

(Audio MP-3 Recording of the Meeting Available
On the Commission's Website)



BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

South Los Angeles (Chesterfield Square) Shelter
1850 West 60th Street
Los Angeles CA 90047



DAVID ZAFT
President

ALANA YANEZ
Vice-President

JENNIFER BRENT
LARRY GROSS
ROGER WOLFSON

Commissioners Zaft, Yanez, Brent, Gross and Wolfson were in attendance.

I. REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING

1. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD - (Comments from the public on items of public interest within the Board's subject matter jurisdiction and on items not on the Agenda.)

Laurie Weiss: Spoke on the spay and neuter program. Asked that there be no cutbacks to the spay and neuter program funding.

Lisa Edmondson: Spoke on the rabbit area at the West Los Angeles animal shelter. Spoke on the accomplishments of the rabbit adoption program and how successful adoptions keep rabbits out of the shelters. Thanked volunteers and staff for their support of the program.

Teri Austin: Commented on the Department's "WoofStat" report. Believes that these statistics are responsible for the funding in the spay and neuter budget being reduced. Cannot afford any less spay and neuter because the adoption numbers are not significant enough to offset the increase in population to the shelters.

Sue Mattson: Commented on the use of data statistics. She is currently working on a no-kill data project. Feels that data numbers have to be looked at very critically before assumptions on a trend are made.

Whitney Smith: Spoke on YTD 2013-2014 intact dog licenses issued. Does not understand how 1,164 intact dog licenses have been sold but only 481 breeder licenses have been sold. Ms Smith would like to know the Board's feedback, regarding the populated Best Friend and New Hope report. Believes that no monies from the spay and neuter fund should not be going to the General Fund. Said that 10,000 animals have been killed, and we are not near no kill.

Mary Catalano: Commented on spay and neuter vouchers. Said that shelter clerks do not know what the acceptable proofs of income are; only know about the DWP Lifeline documentation. Feels that people should be screened prior to being able to adopt an animal from one of our shelters. Believes that the Department should not require a valid I.D. to obtain a free spay and neuter voucher.

Sue Taylor: Spoke about a comment made by General Manager, that Actors and Others for Animals never turns in breeders. Comment that in nine years they had turned in 4,482 illegal breeders. Would like to work with the Department to help catch illegal breeders. Would also like the Department to put the Spay California referral on the LAAS website.

Rick Browdy: Spoke on spay and neuter. The Department needs to bring back license canvassers. Revenue to fund spay and neuter is available through canvassers.

Melonie Pozaz: Spoke on the spay and neuter program. Reducing rather than increasing access to spay and neuter, mobile clinics and free vouchers is wrong.

Nori: Spoke on dogs that are personal property. Believes that it is cruel and inhumane to hold a dog in a kennel for any duration.

Rhonda: Commented that she is fearful of walking her dog in her neighborhood because she has been attacked twice. Wanted to know if there is anything available in her community to help her live peacefully in her home and enjoy her pet.

Hannah Lieberman: Concerned that the spay and neuter budget was being reduced. Do not use the Sam Simon Foundation as an excuse to not bolster the Department's own spay and neuter budget. Disagrees with the numbers published in WoofStat. Concerned that none of the Department's resources are in Spanish. Mentioned that the Department's website needs to be looked into and updated.

Jeanine Curcione: Commented that she was concerned that a dog has to be available for a weekend before it's available to New Hope partners. Believes that is not in the best interest of the dog. Feels that the dog is better off with a reputable rescue than the general public.

Public Comments: The Brown Act prohibits the Board and staff from responding to the speakers' comments. Some of the matters raised in public comment may appear on a future agenda.

2. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Approval of the Minutes for the Meetings of March 25, 2014

Commissioner Gross made a motion to approve the minutes with the appropriate changes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wolfson. The motion was approved by the Commissioners present by a 5-0 vote.

B. Approval of the Minutes for the Meetings of April 8, 2014

This vote was held over until next meeting.

3. ORAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

The General Manager Brenda Barnette commented on the following item:

- Cell phone use during meeting (Brenda Barnette)
 - Wanted to reassure that the use it is not due to lack of interest, but used for:
 - Note taking for herself
 - Communication with staff regarding public comments
- Mayor's release of the 2014-15 Proposed Budget
 - Animal Services has some concerns about the 2014-15 Proposed Budget including:
 - Funding for Animal Food and Medicine
 - Clerk Staffing (One of the shelters only has one clerk; if she sick or out the shelter cannot open)
 - Spay and Neuter Funding
- The ASPCA began operations of the spay and neuter clinic at the South Los Angeles Shelter on April 15, 2014.
 - Believes that bringing high-volume spay and neuter to South LA is going to be a lot of the solution to the problem of loose and dangerous dogs on the streets. People who have not been able to get the services they need in the past now will.

- Difference in the Breeding Permits
 - If you have an exception to the mandatory spay/neuter ordinance, such as a show dog that is registered and had multiple years of parents recorded, and is submitted to the Department, you can get an intact permit for \$100
 - If your dog is not exempt from the list of acceptable exemptions, and you still want an intact license, you can pay an additional \$235 for the breeding permit, or \$335 total, for an intact dog in the City.
 - This is why the numbers of breeding permits and the number of intact licenses are not the same.
- The bull hook ordinance will be heard in Council Friday, April 25, 2014. If passed, it will go into effect in January of 2017
- Commissioner Brent wanted an update on the Volunteer Liaison position.
 - One round of interviews was conducted by the Department and it selected three Volunteer Liaisons.
 - Interviews have been reopened to select additional Volunteer Liaisons so there will be one Volunteer Liaison at each shelter.
- The application period for the New Hope Coordinators has closed.
 - This is an internal part-time position for an ACT that does not offer pay differential. Four applications were received, and interviews will be in the next two weeks. The Department hopes to appoint three coordinators by May 1, 2014, and station them in the largest shelters and offer assistance to the smaller, neighboring shelters.
- The bunny case; there have been lots of posts on Facebook.
 - Received 63 emails from local, national and international origins.
 - Case involves 114 bunnies and two owners, one of whom is terminally ill and has not been able to maintain the bunnies as well as he would like.
 - On April 21, 2014, the Department's Animal Cruelty Taskforce made an unannounced visit and left a pre-seizure notice.
 - Department does not want to seize the bunnies and is not convinced that it can win an animal cruelty case against the owners.
 - Owners want to relinquish bunnies and the Department is working to get a negotiated release.
 - Department is taking a few bunnies at a time due to limited shelter space and to avoid euthanizing bunnies for lack of space.
 - Bunny World Foundation has taken 57 bunnies and has room to take the rest. Department is working with this rescue to take

already altered bunnies from our shelters to make room for the bunnies from this case.

- Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness (GLAAD) is a social service agency that serves the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing community in the Los Angeles area. On May 23, 2014, Brenda Barnette will be presenting a dog bite prevention workshop
- New Dog and Cat Habitat at East Valley Shelter
 - During the demolition of concrete benches General Services found that there is more rebar in the benches. This will require more work than anticipated, so they are working extended hours to stay on schedule.
- The Harbor Chicken Case:
 - Chickens were housed in a temporary enclosure on the street.
 - Case has been closed since there are no chickens on the owner's property and no loose chickens have been caught.
- Cat Situation in 90018 area
 - Received complaint on April 12, 2014 that many sick cats are being maintained on the property.
 - Officer visited on April 17, 2014 and did not find any unsanitary conditions.
 - Notice To Comply advising on the cat limit, license, and sterilization and rabies requirements.
 - Owner has not responded to NTC
- Report Back on Service Provided at the North East Valley Shelter
 - Copies have been provided to Board
- Highlights from the WoofStat Report
 - Fiscal Year To Date (FYTD) impounds are down by 8% but up by 6% for the month for kittens (attributed to "kitten season")
 - FYTD Live-Save Rate for dogs and cats is up 11%, down 2% for the month
 - Licenses are up for the FYTD; month is level
 - FYTD for in-house spay and neuter surgeries are up 60%; up 27% for the month.
 - FYTD dog and cats deaths are down 26%; through nine months, there have been 3,132 fewer shelter deaths.

