



REVISED

**BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES
Monday February 23, 2008
10:00 A.M.
LOS ANGELES CITY HALL
200 N. Spring St.
Room 1060
Los Angeles, CA 90012**

Vacant, President
Kathleen Riordan, Vice-President
Tariq Khero
Irene Ponce
Archie J. Quincey, Jr.

Sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or other auxiliary aids and/or services may be provided upon request. To ensure availability, you are advised to make your request at least 72 hours prior to the meeting you wish to attend. For information please call (213) 482-9501.

Si require servicios de traduccion, favor de notificar la oficina con 24 horas por anticipado.

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.

COMMISSION MEETING

1. ORAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

2. COMMISSION BUSINESS

- A. Approval of the Commission Meeting Minutes for January 26 and February 9, 2009
- B. Oral Report by the Commission on Meetings and Events attended.

3. GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR BOARD ACTION

- A) Amendments to Los Angeles Municipal Code Specific to Dog Licensing
And Rabies Vaccination Regulations

That the Board request that the City Council direct the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance amending the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 53.00 et. seq. The Municipal Code sections that may be considered include:

<i>RELEASING UNNECESSARY RESTRICTIONS IN THE LAMC, ADDING PROTECTIONS</i>	
LAMC Section	Summary of Changes
53.15	The owner of a dog (whether or not four months of age) must license the dog.
53.15	Streamline the language to make clear that application, fees, and proof of rabies vaccination are required, and remove specific references to one-year or two-year licenses.
53.15	Update language and expressly allow for both rabies vaccination and spay/neuter to be proved through satisfactory evidence, and not only by an express type of written certificate.
53.15.2(c)(4)(G), 53.15.2(e)(1)	Expand and emphasize the responsibility of breeders, commercial establishments, and others to report information to the Department on dogs sold for licensing follow-up.

<i>CONSOLIDATING AND SIMPLIFYING FEE AND TAX PROVISIONS</i>	
LAMC Section	Summary of Changes
53.15	Authorize a fee setting process through the Board with approval of the Mayor and Council the same as the new Fee Ordinance will authorize for other types of fees and charges in the Department. The fee setting process could include establishing waivers for special circumstances or timeframes, for example, to conduct a licensing drive featuring an amnesty program.
53.15 (new)	Add a provision authorizing charge of late fees to motivate compliance with payment of licenses due.
53.15 (new)	Add a provision expressly exempting from any license tax or any license payment the New Hope partners or any enterprises partnering with the Department to adopt dogs. Other provisions expressly require that the new owner information must be provided to the Department for follow up.
53.15.2(c)(4)(G), 53.15.2(e)(1), 53.15.4	Expand the responsibility of veterinarians and others to distribute license information or applications to allow the Department to authorize veterinarians and commercial entities to take applications and sell licenses, remitting fees with the information to the Department, in exchange for a service fee to be set by the Board and approved by the Mayor and Council.
53.15.4	Provision inserted and updated to allow a contractor to sell licenses but then be paid a fee after remitting license revenue collected.

TECHNICAL CHANGES	
LAMC Sections	Summary of Changes
53.00, 53.11(f), 53.11(l), 53.13, 53.15, 53.15.3, 53.26	Revise language to indicate that dog licensing where mentioned, such as when a dog is adopted, shall be in conformance with provisions in 53.15 and other revised sections as appropriate, rather than giving specific terms, fees, or rules within various sections that may then turn into conflicts. Remove specific references to one-year licenses.
53.15	Streamline and unify language so that all waivers provided to low income seniors and disabled persons, whether for a dog license, spay/neuter, or other reduced fees, use the low income definitions set forth by HUD.
53.15.2(b)	Modify language so that licenses can be applied for (and fees paid) pending a delayed spay/neuter surgery or pending receipt of proof of exemption from spay/neuter, but not be valid until such proof of surgery or exemption is received, so that the owner of a dog being adopted or redeemed, for example, can purchase the unaltered license even though there may be a delay in getting surgery for the dog.
53.16, 53.24, 53.25, 53.27, 53.28, 53.54, 53.57	Old provisions to be deleted or merged with existing licensing and vaccination sections.
53.53	Allows that proof of rabies vaccination (certificate) may be another form of documentation other than being restricted to a printed triplicate form, such as electronic documents or computer-generated certifications (as the Department currently provides).

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A) Oral Report by the City Attorney in regard to the status of Dangerous Dog Case DR 05329 NC ("Maeve"), and;

CLOSED SESSION: The Board of Animal Services Commissioners will meet in closed session with the City Attorney as its legal counsel pursuant to Government Code section 54956.9(a) to discuss pending litigation in Jeffrey Peter De La Rosa v. Animal Control Board of the City of Los Angeles, et al.; LASC case # BS104836; Ct of App. Case # B202071.

- B) Information Report from the Volunteer Coordinator

Discussion of an Assessment of the Volunteer Program, the Erica Meadows Report and the plans for the future.

