

MEETING SUMMARY



BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Tuesday, February 9, 2010
11:00 AM



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

Melanie Ramsayer, President
Irene Ponce, Vice-President
Tariq Khero
Kathleen Riordan
Ruthanne Secunda

mp3 Minutes are available at www.laanimalservices.com

The meeting was called to order at 11:15 am. Commissioners Ramsayer, Secunda, Riordan, and Ponce were present. Commissioner Khero was absent.

COMMISSION MEETING

1. **COMMISSION BUSINESS**

A. Approval of the Commission Meeting Minutes for January 12 and 26, 2010

Commissioner Ramsayer made a motion to approve the minutes of January 12, 2010 with the requested correction. Commissioner Ponce seconded the motion and the motion passed 4-0.

The January 26, 2010 minutes were held over to the next meeting.

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

Commissioner Riordan had nothing to report.

Commissioner Ramsayer attended the Found Animals Forum on February 6, 2010 with SEACA. It was very productive and a lot of solutions were discussed. She mentioned that the Ad Council is doing a nationwide campaign to promote adopting a shelter pet at www.adcouncil.com.

Commissioner Ponce went to the North Central Animal Care Center to discuss the upcoming Valentine's Day adoption event with Captain Figueroa to make sure the emphasis is on s/n, adoption, and volunteer recruitment.

Commissioner Secunda attended a Much Love adoption event on February 6, 2010. Reminded that identifying good locations for mobile adoptions makes all the difference.

C. Oral Report on Status of the General Manager Recruitment

Jim Bickhart from the Mayor's Office made a presentation. He reviewed the process to date and the outlined the future steps. More than 65 applications have been received by Citygate. Citygate wants 25 viable, serious applicants before they close the application process. In late March/April, semi-final interviews will be held and the Mayor's Office will choose 3 candidates to be interviewed by the Mayor. The final 3 interviews will be held in mid-April and the Mayor has the right to choose or not choose anyone. He emphasized that he does not know who the applicants are, but the job bulletin has attracted a wide range of candidates from the animal and business world.

2. GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR BOARD ACTION

A. Penalties for Violation of Proposed Animal Transfer Permit Requirements

That the Board request that the Mayor, and subsequently the City Council, direct the City Attorney to include in the ordinance creating an Animal Transfer Permit that violators may be subject to criminal or civil penalty of \$250 for the first violation and \$500 for the second violation, within twelve months, with repeated violations subject to prosecution as a misdemeanor.

AGM Barth explained to the Board that this is a technical correction to an action that the Board had previously taken to a needed addition to the City code to tie up a loose end. The report before the Board is to add escalating penalties.

AGM Barth read two letters into the record in support of the motion from Susan Taylor, Actors and Others For Animals and Phyllis Daugharty, Animal Issues Movement.

City Attorney Lesel clarifies that the current code allows for a maximum infraction of \$250. If the Board wants the penalty to go above \$250, the language must be changed slightly so that the Department and the City Attorney can have the ability to file this as misdemeanor or a criminal penalty with a maximum infraction of \$250 or a civil penalty with the 1st offense infraction of \$250 and the 2nd offense infraction of \$500. An appeal process also needs to be in place to have administrative citations.

Commissioner Riordan made a motion that the Board request that the Mayor, and subsequently the City Council, direct the City Attorney to include in the ordinance creating an Animal Transfer Permit that violators may be subject to either as a misdemeanor, an infraction or a civil penalty of \$250 for the first violation and \$500 for the second violation, within twelve months. Commissioner Ponce seconded the motion and the motion passed 4-0.

3. 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.) **(Item 5 taken out of order)**

Joyce Kemp – She wants to know the City policy on dangerous dogs. A dog in her neighborhood has attacked both people and animals and she is afraid to walk there. She had a hearing in September, but the dog has since attacked.

Interim AGM Davis asked Ms. Kemp to pass along the address of the dog and her information and staff will be directed to follow-up.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS (Item 3 taken out of order)

A. Discussion and input from the public on effective and efficient ideas for raising money to supplement funding for Department core responsibilities of greatest financial need, and direction to staff relative to ideas presented.

AGM Barth presented a list of things that the Department would like funding for (not all-inclusive, but a priority), a list of common in-kind donations that the Department receives, and the Adopt-A-Kennel program that was piloted at the Harbor Animal Care Center.

Commissioner Secunda requested clarification on the Reserve Animal Control Officer Program (RACO).

The Board discussed targeted fundraising ideas for specific items.

City Attorney Lesel to report on the development of a formal sponsorship program without City endorsement. He also is to report on whether sponsoring companies would be able to use the City symbol in their advertising as a "proud sponsor of."

Commissioner Ramsayer requested that creating a 501 (c) 3 be agendized and a report provided about what the priority is and the purpose.