- Volunteer stats are quite impressive; shows the result of offering regular volunteer orientations
- Added spay and neuter surgeries by vets under contract to the Department (SNP LA, Value Vet, ASPCA)

Public Comment

Phyllis Daugherty: Commented on Brenda's comment that the spay and neuter clinic in South LA is going to cut down on attacks in the streets. Mentioned that it will cut down on the number of animals but believes there are other reasons for the attacks. Believes there is a need for more Animal Control Officers on the streets enforcing the laws and the need for Administration Citation Enforcement program.

Sue Taylor: Commented on WoofStat. Believes that we should distance ourselves from using percentages and look simply at the number. Can WoofStat report divide the breeding permit by show dogs and breeders? Would like information on where she can obtain a copy of the Best Friends report.

Sue Mattson: Commented on WoofStat. Believes that the live-release rate is good for operations month to month, but it should not be used for overall trends. Would like to see different milestones for dogs, cats, rabbits and others.

Teri Austin: Commented on WoofStat. We keep hearing percentages, but she would like to know what is the number of animal taken by Best Friends that are shipped out.

4. Quarterly Report

A. Quarterly Report: Animal Licensing Team

Director of Field Operations Mark Salazar presented the quarterly report on the Animal Licensing Team. Have seen the numbers increased almost 33% every month under Lt. DeMascio's leadership. Team is not only bringing in great numbers in licensing, but also educating the community about City and Department resources. Animal licensing team's numbers are blended into the North Central shelter's numbers. Will be pulling Lt DeMascio, and another Animal Licensing team member from the field for the next 30 to 45 days to organize paperwork.

Lt. DeMascio provided statistics for the Animal Licensing Team, from August 2013 through December 2013. Includes 965 licenses sold with over \$30,000 in revenue collected. In January 2014, 753 licenses were sold by the team with over \$14,000 in revenue collected. February saw the sales of 969 dog licenses sold and \$20,000 collected. In March, one officer alone collected 73 licenses for \$1,345. In total there was a 42% increase from February with a total of \$1,250 for a total of \$29,000.

A Commissioner requested to see Lt. DeMascio's report in writing.

Brenda Barnette – Made correction regarding the bull hook ordinance. It will be heard in Council Wednesday, April 30, 2014 not Friday, April 25, 2014.

A Commissioner requested clarification on the new strategy of canvassing a neighborhood only once.

Mark Salazar – Canvasser will canvass a neighborhood, attempt to collect for licenses. If constituents do not have the means at the time, the canvassers will provide information on how to obtain a license. Canvassers will follow up at the properties that do not follow up with obtaining a license.

Commissioner Gross – Commented that he met with Mark Salazar and Lt. DeMascio and discussed ideas to outreach to the community, such as community groups and neighborhood councils. Believe that one of the issues is that most people do not know that they are required to license their dogs. He got the sense that DFO Salazar and Lt DeMascio are very committed to the canvassing program.

A Commissioner was concerned that West LA and West Valley are not being canvassed as compared to North Central, and also the type of licenses.

Mark Salazar – Mentioned that the stats for licenses that are collected by the canvassers are rolled up in the North Central stats.

Brenda Barnette – Mentioned that the Department would have to do a zip code study to show if there was an increase or decrease in licenses for a certain area.

Lt. DeMascio – Mentioned that the Department plans to canvass areas of West LA, West Valley and Harbor. Canvassers are currently working in areas of West LA.

A Commissioner asked when canvassers are out in the field do they carry vouchers or information about vouchers?

Lt. DeMascio – Canvassers carry information about spay and neuter, but at this time the vouchers themselves are not carried by canvassers.

Brenda Barnette – Mentioned that there are audit controls on how vouchers can be distributed.

Public Comment

Teri Austin: Commented that she offered to go speak to the officers in the field, has gone to South LA and North Central. Stated that there was not one single employee who could tell her about the different spay and neuter programs. Officers often go out without spay and neuter program materials. Would like commissioners to ask to physically see what materials are being given out and what is the written policy of what officers are supposed to provide in the field.

Sue Taylor: Spoke on the need for canvassing officers to conduct follow-up visits. Hopes that the canvassing efforts are not only for gathering money.