5. **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.)
6. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Requests from Commissioners for future Agenda Items.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Next Commission Meeting is scheduled for 10:00 A.M., March 9, 2009, Los Angeles City Hall, Room 1060, 200 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, California 90012

UAGENDASU - The Board of Animal Services Commissioners (Board) meets regularly every second (2P^{ndP}) and fourth (4P^{thP}) Monday of each month at 10:00 A.M. Regular Meetings are held at City Hall, 200 North Spring Street, Room 1060, in Los Angeles, CA 90012. The agendas for Board meetings contain a brief general description of those items to be considered at the meetings. Board Agendas are available at the Department of Animal Services (Department), Administrative Division, 221 North Figueroa Street, 5P^{thP} Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Board Agendas may also be viewed on the 2P^{ndP} floor Public Bulletin Board in City Hall East, 200 North Main Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Internet users may also access copies of present and prior agenda items, copies of the Board Calendar, as well as electronic copies of approved minutes on the Department's World Wide Web Home Page site at HTU<http://www.laanimalservices.com/CommissionAgendas.htm>UTH

Three (3) members of the Board constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The Board may consider an item not listed on the Board Agenda only if it is determined by a two-thirds (2/3) vote that the need for action arose after the posting of an Agenda. Some items on the Agenda may be approved without any discussion.

The Board Secretary will announce the items to be considered by the Board. The Board will hear the presentation on the topic and gather additional information from Department Staff. Once presentations have finished, the Board President will ask if any Board Member or member of the public wishes to speak on one or more of these items. Each speaker called before the Commission will have one (1) minute to express their comments and concerns on matters placed on the agenda.

UPUBLIC INPUT AT BOARD MEETINGSU – Public Participation on Agenda Items. Members of the public will have an opportunity to address the Board on agenda items after the item is called and before the Board takes action on the item, unless the opportunity for public participation on the item was previously provided to all interested members of the public at a public meeting of a Committee of the Board and the item has not substantially changed since the Committee heard the item. When speaking to an agenda item other than during Public Comment (see Public Comment below), the speaker shall limit his or her comments to the specific item under consideration. California Government Code Section 54954.3.

Public Comment. The Board will provide an opportunity for public comment at every regular meeting of the Board. Members of the public may address the Board on any items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board as part of Public Comment.

Speaker Cards. Members of the public wishing to speak are to fill out one speaker card for each agenda item on which they wish to speak and present it to the Board secretary before the item is called.

Time Limit for Speakers. Speakers addressing the Board will be limited to one (1) minute of speaking time for each agenda item except in public comment which is limited to three (3) minutes. The Chairperson, with the approval of a majority of the Board, may for good cause extend any speaker's time by increments of up to one (1) minute. Total speaker time on any agenda item will be limited to ten (10) minutes per item and fifteen (15) minutes for Public Comment, unless extended as above.

Brown Act. These rules shall be interpreted in a manner that is consistent with the Ralph M. Brown Act, California Government Code Section § 54950 et seq.

USTANDARDS OF CONDUCT. Speakers are expected to behave in an orderly manner and to refrain from personal attacks or use of profanity or language that may incite violence.

All persons present at Board meetings are expected to behave in an orderly manner and to refrain from disrupting the meeting, interfering with the rights of others to address the Board and/or interfering with the conduct of business by the Board.

In the event that any speaker does not comply with the foregoing requirements, or if a speaker does not address the specific item under consideration, the speaker may be ruled out of order, their speaking time forfeited and the Chairperson may call upon the next speaker.

The Board, by majority vote, may order the removal from the meeting of any speaker or audience member continuing to behave in a disruptive manner after being warned by the Chairperson regarding their behavior. Section 403 of the California Penal Code states as follows: "Every person who, without authority of law, willfully disturbs or breaks up any assembly or meeting that is not unlawful in its character, other than an assembly or meeting referred to in Section 302 of the Penal Code or Section 18340 of the Elections Code, is guilty of a misdemeanor".

VOTING AND DISPOSITION OF ITEMS – Most items require a majority vote of the entire membership of the Board (3 members). When debate on an item is completed, the Board President will instruct the Secretary to "call the roll". Every member present must vote for or against each item; abstentions are not permitted unless there is a Conflict of Interest for which the Board member is obliged to abstain from voting. The Secretary will announce the votes on each item. Any member of the Board may move to "reconsider" any vote on any item on the agenda, except to adjourn, suspend the Rules, or where an intervening event has deprived the Board of jurisdiction, providing that said member originally voted on the prevailing side of the item. The motion to "reconsider" shall only be in order once during the meeting, and once during the next regular meeting. The member requesting reconsideration shall identify for all members present the Agenda number and subject matter previously voted upon. A motion to reconsider is not debatable and shall require an affirmative vote of three members of the Board.

