restrictive" would be the language used in the drafted document. Deputy City Attorney Dov Lesel added that the group drafting the Bill was gathering input from the animal control community, the Veterinary Association, and rescue organizations.

Public Comments

Daniel Guss: Expressed concern that the Bill should have been a local issue first, rather than taking City resources and putting them on a State issue. There are other issues being tied to Assembly Bill 1634, such as the banning of the sale of incandescent light bulbs.

Phyllis Daugherty: Agreed that the Bill should have been a local issue first. The Assembly Bill codifies the ability of anyone with a papered dog to breed freely with an issued intact permit. This Bill will dump animals into breeder rescue groups. They will strongly oppose the Bill because it allows breeders to breed dogs without restrictions.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Daniel Guss: Commented on the email sent to the media by Mr. Scott Sorrentino, and presented a copy of it to the Board. The email was sent to the Los Angeles Times, The Daily News, and several other electronic media outlets. Mr. Sorrentino needs to be held accountable for his actions and inappropriate communications. Mr. Sorrentino also needs to provide the links that show there was media coverage for the event as he had claimed. Felt it was important for the Department to disclose when the first killing after the moratorium occurred.

Phyllis Daugherty: The Department is losing several more employees. Captain Karen Stepp will be joining the County. The Chief Veterinarian may also be leaving soon. The media has made Assembly Bill 1634 a laughing-stock, which will make it difficult for the Department to get legislation passed at the local level. Commented on the history of dog fighting in the City. Suggested that the Department lower the number of roosters and any other animals bred for fighting. The Department could also pass an ordinance that would authorize the seizure of vehicles used to transport the animals for such fights.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner Brown left the Commission Meeting at 1:02 P.M. and returned at 1:06 P.M.

Requests from Commissioners For Future Agenda Items

- Commissioner Atake wanted a discussion item on veterinarian issues.
- Commissioner Atake requested to have a discussion item on raising the breeders' license fees and the intact animal fees.
- Commissioner Riordan asked for a report on the Department's euthanasia statistics, especially after the recent Paw-Fect Match adoption event.
- Commissioner Riordan asked that we receive a report on the County's ordinance regarding the sale of baby rabbits and poultry at pet and feed stores.
- Commissioner Brown requested a discussion item on utilizing animals in a service capacity.
- Commissioner Brown wanted a program update on the Animal Cruelty Task Force.
- Commissioner Brown also requested a discussion item on the Department's recruitment plan for veterinarians.

Public Comments

Daniel Guss: Commented on the Department's need for a Marketing Director position on the same level as the Assistant General Manager. Asked about the nine veterinarians the General Manager had mentioned nine weeks ago.

Commissioner Khero confirmed that the agenda items for the March 27, 2007 Commission Meeting would be: **The Approval of an Increase in the Payment to Veterinary Hospitals, The Approval of Mandatory Collection of One-Time \$5.00 Cat Registration Fee for New Adoption and Ownership Redemptions, The Definition of Euthanasia Terminology, and The Discussion on the Sedation of Animals as Part of the Euthanasia Protocol.**

7. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Riordan motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Quincey and passed on a vote of 5-0. The Commission Meeting was adjourned at 1:35 P.M.