



BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES



MINUTES

TUESDAY, March 10, 2015 at 10:00 AM

Los Angeles City Hall, Room 1060
200 North Spring Street, 10th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90012

Audio MP-3 Recording is available at www.laanimalservices.com

David Zaft, President
Alana Yañez, Vice-President
Jennifer Brent
Larry Gross
Roger Wolfson

Meeting called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Board Secretary, Rita Moreno, Los Angeles Animal Services (**LAAS**). Roll call. Commissioners present were Zaft, Yañez, Brent, Gross and Wolfson. Also present: General Manager (GM) Brenda Barnette, Director of Field Operations (DFO) Jan Selder and Assistant City Attorney (ACA) Dov S. Lesel.

Commissioner Zaft opened the meeting and provided an overview of the agenda.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING APPEAL (Taken out of order after Item II.2.)

1. Dangerous Animal Case: DA 142015 EV
Respondent: Erica Sullivan
Complaining Witness: Susan Brown
West Valley Animal Care and Control: Captain Wendell Bowers

Testimony was taken from the Respondent, Erica Sullivan, and from the Complaining Witness, Susan Brown. Testimony provided by both parties indicated that the Respondent and dogs in question no longer live in the City of Los Angeles.

Commissioner Yañez made a motion to modify the order of the General Manager and to re-issue the licenses upon the following terms and conditions:

- Prior to bringing dogs Stella and Stanford back into the City of Los Angeles, the Respondent must obtain a Restricted Dog License for each of the dogs;
- Dogs are to be licensed with the County of Los Angeles and microchipped within 30 days, and proof of such must be provided to the City of Los Angeles, including a copy of the new license and the microchip information;
- The address where the dogs are kept must be provided to the City of Los Angeles; and
- The dogs cannot be brought back into the City of Los Angeles, even for a visit. If they are brought in to the City, they will be subject to seizure.

The motion was seconded by **Commissioner Brent** and was approved by a vote of 5-0.

2. Barking Dog Case: BR 142024 SL
Respondent: Deborah Lenita Walker and Rochelle Nieshae Jones
Complaining Witness: Jon Nathan Barton

South Los Angeles Animal Care and Control: Lt. William Tranzow

Testimony was taken from the Respondent, Lenita Walker and Rochelle Nieshae Jones. The Complaining Witness was not present. Testimony provided indicated that the conditions leading to excessive barking were not ongoing and that remedies existed to address the problem barking.

Commissioner Yañez made a motion to modify the order of the General Manager and to re-issue the license with the original terms and conditions, and upon the following additional terms and conditions:

- The dog, Jurnee (dog), will be spayed within 60 days of the date of the Board letter and proof of such will be provided to the Department of Animal Services;
- The dog will be spayed prior to being brought back into the City of Los Angeles, unless being brought into the City in order to be spayed; and
- That a device such as a citronella collar be used if the shock collar is not working, or other methods to keep the dog from barking excessively.

The motion was seconded by **Commissioner Brent** and was approved by a vote of 5-0.

II. REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING (Items 1 and 2 taken out of order; heard prior to Appeal Hearings)

1. **PUBLIC COMMENT SPEAKERS: Phyllis Daugherty:** Clarified that licensing is not law enforcement - the State allows the City to do licensing to guarantee an animal has rabies shots, and only reason for rabies shots is public health; not enforcing any law in regard to care and keeping of animal, or conduct of animal or person.

2. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes for February 24, 2015.

Commissioner Gross made a motion to approve the minutes and **Commissioner Yañez** seconded. The vote was 5 – 0 in favor.

3. ORAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER (Taken out of order; heard after Appeal Hearings)

GM Barnette shared the following:

- The Department met with the Safe Results Team and the Livable & Sustainable Results Team regarding our 2015-16 budget proposal. The areas for discussion were field (public safety), shelter and medical (No Kill). In addition, we are working with our CAO Analyst on the budget for 2015-16.
- We issued the GM issued a directive developed with input from our Field Director and City Attorney related to "Impounding Animals Involved in Bites And/Or Attacks." This change will help Animal Services support the Mayor's priority outcome related to a safer and more livable City for people and animals. The

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directive provided specific direction for staff on handling potentially dangerous dogs. The procedures have always been in place. We are just trying to remove the "grey". The result has been the impounding of approximately 40 dogs which points out how many possibly dangerous dogs were being left in the community. This has also prompted me to inquire about other ways to get assistance with our Hearings so we can avoid housing these dogs for any longer than necessary.