When the Board has failed by sufficient votes to approve or reject an item, and has not lost jurisdiction over the matter, or has not caused it to be continued beyond the next regular meeting, the issue is again placed on the next agenda for the following meeting for the purpose of allowing the Board to again vote on the matter.



APPEAL AGENDA
(Continued from February 9, 2009)

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CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Monday, February 23, 2009 at 10:00 A.M.

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ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL HEARING 10:00 A.M.

1. Barking Dog Revocation - BR 083105 WV

Appellant: Philip Minton
Complaining Witness: Najib Saadeh
Field Operations Supervisor, West Valley Shelter, Val Angeles
Hearing Coordinator, Department of Animal Services, Ross Pool, Management Analyst

II

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CITY OF LOS ANGELES
L A ANIMAL SERVICES



Date: February 23, 2009

To: Board of Animal Services Commissioners

From: Edward A. Boks, General Manager

Subject: Department Volunteer Program

In October of 2008, the Department was fortunately joined by Jaren Sorkow as our Volunteer Manager, filling a position that had been vacant since May of 2007. Mr. Sorkow has extensive experience with large volunteer programs such as at Los Angeles Animal Services, and he immediately immersed himself in both day-to-day operations with volunteers and in analyzing the overall program for improvement and expansion. Among the steps he took were to read and consider the recommendations in the report on volunteer activities prepared by consultant Erica Meadows in early 2007. Now that he has completed his first "100 Days," I am pleased to have him present his assessment of the Department's volunteer program, of the great potential for the program's future, and of the Meadow's report.

Assessment of the Current Program

LAAS has a large, active volunteer base. Currently there are approximately 1000 active volunteers for LAAS. Active refers to volunteers who have completed orientation, and have volunteered at least six hours for the year. The number of volunteers varies among animal care centers, and in the ensuing months we will be focusing on retention and development for some animal care centers (East Valley, West Los Angeles, West Valley) and recruiting and diversity for others (South Los Angeles, North Central, Harbor). Overwhelmingly, volunteers operate on the weekends, and come out for events, which occur on a weekly basis. (Large events occur at least once every 6 weeks; these events often involve 30-40 volunteers who average at least 5 hours for the day, giving us 200 hours of volunteer hours for one event.)

LAAS needs to improve its communication with volunteers. Once volunteers enter LAAS, I have found that many do not feel that their concerns are being addressed, nor their suggestions being heard, which in large part is why volunteers go directly to administration for answers, the result of which produces tension between animal care center staff and upper management. Given that the Volunteer Manager position was open for two years, it is understandable that volunteers have either given up on communicating or do not follow the proper chain of command with regards to their concerns. From henceforth, if a volunteer needs to communicate or has an issue with regards to animal care center operations, he/she should contact their Liaison and/or the Volunteer Manager, who will ultimately find the appropriate staff person to address the concern. Furthermore, once the volunteer meetings are fully functional, communication

between staff and volunteers should improve. Finally, Volunteer Liaisons have been directed to concentrate on one-on-one development with their volunteers, which should give the volunteers the attention and supervision that they need.

Volunteer Orientations need to be streamlined and structured more effectively.

Each Liaison will perform two orientations a month, in addition to two dog-walking classes a month. Currently orientations cover a lot of ground, some of which should be covered during Liaison one-on-ones. I have instructed the Liaisons to invite Registered Veterinary Technicians and Animal Care Technicians to the orientations, as well as other volunteers, and for them to focus on giving a tour of the animal care center, rather than focusing too much on what one cannot do as a volunteer, which should be addressed on a more individual basis. There are some major do's and don'ts that need to be brought up in the orientation; however, one of the reasons our retention rates are low after an orientation is due to the stress of the negative, while we should be focusing on the positive work one can do for the animals. Liaisons have improved their orientations, and we have designed a power point presentation, which should establish an immediate level of professionalism when they first meet volunteers.

The Volunteer Program is the de facto public relations for the Department. While the General Manager, Assistant General Managers, Center Managers, officers, animal care technician supervisors, and animal care technicians are in constant contact with the public, it is clear that with over 1000 volunteers, and access to many more, volunteers are the best voice for the Department. The goal for the Volunteer Program is to effectively work with the volunteers, but to also target specific populations, schools, faith based groups, etc, in efforts to diversify our volunteer pool, and as importantly, let the general public know about LAAS. During the past three months, the Volunteer Program has attended classrooms, street fairs, and events put on by City Council, and will continue to do so, with a particular focus on spay/neuter information and adoption events.

Accomplishments During The Past 100 Days

- Established two new MPA sites, both of which are collaborations (Starbucks and Best Friends).
- Created a guideline for Liaisons to conduct their one-on-ones.
- After a year and a half hiatus, established two new MPA sites at the Harbor shelter.
- Created a detailed description of Volunteer Liaison duties and how they fit into overall shelter operations.
- Served as a panel member for the Human Workshop on Volunteers, and followed through on many of the volunteer suggestions.
- Worked with Chief Veterinarian to instruct Registered Veterinary Technicians to attend volunteer orientations to discuss overall animal health.
- Streamlined orientation, capping the amount of volunteers per orientation at 15, while focusing on one-on-one management.
- Established a dog training/walking class at Harbor.
- Initiated conversations with Found Animals Foundation about collaboration for a volunteer training expo.