Sue Mattson: Spoke on targeted and service-area spay and neutering. Much of the animal intake comes from underserved and economically disadvantaged areas and you want to target these. Has seen groups say they are doing "target" spay and neutering and their impact is showing fewer shelter animals. Believes that we are not anywhere near linking spay and neutering activities and correlating these to trends in reduced shelter intake.

Mary Catalano: Requested clarification from Brenda Barnette on a \$20 unaltered license. Believes it is important to be canvassing South LA and believes that officers should be able to issue spay and neuter vouchers on site.

B. Staff Overview of the Spay and Neuter Program

Assistant General Manager John Chavez spoke on the various programs offered and referred to the spay and neuter providers table. Table shows the different contractors, the areas that they serve, their contract amounts and the amounts that they have spent last year, and the amount that they spent through March. The Department projects all the contractors will come in at \$1.5 million or \$1.6 million spent for the year. These amounts fall within the projected revenue for spay and neuter that the Department expects to receive. The Animal Sterilization Fund is made up of three sources: the \$2 and \$7 paid on every intact or sterilized dog license, donations, and the General Fund subsidy. This year's subsidy is \$710,000 and next year's is recommended at about \$545,000. The Department will meet its obligations this year; however next year may be problem.

The Department's procedures on the voucher programs that are used at the shelter were included. Comment on a previous question from Mary Catalano regarding proof of income requirements. He answered that proof of income requirements have been in place for a year and a half. Will follow up with the DFO who oversees clerical staff, and make sure that her staff is informed about the different ways of qualifying for a free voucher.

A Commissioner Yanez asked if an undocumented worker get a free voucher?

John Chavez: Responded that they would have to have a valid I.D.

Brenda Barnette: Added proof of residency with the City of Los Angeles is needed. That is the advantage of using the DWP Lifeline documentation.

Commissioner Gross asked how spay and neuter funding works as far as the contract amount.

John Chavez: Responded that any funds that are not used are not swept but remain in the balance.

A Commissioner asked if the shelter is the place to obtain a voucher.

John Chavez: Responded that the shelter is the place to go; however it can be obtained through administration if we receive an application. The Department is very cautious on how vouchers are issued. Vouchers also have a 60-day shelf life.

A commissioner asked if the Department knows the percentage of vouchers redeemed.

John Chavez: Stated that he would have to obtain and verify that number before answering.

A commissioner asked how visible are the spay and neuter services to the community.

Brenda Barnette: Noted that the website needs updating that she will follow up on. Mentioned that English and Spanish door-hangers are being considered, that these would be used by the canvassing.

A commissioner asked about providing spay and neuter fliers at dog parks.

Brenda Barnette: Mentioned that she like the idea, but would have to look into how they would be distributed and working with Recreation and Parks.

A commissioner wanted to know what some of the problems were regarding free vouchers.

Brenda Barnette: Explained that books of vouchers were, in the past, being passed out to rescues. Department audit finding included not knowing if vouchers were being used by LA residents or if rescues were using them to spay and neuter animals in their care.

John Chavez: Added that if all the vouchers were redeemed there was a possibility that the Department would not have the enough funds available.

Dov Lesel: Bottom line -- the Controller felt that the Department did not have a control mechanism over the voucher program.

A commissioner asked if an undocumented worker could obtain a DWP bill. Received an answer of yes. Mentioned that undocumented worker with a DWP bill can receive a voucher. The answer was yes if the bill has their name on it.

A commissioner asked a question on how many participating vets there are.

Brenda Barnette: The participating vets sign an agreement that they will do the spay and neuter for the voucher amount. This does not prevent the vets from up-selling. The Department encourages constituents to shop around for vets that do not up-sell.

A commissioner asked about the need to control voucher distribution, suggested that we use trusted members of the community for voucher distribution.

Brenda Barnette: The Department would first have to first consider the budget for next year and speak to the Controller to ensure compliance.

A commissioner asked if the 50 participating vets listed on our website. The answer was no and John Chavez mentioned that it would be updated.

Commissioner Gross:: Are the vets geographically spread out? John Chavez replied that they were spread out. Also mentioned, that the Department is looking to increase the number of participating vets.