- The AGM, John Chavez, has accepted a position on the Mayor's budget team. Animal Services will be backfilling this vacancy and is working with the Personnel Department.
- Staffing is at an all time low despite our efforts to obtain permission from the Managed Hiring Committee to fill vacancies ASAP.
- We have some staff who have had reactions to the cleaning agents used to clean the items from the Fig Plaza offices. Some have missed work and some have been ordered by their doctor to limit their time in the office due to this reaction. Most of the boxes are on the 21st floor so we are trying to move the staff from the 21st floor to the 19th floor.
- The Admin Team will be moved to Grand Plaza but a date has not been set. We do not believe that the lease has been signed on that property. Some work has been done to determine the space needed and the configuration of the desks/cubicles.
- There have been two rounds of interviews for the Senior Clerk Typist. An offer has been extended but has not yet been accepted.
- Christal is taking a position at the airport to be close to her home. She is likely to continue to help us from time to time. Christal was hired from a pool of Management Analyst. We are trying to get permission to hire a Public Relations Specialist in lieu of that position. The likelihood of getting another analyst with Christal's talents and abilities is not good.
- The ordinance to microchip rabbits will be heard by the PAW Committee next Tuesday.
- A volunteer at the Harbor shelter was terminated due to a harassment complaint. The adopter stated the volunteer called her at her place of residence and threatened her. The complainant contacted the police and provided phone records to the Department.
- On March 14th and 15th, all six shelters will celebrate "St. Pawtrick's" Day with discount adoptions. The Honda Corporation and the "Helpful Honda" people will be at East Valley, West Los Angeles and North Central shelters on March 14th to be helpful and hand out toys and treats for the pets. Honda will also be attending our Moorpark mobile adoption event on March 15th.
- On March 22nd, the East Valley shelter will be at the CicLAvia event, a bicycle ride that will wind its way throughout the San Fernando Valley. This public event will have several "hubs" with vendors and activities at these hubs. The East Valley

shelter will set up a mobile pet adoption at one of these. The MPA is tentative at this point; location and times are still pending. Councilmember Krekorian is involved in the planning of the event.

- Since the last Commission meetings, both the Kaparrot and Dangerous Dog Committees have held meetings. Most of the participants in the Kaparrot meeting are lawyers as we are looking at the Ordinances.
- The Department continues to talk with constituents and attorneys from the City Attorney's Office about the best approach to handle the injunction against the City preventing us from providing spay/neuter services for neighborhood cats.
- Thanks to caring politicians and the thoughtful activists in Los Angeles who never gave up until the ordinance to outlaw the bull hook by 2017 passed and took the charge to Oakland and San Francisco where they followed suit, Ringling Brothers has announced that they will not have elephants at their circus performances after 2018. The elephants will be retired to a sanctuary in Florida. We believe that Los Angeles led the charge that won this freedom from a life in boxcars for the Ringling elephants.
- Downtown dogs went to East Valley Shelter and did a clean-up and painted out graffiti.

Public Comment

Phyllis Daugharty: Mentioned dog bite incident at a shelter where a court referral lost part of his finger that could not be reattached; employees told him to reach inside to wash the kennel and they are not supposed to be close to animals (**GM Barnette** responded that heard court referral was in area he was not supposed to be in and he reached in; will find out what happened). **Jeff Fleiss:** Mentioned that new shelter needs shelter sign on Western Street; feels Councilman Parks moved shelter to current location, which is not ideal.

4. COMMISSIONERS' ORAL REPORTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner Wolfson: Asked for agenda item to discuss a volunteer "Volunteer Coordinator" one citywide and one for each shelter to do community building among volunteers and coordinate their work; and item to issue RFPs for pet stores to bring in revenue for shelters, to have a kiosk at each shelter to provide basic necessities for new pets at the point of purchase, and a percentage would go to the shelter.

Commissioner Brent: Acknowledged the passing of Sam Simon who was a huge animal supporter in Los Angeles and whose foundation will likely continue to do his great work; mentioned meeting with Cesa Cohen who has remarkable ideas for marketing the department.