- Collaborated with numerous community volunteers on marketing strategies for the Department.
- Worked on establishing a key policy at each shelter.
- Brokered disagreements between staff and volunteers, documenting all.
- Conducted monthly training for Volunteer Liaisons, which focus on upcoming events and volunteer issues, but are also a forum for professional development.
- Established protocol for volunteers who are looking to participate in one-time group volunteer opportunities.
- Started conversations with Recreation and Parks about collaborating with students in their programs.
- Held volunteer meeting at each shelter, where volunteers were able to address their concerns.
- Held a holiday appreciation event at every animal care center.
- Established regular orientations and trainings at each shelter.
- Monitoring efforts by Volunteer Liaisons clearing all their pending volunteer applications.
- Worked with volunteers to create a power point presentation for volunteer orientations.
- Increased in-kind donations for LAAS.

Future Goals

1. ***Increase the outputs of Mobile Pet Adoptions (MPAs).*** We do not have the staff resources to do several MPAs a week. However, we need to audit our current MPAs and spend considerable time in looking at good MPA sites. It is proven that a good site results in a large amount of animals getting adopted; thus maximizing our MPA's is a priority.
2. ***Increase the communication channels between volunteers and staff,*** therefore decreasing staff/volunteer conflict. Achieved through: structured monthly group meetings, and regular e-mail's from the Volunteer Manager regarding shelter operations.
3. ***Increase public awareness of animal care centers.*** Achieved through: Strategizing with shelter staff and volunteers to decide which groups we need to contact. Volunteer Liaisons or the Volunteer Manager should go to at least one volunteer fair/event or public informational a month. Due to the shelter duties of each Liaison, many times the public outreach person will be the Volunteer Manager.
4. ***Develop a system of tracking public who come in the shelter,*** and using volunteers for follow-up adoption advice. Achieved through: Though this goal is not specifically related to the Volunteer Program, volunteers are instrumental in working with the public. We are developing a system of tracing who comes in the shelter and, with the permission of the individual, we will begin having volunteers do follow-up via e-mail/phone regarding available animals. Furthermore, once an animal is adopted, we will ask if the adopter will permit a LAAS volunteer to follow up, or we may give the adopter a screened, trained volunteer to call if she/he encounters problems with the adopted animal.

5. **Hold one large Volunteer Appreciation Event.** Achieved through: Working with volunteers and community on fundraising, planning and implementation of the event. Target date: To Be Determined.
6. **Increase Department relationships with corporations via volunteering.** Achieved through: Contacting the community service division of large corporations and encouraging their groups to participate in animal care center events. Large one-time events are particular draws for large volunteer groups. The larger, major corporations are excellent promotional vehicles for LAAS, at no cost to the Department.
7. **Maintain relationships with private rescues and other agencies** working on animal welfare. Achieved through: MPA collaborations; quarterly large events; and potential training events.

Review of Erica Meadow's Consultant Report

Erica Meadow's report focused on three areas:

The Internal Structure of the Volunteer Program. Many of Meadow's suggestions with regards to the internal structure of the volunteer program have come to fruition. This includes:

- Volunteer Liaison at each Shelter: These positions were in their infant stage when the consultant was conducting her research, and her assessment that the Liaison position will be crucial to the successful management of volunteers is correct. Currently, there is one Liaison at each animal care center. The Liaisons' past training and experience as ACTs is invaluable, particularly when they need to train volunteers in handling animals. However, as they were not trained as volunteer supervisors or managers, the Volunteer Manager needs to spend significant time with each Liaison on training and guidance with regards to volunteer management. The need for this training is mentioned throughout the consultant report, about which the Volunteer Manager concurs.
- Restructuring of volunteer orientation, including redesigning volunteer manual, liability forms, and application. Per Meadows' input, all Liaisons follow the same procedure and guidelines with regards to their volunteer orientation. While the volunteer manual includes valuable information, some of the volunteer opportunities cannot currently come into fruition or only can occur at one animal care center (i.e. Bold Brigade, Puppy Partier). The volunteer manual will be shortened, with supplemental material given to volunteers who are interested in specific tasks. The volunteer manual should cover basics of the Volunteer Program in the Department, but should not contain too much information, as many volunteers will be intimidated with a manual that is in excess of 30 pages.
- Volunteer Levels: Meadows suggested having various volunteer levels as a method of increasing volunteer production, and for purposes of volunteer retention. Though instituting a ladder of volunteer achievement is desirable, given the unique nature of each animal care center (it's intake and customer base), we are restructuring the volunteer levels. If volunteers want to work in a certain area of shelter operations, they must let their Liaison know. He/she will in turn speak to the appropriate supervisor, and/or guide the volunteer towards the necessary training. Overwhelmingly, volunteers' biggest request is access to kennel keys: volunteers

who have put in some set amount of hours should have the ability to borrow the kennel key, per the Liaisons approval. For volunteers who wish to work in other areas: dog-walking; bathing; and/or MPA's, he/she will be directed to the appropriate training. The Volunteer Program needs to move to individual, one-on-one contact with each volunteer, so that he/she feels both appreciated and is given the necessary tools to succeed.