Public Comment Item 4

Aimee Gilbreath: Spoke on Found Animal Foundation and wanted to clear up inaccuracies. Spay4LA targets seven zip codes in South LA and surgeries are free. For areas outside of those zip codes, they accept both \$30 and \$70 dollar vouchers. Wants to see spay and neuter funding be increased. Mentioned that not all programs are created equally so it is not fair to compare them.

Noel Jackson: Spoke on the services and background of SNP LA.

Sandy Sagastume: Spoke on Spay 4 LA services. Wanted to state that the surgeries they provide within the seven targeted zip codes are completely free. Since 2010 they have fixed 19,000.

Teri Austin: Questioned Aimee Gilbreath's comment. Believes that the information on spay and neuter is confusing on all levels. Commented that Found Animal was started by a billionaire and finds it appalling that they ask for money from the City. Is confident that if the Department went to the ASPCA to reduce its contract, ASPCA would grant money back to the Department.

Sue Mattson: Spoke on the voucher programs. Mentioned that she believes that all information regarding vouchers is provided.

Phyllis Daugherty: Spoke of the Animal Control Officer: Believes that they are not commended on the great work that they do.

Josh Liddy: Commented on the spay and neuter fund. Funds should be increased and not decreased. Believes that vouchers do not cover the full cost of spay and neuter cost.

Mary Catalano: Commented that it needs to be easy to get your animals fixed. Believe that the shelter workers are not informed and do not care.

Unknown Speaker: Commented on spay and neuter vouchers. Suggested that the Department do away with vouchers. Use the funds from the voucher program and distribute it to the mobile spay and neuter programs.

Arianna Buturovic: Commented on mobile spay and neuter. Believes that the coalition is what is important and cannot bring each other down. Comment that Spay4LA is not a billionaire's pet project.

5. Presentations

Joey Herrick: Spoke about and provided the background of Lucy Pet Foundation.

Dr. Karen Halligan: Spoke on the Lucy Pet Foundation's equipment, surgery procedures and post-op treatment. Stated that since October, they have conducted about 1,000 surgeries.

Teri Austin: Spoke on the Amanda Foundation. Conducted a two-year study and found that the most animal come from the poorest neighborhoods. Stated that there are no vets in Watts. Teri believes that this is due to lack of education, service and enforcement. Believes that the mobile clinics are your greatest assets because it takes the solution to the problem. Commented that she is horrified to think that there might be cutbacks. Commented that the Department's employees are not aware of what spay and neuter opportunities are available.

6. Report on the Animal Welfare Trust and Animal Sterilization Funds

- AGM John Chavez commented that this month the ASPCA will begin operating so we will see the impact on the ASF next month. And the major change from last month to this, in the Animal Welfare Trust Fund, was paying Engineering for the CEQA related to the proposed cat program.

Commissioner Brent asked what was the transfer related to the General Fund in the ASF.

John Chavez: The Department has to reimbursement the General Fund from the ASF for administrative costs of overseeing the sterilization programs.

A commissioner asked if Best Friend is restricted from promoting their adoptions or the City's adoptions.

Brenda Barnette: Has nothing to do with Best Friends; the money just comes from Best Friends.

A commissioner asked if funds from the AWTF can be used to for landscaping at the North Central shelter.

Brenda Barnette: The Department can look into to that but would have to speak to the City Attorney and Controller.

Commissioner Gross: Asked questions regarding CEQA funding.

Brenda Barnette: Money was raised to pay for CEQA-related costs and a proposed cat program. Funds have been expended.

Commissioner Gross: There is no more money to deal with this issue?

Brenda Barnette: That money was raised from grants and donations specifically to pay for the CEQA study. If we need to do a full-blown Environmental Impact Report, we would have to raise additional funds.

A commissioner asked how much an EIR costs.

Brenda Barnette: Estimates range from \$100,000 to \$150,000.

Board Availability for the Meeting of May 13, 2014.

ADJOURNMENT

A commissioner made a motion to adjourn the meeting. A commissioner seconded the motion and it was approved on a vote of 4-0 by all Commissioners present.