Commissioner Zaft: Informed that he is scheduling a presentation for a meeting in May by the folks who do the intervention programs to discuss how it's working, what they are seeing and how they're making a difference; would like to coordinate with staff on information available on reasons for owner surrender.

Commissioner Yañez: Requested status update on hiring of Canvassers and idea of one-stop-shop where people can get license and voucher application at same time.

Commissioner Gross: Update regarding concern for surrender of pets because landlords do not allow them; provided information on tenants' rights clinic; mentioned meeting with HCID GM and Director of Rent Stabilization section to schedule workshops at the shelters, in November, on the rent control law geared towards pets and housing.

Public Comment

Jeff Fleiss: Visited Mission Hills shelter and it does not have any LAAS identifying signage; department should embrace intervention program which will eventually be nationwide; suggested meeting with/observing Amanda Casarez, founder of Watts Project, who is a full time intervention counselor.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Draft Los Angeles Animal Services Expression of Esteem (LAASEE) and Certificates of Appreciation (CAPs) Standard Operating Procedure

GM Barnette provided an overview of the draft Standard Operating Procedure for LAASEE and CAPs.

Commissioner Zaft: Thanked GM Barnette and staff, ACA Lesel and Commissioner Wolfson for working on the report. **Commissioner Wolfson:** Clarified that his intent was to include City Counsel and not City Council in the vetting process. **Commissioner Zaft:** Recommended starting in the second quarter. **Commissioner Wolfson:** Recommended starting with community nominees.

Public Comment

Phyllis Daugherty: Suggested private notifications to selected nominees first before giving out award because some may not want a public recognition as it can create problems. **Jeff Fleiss:** Recommended Sam Simon Foundation and asked for a moment of silence.

Commissioner Zaft: Commented that the awards should not be used to reward favorites, but to go beyond own networks and consider those who have contributed. **Commissioner Gross:** Stated that the real success in saving animals' lives comes from the work done as a community and encouraged choosing a group over an individual. **GM Barnette:** Mentioned Woofstat meetings and the opportunity to recognize Officers, kennel workers, ACTs at a shelter who have worked at the highest standards.

6. BOARD REPORTS

- A. Recommendations on Amending Carroll Petrie Foundation Dog Rescue Project Funds – 6 Month Update

DFO Selder provided an overview of the board report on the Carroll Petrie Foundation Dog Rescue Project Fund and provided recommendations for use of

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uncommitted funds.

Commissioner Zaft: Asked if there were fund remaining in the existing grant.
DFO Selder: Responded that a full report is needed, but understands funds are exhausted. **GM Barnette:** Mentioned a meeting with the ASPCA and County discussing needs for coming year, and discussed need to emphasize cat adoptions. **Commissioner Brent:** Mentioned discussion with Matt Bershadker of ASPCA and concern that money given to City of Los Angeles has not had effect on number of rescues pulled; number of New Hope City and County pulls have decreased since the ASPCA has been subsidizing; money from ASPCA and others may come to an end. **GM Barnette:** Stated the need to notify New Hope partners that grant funds are running out. **DFO Selder:** Responded that New Hope partners can submit until April 1 if they get a pitbull adopted, but will let them know that beginning April 1 they will need to start paying pull fees again once the funds run out; red and blue alert animals will still be pulled at no fee by New Hope partners. **GM Barnette:** Stated that if the Commission approves the recommendation, ACA Lesel will determine if the change in how the funds are spent will need to go to the PAW Committee. **ACA Lesel:** Responded that if the Council approved the funds for a particular use, it would need to go back for approval. **Commissioner Zaft:** Indicated that if the recommendation is approved, the money will not last very long so New Hope partners need to be informed.

Public Comment
None

Commissioner Gross made a motion to approve the staff recommendations and **Commissioner Yañez** seconded. The vote was 5 – 0 in favor.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Public Comment

Phyllis Daugharty: Asked if the Commission could request that the City Council honor Sam Simon (**Commissioner Wolfson** responded that he would reach out to Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell).

Commissioner Brent made a motion to adjourn the meeting in honor of Sam Simon, and **Commissioner Wolfson** seconded. Motion carried 5 - 0.

Meeting ended at 12:08 p.m.