- Recruitment: Meadows report noted that attracting volunteers is not a problem for LAAS, which appears to be the case. Many volunteer organizations concentrate solely on recruiting, but for the Department retention and training need to be addressed. The Department can benefit from efforts to diversify its volunteer base, to more accurately reflect the City and the neighborhoods surrounding the animal care centers. This process will be done via the Liaisons' outreach to specific schools or faith-based organizations, and strategizing with our current volunteers, as word of mouth is the best and most efficient recruiting tool for any organization. With regards to retention, group meetings, consistent training opportunities, and, most importantly, the Liaisons' focus on individual volunteers, will serve to improve our retention rates.
- The relation of the Volunteer Program to other aspects of LAAS. Meadows stressed the importance of the Volunteer Program as it relates to other programs in the Department. Given that volunteers interact with all aspects of animal care center operations, it is imperative that staff and supervisors keep the Liaisons, and ultimately the Volunteer Manager, abreast of any and all changes. When there are any changes in animal care center or Department operations, policies, or procedures, many volunteers or volunteer staff or not notified until after the fact. The Volunteer Program should be notified in advance of changes, as the Program is the main go-between for volunteers and the Department. Once the Volunteer Program is notified of the changes, it is the Volunteer Manager and Liaisons' duty to inform the volunteers. This information will be communicated via the monthly group meetings, a monthly message from the Volunteer Manager, and through the newsletter (which may be through an Internet Bulletin Board). Furthermore, volunteers will receive information through the continued focused one-on-one management.

LAAS Staff and Volunteer Relations. Meadows' report included evaluations from both volunteers and staff regarding the volunteer program. While there was some positive feedback, there are several areas where staff and volunteers disagree; hence the Volunteer Program needs to focus on creating the necessary framework for productive communication. The most effective way to create communication is for each animal care center to adopt monthly group meetings, or committees; these meetings must include a supervisor or respected staff member who is not associated with the Volunteer Program.

Volunteer Professional Development. Meadows recommended several new programs and training ideas for volunteers. While such programs can prove beneficial for volunteers and our animals, given the unique dynamics at each shelter, and the additional on-going training necessary for these programs, it is recommended that we do not promote these opportunities at this time. Our Volunteer Manager's experience suggests that the most pressing needs and concerns of volunteers are: dog walking classes; dog grooming; and animal specific training (i.e. how to work with rabbits, cats). Each Center will have two dog walking classes a month, and at least one additional

class. This class can include dog grooming, cat cuddling, or be breed specific. However, the Department should not promote opportunities that are not applicable to every Center, as this causes confusion and dissension amongst volunteers at different shelters.

To further train our volunteers, at least twice a year we may attempt to hold Department-wide trainings for volunteers. These trainings will be all day/weekend affairs, where volunteers can attend training workshops and/or guest speaker seminars. Initially, our training should only focus on Department volunteers; however, given the number of private rescues and other 501c3 organizations we work with, the Volunteer Program will collaborate with other organization for training events.

**BOARD OF
ANIMAL SERVICES
COMMISSIONERS**

PRESIDENT

KATHLEEN RIORDAN
VICE PRESIDENT

TARIQ A. KHERO

IRENE G. PONCE

ARCHIE J. QUINCEY JR.

City of Los Angeles
CALIFORNIA



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF
ANIMAL SERVICES
221 North Figueroa Street
5th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(888) 452-7381
FAX (213) 482-9511

EDWARD A. BOKS
General Manager

Report to the Board of Animal Services Commissioners

Edward A. Boks, General Manager

COMMISSION MEETING DATE: February 23, 2009 **PREPARED BY:** Linda Barth

REPORT DATE: February 17, 2009

TITLE: Assistant General
Manager

SUBJECT: Amendments to Los Angeles Municipal Code Specific to Dog Licensing
and Rabies Vaccination Regulations

BOARD ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the Board:

1. Request that the City Council direct the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance amending the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 53.00 et. seq. to permit dog licenses to be issued for up to three years or other terms in conformance with State Law, to permit issuance of puppy licenses, to establish that license validity, rather than issuance, requires rabies vaccination and sterilization unless certain exemptions apply, and related changes as further described below;
2. Request that the ordinance delete the setting of specific fees and charges in sections of LAMC 53.00. et. seq., as described below; and add a process to review fees for licensing, based on a cost recovery model, and submit recommendations to the Mayor and Council for approval;
3. Request that the City Attorney include whatever minor modifications, additions, or deletions are necessary to achieve the goals of the recommendations;
4. Note and file the "Study of the Dog Licensing Program of the Department of Animal Services" dated October 2008; and,

