

MEETING SUMMARY



BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Tuesday, January 11, 2011
10:00 AM



**Los Angeles City Hall
200 North Spring Street
Room 1060
Los Angeles, California 90012**

Melanie Ramsayer, President
Ruthanne Secunda, Vice-President
Tariq Khero
Terri Macellaro
Kathleen Riordan

mp3 Minutes are available at www.laanimalservices.com

Commissioners Ramsayer, Macellaro, and Khero were in attendance. Commissioner Secunda and Riordan were absent.

Meeting started at 10:24 AM.

1. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Approval of Commission Meeting Dates for 2011

Commissioner Ramsayer made a motion to approve the Commission meeting dates for 2011. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Khero. The motion was approved on a 3-0 vote

B. Oral Report by the Commissioners on Meetings and Events Attended

Commissioner Ramsayer attended South Los Angeles and Harbor volunteer holiday party.

Commissioner Macellaro visited Harbor, North Central, and South LA on the day of the Found Animals Foundation multi-shelter adoption event.

2. GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR BOARD ACTION

Commissioner Riordan arrived.

A. Amendment to New Hope Rescue Partner Agreement on Secondary Releases

General Manager Barnette commented on a question that some of the Department's New Hope Partners were sending animals to Out-of-State shelters that did not have an adoption guarantee or is not no-kill. The GM indicated that she is unaware of what happened in the past, that there in fact may have been

problems in this regard at least once in Canada and safeguards have been put in place now. Commissioner Ramsayer commented that the purpose of the program was to find animals' homes. The General Manager suggested that the guidelines be amended to read "individuals or organizations" rather than just "rescue". Commissioner Riordan said that prior to being called New Hope, the program was called the Participant Shelter Program which was the premise of a code change in 2004/05. Part of the Participant Shelter Program contract was a section that precluded killing animals unless they were suffering and they were spayed or neutered. Commissioner Khero asked about potential liability. Commissioner Riordan speculated that the City's liability is probably the same as existing New Hope adoptions, but defers to the City Attorney.

Public Comment:

Phyllis Daugherty: She believes this is so broad. Asked how we verify some of the conditions on shelters that may be as far away as Canada. Every organization who participates in the New Hope Program should indicate what happens to the animals.

Commissioner Ramsayer made a motion to approve the General Manager's recommendation as stated. Commissioner Macellaro seconded the motion and the motion passed 4-0.

3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Coyote Issues (Continued from the Meeting of October 12, 2010)

Captain Wendell Bowers and Officer Greg Randall, the Department's wildlife experts gave a report regarding the coyote issue. Captain Bowers and Officer Randall reported on the Department's efforts to educate the public on co-existing with wildlife and especially coyotes. Coyote sightings occur throughout all neighborhoods of the City. Officer Randall presented statistical information on the number of coyote sightings and incidents. The number of coyotes within the City ranges from 4,000 to 7,000. No accurate count has ever been done. Killing the coyotes does not solve the problem. Residential management of their homes is a better way to control the problem. The best way to control the problem is through public education. This includes public meetings, including schools, brochures and videos that are available for distribution.

B. Pet Surrender Fees

The General Manager said that there was a \$25 fee for owner surrender of animals. The shelters work with pet owners who can not afford the fee. AGM Barth indicated the number of animals surrendered dropped when the fee was increased. The number of animals surrendered in 2008 was 15,750 and decreased to 13,770 in 2009 and 11,600 in 2010. The surrender fees have increased during the same period. In 2008 the surrender fees were \$50,000. By 2010 the fees collected increased to \$199,550. Commissioner Riordan said

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that sometimes people turn their animals as strays. Commissioner Ramsayer likes the idea that there is a financial penalty for persons turning in their animals. She believes that it is your pet and you should take care of it or find a new home for it. Commissioner Macellaro questioned whether the Department was questioning pet owners on why they were turning in their animals and even try to get some information on the animal's personality. Commissioner Riordan stated that some people turn their animals in as strays to avoid fees and sometimes due to guilt. Fees should remain and waivers should be at the discretion of staff.