The Board also requested a list of specific equipment and medications needed by the Department, including an itemized list of foster supplies and the price tag to complete the rabbit area renovations.

The Board also requested more information on grants.

Commissioner Secunda would like Volunteer Coordinator Jaren Sorkow to identify volunteers who would be willing to solicit donations.

Public Comment

Shawn Simons – She has a proposal for outsourcing adoptions to non-profits which would allow for more revenue to be devoted to S/N, and licensing.

Lisa Avrey – She suggested that the Department ask Disney to include an adoption message at the end of animal-related films, that radio suppliers be approached to donate to RACO, that prospective RACO go through the PCA32 and firearms training on their own and the Department will provide the LAAS specific training and will reimburse them the fees following a certain amount of time of service, ie. four months. She would be happy to help the City form a 501 (c) 3, but it needs to be attached to the City with the Commissioners as Board members.

Commissioner Ramsayer requested that a part of every upcoming meeting be focused on fundraising.

5. ORAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER (Item 4 taken out of order)

Interim GM Davis presented the following report to the Board:

- The Command Post was opened and we were activated again on Saturday, February 6, for the weekend weather emergency due to the rains and mudslides.
- ACTF performed a raid on a cockfight in progress on January 9, 2009 in the North Central area (zip code 90058). Officers found 128 fighting roosters at the location. The case was presented to the City Attorney for prosecution on Jan. 26, 2010.
- Saturday, February 6, was our first Pits and Pals Spay Day at East Valley for the 2010 calendar year. It poured buckets Saturday morning, but the rains didn't keep pet owners away. We accomplished 131 sterilization surgeries for income qualified pet owners. Our next Pits and Pals day is scheduled for February 27, 2009 at North Central. Again, these events are paid for by donations from The Heigl Foundation. S/N services are provided by The Amanda Foundation.
- We now have videos of selected pets at three of our Centers. WLA joins NC and Harbor. We've experienced much success in the form of quick adoptions on those pets that have their video posted on our website. We'll continue to look for additional talented volunteers who can spread this dynamic marketing tool to the rest of our Centers.
- Last week, we had 82 parakeets come into our EV Center. We were fortunate that the media picked up on the story. The Daily News gave it front page coverage with a really beautiful picture of our feathered orphans. The press release went out late Thursday and by Friday 4PM, they were all adopted.
- We had a good month in January. We impounded only 3,228 dogs and cats and sent 2,608 of them home. As a percent of impounds, that means 81% of our dogs and cats went home in January. One other very interesting note: Our cat impounds were down by 159, which relieved cage space resulting in no euthanasia for Time & Space for cats in January.
- You probably read quite a bit about the budget hearings in City Council last week that included expediting the Early Retirement process and consideration of layoffs of at least 1000 employees, which was deferred for 30 days. With regard to ERIP, we have two employees already retired, 5 retiring next week and the balance of 7 will be leaving March 13 under the Mayor's expedited plan. The Mayor also provided direction on Thursday, February 4th, that General Managers were to proceed with the 1,000 layoffs. The Mayor requested that General Managers work together to transfer some employees at risk from general-funded positions to special-funded positions in other Departments such as DWP, Harbor, and Sanitation, if possible. For LA Animal Services, 14 positions are included as part of the 1,000. At this time, we don't believe that any of those targeted for layoffs will be able to transfer to a special fund vacancy. No ACTs, medical staff, or ACOs are targeted for layoff, but the CAO did recommend eliminating our Call Center and Canvassing Programs, resulting in the layoff of 6 Call Center Communication Information Reps and the 8 Canvassers. We have informed both employee groups. Layoffs would not be effective until July 1st because the employees are part of the Coalition of City unions that is protected from layoff this fiscal year. These cuts will further reduce service levels.
- Our Discount Adoption Event begins today and runs through Sunday, Valentine's Day. The Pet Care Foundation is sponsoring some special events on Sunday at

Please join us at our website: www.LAAnimalservices.com

East Valley Center from 11AM to 3PM. There will be refreshments, face painting, music and lots of fun laced with lots of adoptions. The promotional flyers, in English and in Spanish, have been sent out to a myriad of media and email addresses. We're hoping for a great turnout all week with a corresponding drop in our inventory, even though we are already at an extremely low inventory mark. Please stop by if you have an opportunity.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner Riordan read a motion to amend the code regarding giving away or selling animals on City streets.

Commissioners Ramsayer and Secunda requested to continue the fundraising conversations.

Commissioner Secunda read a motion regarding the expansion of the breeding permit to include rabbits, chickens, ducks, turtles, and other animals as deemed appropriate.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Riordan made a motion to adjourn and Commissioner Ponce seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 1:44 pm.

Next Commission Meeting is scheduled for 10:00 A.M., February 23, 2010 Los Angeles City Hall, Room 1060, 200 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, California 90012.