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5. Direct Staff to transmit this request to the Mayor and Council for consideration and action.
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SUMMARY:

Report Highlights

- The “Study of the Dog Licensing Program” was completed in October, concurrently with an examination of potential improvements to the program considered in a Joint Labor- Management Task Force, and input from others in the community.
- Chronic perceptions of ineffectiveness in the Licensing Program were not borne out in the course of these efforts, but changes that could improve the Program were clearly revealed.
- Implementation of any ideas to make the licensing program more business-like and customer friendly is predicated on an essential need to replace the licensing and rabies vaccination sections of the LAMC
- Wholesale updating of the LAMC, rather than tinkering with minor revisions, offers the opportunity to release the licensing process from explicit twenty- and thirty-year old rules that were developed prior to modern technology such as computers and shared databases, fax machines and electronic documents, or e-mail and credit card verification systems.
- Changes will simplify and clarify licensing- and rabies-related requirements but remain in alignment with State law.
- Currently, licenses are not issued without advance receipt of necessary rabies vaccinations or proof of spay/neuter status or exemption. Changes will allow that a license is not valid or is provisional pending vaccination or spay/neuter (or demonstrating exemption).
- Licenses would be issued for up to three years, or otherwise in conformance with California law.
- Licenses will be required for any age (puppy licenses will be possible) with rabies and spay/neuter requirements having to be met at age four months to keep the license valid.
- Proof of rabies vaccination and spay/neuter status must be submitted but with flexibility to permit electronic or other verification to render a license valid, in place of only a separate written certificate(s) provided by a veterinarian. **Titers** (tests for rabies antibodies in place of vaccination) would not be accepted.
- Emphasize responsibility of pet stores, breeders, and veterinarians to give licensing information to new owners and to provide all details to the Department for follow through, but may also be authorized to sell licenses.

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Background

At the meeting of September 22, 2008, an Executive Summary of the “Study of the Dog Licensing Program of the Department of Animal Services” was presented to the Board. In September and October of 2008 that presentation was also made to Councilmembers or their staff members, and to other City Officials. The purpose of the Study was to develop a full picture of the evolution of licensing laws, practices, and public perception in the City, to evaluate current practices compared to other jurisdictions (best practices), and to postulate systemic changes rather than quick-fix actions that fail to generate sustainable improvements.

Concurrently, the Department participated with the Mayor’s Office and representatives of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 721 on a Joint Labor-Management Task Force (Task Force) convened for the sole purpose of collaboratively evaluating the City’s current dog licensing program and recommending cost-effective methods to improve it. Specifically, the Task Force focused on the goal of identifying ways to license an additional 40% of dogs that are currently unlicensed, or approximately 89,000 new licenses. This would raise approximately \$1 million in annual, ongoing additional General Fund revenue. Thirty-seven core ideas were identified, preliminarily evaluated by the Task Force, then culled and consolidated into three groups: a package to recommend for immediate action now, a set of ideas that require resources to implement, and a group of good ideas that requires more time or further research to implement.

Other research efforts and assistance have been focused over the last year on how the licensing program works in the City of Los Angeles, and what fundamental changes might be prudent to consider. The Found Animals Foundation was very helpful and proactive in this regard, and often the snafu’s suffered by individual licensees served to identify procedures both major and minor that needed review.

The summary judgment that we can make from this entire effort is that the current licensing program does not effectively leverage technology, it places all the responsibility for timely and valid licensing on the Department, minimizes the responsibility for compliance by the licensee and, at the same time, makes the licensing process unnecessarily inconvenient for dog owners who want to comply—which taken together increases cost, decreases revenue, and undermines compliance.

In any discussion of dog licensing, as in the Study itself, obvious suggestions such as allowing an owner to license a dog on-line or allowing sale of three-year licenses to match three-year rabies vaccinations are obstructed by the firm and clearly restrictive language of the LAMC. Implementation of almost any idea for improving the licensing program is predicated on an essential need to substantially revise, delete obsolete sections, and replace the language in virtually all of the licensing and rabies vaccination sections of the Municipal Code. This revision process will clarify the regulations,

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resolve any inconsistencies that have arisen over the years of piece-meal changes, and most importantly, it will allow the process of licensing to be more business-like and customer friendly. Revisions will maintain all requirements to keep the City in conformance with all relevant law on dog license and rabies control in the State of California and draw upon “best practices” found in other jurisdictions.