C. Discussion of Animal Control Officer Uniforms

Director of Field Operation (DFO), Mark Salazar presented a brief report on the differences between the classes of uniforms. Captain Bowers and Officer Greg Randall modeled the Class A, formal uniform, and the Class C uniform that is worn around the Shelter. It was explained that some persons react with fear when they see an officer in a Class A uniform with a badge. Conversely, some persons are too relaxed when faced with an officer in a Class C uniform. The question came up regarding this subject. It was decided at some point that the Class C uniform would be phased out and officers required to wear Class B uniforms. DFO Salazar indicated that the polo type Class C uniforms have their places in the field and shelter. It was the consensus of the Commission that each of the classes of uniforms be retained.

4. ORAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

- Budgeting: Department has about a \$400,000 gap to close.
- Mayor's Office has approved our goals.
- GM plans to hold Leadership Team Meetings.
- Department Housecleaning;
 - A. Review and update Donor Letters;
 - B. Draft Marketing Calendar; and
 - C. Complete survey for New Hope partners;
- Volunteer Ambassadors working on specific projects;
 - A. Beds;
 - B. Proof Readers;
 - C. Translators;
 - D. Humane Education;
 - E. Phone Resource Center; and
 - F. Activity levels on shelter animals.
- Western Veterinary students and their professor came for a surgery day with Dr. Purpas.
- On January 15 and 16 there is a Best Friends Adoption Event scheduled at Northeast Valley.
- On February 19th, Best Friends is sponsoring a cat only award at the Palomar Hotel Ballroom in West L.A.
- Created a 501(C)(3) called Friends of LAAS with a goal to provide extras for Department animals.

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5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Jill Winter: A New Hope Partner and owns an animal boarding shelter in West L.A. Commented on the requirement that requires boarding shelters to maintain dog licenses. This creates a problem whereby customers will go to other shelters outside the City, rather than comply. Asked that this requirement be revisited and possibly rescinded. Recommended that boarding kennels be held to the same standards as vets and only maintain records of rabies certificates.

Phyllis Daugherty: Commented on the requirement that apartment owners take animals. Apartment owners are currently overregulated. It is difficult to evict tenants whose pets misbehave. Section 8 apartments are not required to accept pets.

Michelle Kelly Moskowitz: Spoke on behalf of the rabbit volunteers. Organization focuses on getting rabbit volunteers at shelters. Want to raise Commissions' awareness of rabbits at the shelters. Rabbits are a prey animal and getting them out the door is not necessarily the best thing. Rabbit volunteers educate the public on the proper care of the animals.

Commissioner Khoro left the meeting.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner Riordan wants the Commission to review, for possible vote, dog boarding permit requirements.

Commissioner Ramsayer wants a report on how the shelters are holding up due to the rain.

Commissioner Macellaro wants a full discussion on rabbits.

7. BRIEFING AND CLOSED SESSION

Updates on the Status of Preliminary Research for Study of Trap-Neuter-Return Program. Discussion and possible direction to staff.

The Board of Animal Services Commissioners convened into closed session with the City Attorney as its legal counsel pursuant to Government Code sections 54956.9(a) and 54856.9 (b)(1) to discuss litigation involving Trap-Neuter-Return in case No. BS115483, The Urban Wildlands Group, Endangered Habitats League, Los Angeles Audubon Society, et al vs. City of Los Angeles, et al.

At the end of the closed session the Commission returned to open session. The record reflects that no action was taken during the closed session.

8. MEETING ADJOURNED

Next Commission meeting is scheduled for 10:00 A.M., January 25, 2011, Los Angeles City Hall, Room 1060, 200 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, California 90012.

Commissioner Ramsayer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Macellaro seconded the motion and the motion passed 3-0.

The meeting ended at 1:45 PM.