The types of tangible revenue-generating and cost-saving enhancements we can make with updating the LAMC include: selling multi-year and puppy licenses; aligning license and rabies vaccination expiration dates; allowing multi-dog owners to align license expirations on all dogs in a household; setting late fees and penalties that reasonably motivate compliance; annually update fees based on cost recovery formulas; use judicious penalties to motivate compliance or conversely, implement amnesty programs to bring in an influx of licenses.

Besides improvements that are process-related and therefore tied to the LAMC, there are other ideas for increasing license compliance that simply boil down to applying more resources. There are a number of strategies and investments in technology or staff that would yield increases in licenses and revenue—but they require up-front funding to get started. The suggestions include: increasing the canvassing workforce through use of part-time workers or adding staff with peace officer status; providing funding for a Public Information Officer and a public information campaign on licensing; purchasing mobile, hand-held devices so that canvassers can input license information in the field; replacing the Chameleon database software system with a system that has financial management capacities and a superior licensing module. These ideas have a significant budget impact, but will be analyzed further in the coming year. If licensing revenues increase after the LAMC changes, we may be in a position to advocate more investment to yield even more revenue. Some ideas may be excellent candidates for funding from outside sources.

Through the Task Force meetings and discussions of the Study with various officials, many worthy ideas were considered or put forward. These ideas possess merit but require additional research, resources, or time to develop, and do not obviate the need for LAMC changes or the immediacy of improvements to be gained by removing some of the LAMC restrictions left over from the 1960s (for example, not allowing three-year licenses). Some of the other ideas include: increasing follow-up on licensing through use of light-duty employees; using the City’s business licensing requirement to compel veterinarians to comply with LAMC requirements (to send rabies copies of vaccination certificates to the Department); collecting partial licenses as down payments; issuing citation notices directly to an address rather than to a person; using the web to send out renewal notices. Due to their merit, these ideas will be evaluated for future implementation.

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Detail of LAMC Changes

The changes recommended fall into three categories.

- Releasing the restrictions that prevent rapid processing of licensing.
- Clarifying and simplifying the fee and tax provisions, and allowing modification by Council approval rather than ordinance change.
- Technical changes necessary for consistency.

The City and County of San Francisco is notable among jurisdictions in California with modern local code provisions that facilitate easier licensing processes for owners and more clear enforcement parameters for animal control. For example, their code (Section 41.15) provides for “young dog” licensing, issues 1-year, 2-year, and 3-year licenses, requires proof of rabies vaccination (without specifying the form in the code itself), does not specify a portion of the fee as “tax,” and provides a process for annual fee updating without changing the code itself.

RELEASING UNNECESSARY RESTRICTIONS IN THE LAMC, ADDING PROTECTIONS	
LAMC Section*	Summary of Changes
53.15	The owner of a dog (whether or not four months of age) must license the dog.
53.15	Streamline the language to make clear that application, fees, and proof of rabies vaccination are required, and remove specific references to one-year or two-year licenses.
53.15	Update language and expressly allow for both rabies vaccination and spay/neuter to be proved through satisfactory evidence, and not only by an express type of written certificate.
53.15.2(c)(4)(G), 53.15.2(e)(1)	Expand and emphasize the responsibility of breeders, commercial establishments, and others to report information to the Department on dogs sold for licensing follow-up.

** In finalizing changes, the City Attorney may make other technical corrections including changing other sections or the sections cited below as necessary to achieve the recommended objectives.*

Language on fees, taxes, and penalties exist in multiple sections of the LAMC, sometimes contradictory, frequently duplicative because the language has not been touched since the 1960s, while other more restrictive legislation has been enacted since. Please note that the California Food and Agricultural Code Section 30805 states, “The board of supervisors [or other legislative body of a jurisdiction] shall fix the compensation of the animal control department for issuing dog license tags.”

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CONSOLIDATING AND SIMPLIFYING FEE AND TAX PROVISIONS	
LAMC Section*	Summary of Changes
53.15	Authorize a fee setting process through the Board with approval of the Mayor and Council the same as the new Fee Ordinance will authorize for other types of fees and charges in the Department. The fee setting process could include establishing waivers for special circumstances or timeframes, for example, to conduct a licensing drive featuring an amnesty program.
53.15 (new)	Add a provision authorizing charge of late fees to motivate compliance with payment of licenses due.
53.15 (new)	Add a provision expressly exempting from any license tax or any license payment the New Hope partners or any enterprises partnering with the Department to adopt dogs. Other provisions expressly require that the new owner information must be provided to the Department for follow up.
53.15.2(c)(4)(G), 53.15.2(e)(1), 53.15.4	Expand the responsibility of veterinarians and others to distribute license information or applications to allow the Department to authorize veterinarians and commercial entities to take applications and sell licenses, remitting fees with the information to the Department, in exchange for a service fee to be set by the Board and approved by the Mayor and Council.
53.15.4	Provision inserted and updated to allow a contractor to sell licenses but then be paid a fee after remitting license revenue collected.

** In finalizing changes, the City Attorney may make other technical corrections including changing other sections or the sections cited below as necessary to achieve the recommended objectives.*

No licensing fees changes are recommended at this time as part of this report; the total cost of an altered dog license will remain \$15, and for an unaltered dog \$100 (plus proof of exemption status or purchase of a Breeder's Permit, as necessary to comply with the spay/neuter ordinance). However, changes proposed to the code would allow future changes to be processed in the same manner as other Fees, pursuant to LAMC changes currently pending final ordinance adoption by the City Council. Like that Fee Ordinance, the language recommended below would provide a process for review, recommendation, and Council adoption of changes, without the Council needing to amend any specific dollar amount in the LAMC by ordinance.

An example of the current lack of clarity between the "tax" provision (53.15(a)) and the "fee" provisions (53.15.3) is the conflict regarding waived licenses for service animals, or for disabled or seniors at a certain income level. According to 53.15(a), a license tax is due for all dogs, no exceptions, no exemptions. Yet, language in 53.15(b), effective in 1987, appears to contradict that by stating that the Department shall issue free licenses in certain cases (disabled, or assistance). The language in 53.15(b) is silent as to an

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exemption from payment of the license tax. 53.15(a), effective in 2006, provides language stating that Section 53.15 contains waivers from payment of the license tax, but does not specify where within the Section, or which licenses are exempt. By inference one may assume that owners qualifying for free licenses are also exempt from paying the license tax mandated by LAMC, yet there is no clear language anywhere in LAMC to prove it.

This is a strong example of the patchwork LAMC language which requires daily interpretation by staff, and that is a problem. Judges should be the ones interpreting statutory language, not Department clerical staff.

TECHNICAL CHANGES	
LAMC Sections*	Summary of Changes
53.00, 53.11(f), 53.11(l), 53.13, 53.15, 53.15.3, 53.26	Revise language to indicate that dog licensing where mentioned, such as when a dog is adopted, shall be in conformance with provisions in 53.15 and other revised sections as appropriate, rather than giving specific terms, fees, or rules within various sections that may then turn into conflicts. Remove specific references to one-year licenses.
53.15	Streamline and unify language so that all waivers provided to low income seniors and disabled persons, whether for a dog license, spay/neuter, or other reduced fees, use the low income definitions set forth by HUD.
53.15.2(b)	Modify language so that licenses can be applied for (and fees paid) pending a delayed spay/neuter surgery or pending receipt of proof of exemption from spay/neuter, but not be valid until such proof of surgery or exemption is received, so that the owner of a dog being adopted or redeemed, for example, can purchase the unaltered license even though there may be a delay in getting surgery for the dog.
53.16, 53.24, 53.25, 53.27, 53.28, 53.54, 53.57	Old provisions to be deleted or merged with existing licensing and vaccination sections.
53.53	Allows that proof of rabies vaccination (certificate) may be another form of documentation other than being restricted to a printed triplicate form, such as electronic documents or computer-generated certifications (as the Department currently provides).

** In finalizing changes, the City Attorney may make other technical corrections including changing other sections or the sections cited below as necessary to achieve the recommended objectives.*

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No parallel changes to the Equine License provisions are recommended at this time inasmuch as the City Council is in the process of establishing an Equine Advisory Committee that will ultimately review the equine fees and terms for modifications.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Additional revenue from licensing is a reasonable expectation after implementing new LAMC provisions that will facilitate use of automation, permit or direct inducements for dog owners to license, and set up an annual review, modification, and enhancement approval process for the Mayor and Council. The exact amount cannot be estimated; if resources allowed, changes to the licensing process would be advertised and enhanced with a campaign that might include amnesty. Since no resources are likely to be available to market changes, new revenues may develop in a slow pattern as dog owners with notices realize that the system is much more convenient and compliance is easier than before. If the Department were successful in selling an additional 89,000 altered licenses in the next fiscal year, that could yield \$1.3 million in additional revenue. If we increase licensing only 10% in the first year, but 30% of our total license base purchased 3-year licenses instead of one-year, in the next fiscal year we might see an additional \$1.2 million in the first year, and then less revenue for the next two years except for new licenses. Note that the overall impact of the spay/neuter ordinance will be otherwise to reduce licensing revenue as dog owners transition from paying for unaltered licenses to complying with the law and then receiving altered licenses at much lower cost.

The change will result in minimal costs to prepare and process ordinances. Implementing new customer-friendly licensing procedures will require the Department of Animal Services to incur costs in new forms, training of staff, and other minor expenses as new business procedures and processes are implemented. However, we will also likely generate higher levels of revenue and increase the number of licenses when a full revision of the applicable LAMC sections is in place and resultant changes in the licensing program are fully implemented. The higher level of efficiency that may be reached would justify future revenue-generating investments in the licensing program.

Approved:

Edward A. Boks, General Manager

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BOARD ACTION:

_____ Passed

Disapproved _____

_____ Passed with noted modifications

Continued _____

_____ Tabled

New Date _____