

MINUTES



BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Tuesday, May 26, 2009

6:00 P.M.

Exposition Park

Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Branch Library
3900 South Western Avenue.
Los Angeles, CA 90062



Tariq Khoro, President
Kathleen Riordan, Vice-President
Irene Ponce
Archie J. Quincey, Jr.
Ruthanne Secunda

NO TAPE BACK-UP

The meeting was called to order at 6:41PM. Commissioners Quincey, Riordan, and Ponce were present. Commissioners Khoro and Secunda were absent.

At 7:05pm, Councilmember Parks thanked everybody for coming to his district and visiting the new Bethune Library.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL HEARING

Barking Dog License Revocation Case Number 083106 NC

Appellant: Theodore & Rosalind Wiesand

Complaining Witness: David Ladelfa

Field Operations Supervisor, North Central Animal Shelter, Lt. William Tranzow

Hearing Coordinator, Department of Animal Services, Ross Pool, Management Analyst

Commissioner Quincey made a motion to overturn the General Manager's decision to revoke the dog license, but to continue with terms and conditions. Commissioner Ponce seconded the motion and the motion passed 3 – 0.

COMMISSION MEETING

The Commission meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm.

1. ORAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

AGM Barth gave the General Manager's Report:

- A document explaining how volunteers and New Hope groups are notified that they have been suspended will be presented at the next meeting.
- Several New Hope groups have not turned in their monthly reports. In approving the new language for fee waivers, the City Council made it clear that their primary interest was to

support our New Hope Partners and all they do to help us save animal's lives. However, they also felt the public deserved transparency since New Hope groups benefit from fee waivers, and therefore they support our reporting and tracking process.

- In regards to the budget, the Department is closer to being able to get through the Fiscal Year. The next fiscal year is a big question mark. There is a \$326 million dollar gap that needs to be met with layoffs as dictated by the City Council. LAAS has not had to formally submit any layoff list and the budget is still status quo.
- As part of a settlement of a class action lawsuit, PetCo has given gift cards of \$20 value each to LA Animal Services to be distributed on behalf of PetCo to individual pet owners for their personal use. Beginning June 19, 2009, LA Animal Services will begin a special promotion using these gift cards to help increase adoptions during the month of June. The promotion will continue as long as supplies last.
- The Department has sought out PR to get more people interested in the Bottle Baby Foster Program. The program will be featured on the Channel 4 news and Good Day LA.
- Downtown Spay/Neuter Plus Veterinary Clinic, Inc. dropped out as proposers for the North Central Spay/Neuter Clinic.

2. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Approval of the Commission Meeting Minutes for March 9, March 23 and April 14, 2009

Commissioners Riordan and Ponce had changes to the minutes. Held over to the next meeting.

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

Commissioner Ponce went to see the Mark Taper Auditorium at the Central Library for use for fundraising events. She also spoke with staff who wondered what influence or say the Commission has in the hiring of the next GM.

Commissioner Riordan spoke with staff regarding donations to the Department.

Commissioner Quincey had nothing to report.

3. GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR BOARD ACTION

None

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Notice from Clinico regarding price increases for Spay and Neuter services at the City's clinics.

AGM Barth told the Board that there was a PowerPoint presentation in their notebooks from the Found Animal Foundation.

Amy Gilbreth from the Found Animal Foundation gave a presentation on behalf of Clinico. She gave the background on the Pet Smart Charities grant. The grant is for 5 years and had to be triggered by matching funds. Clinico is thinking about long-term sustainability.

Commissioner Ponce expressed her concern that Clinico's new price list is much higher than the vet she contacted in North East Los Angeles.

Ms. Gilbreth explained that low income pricing will only be available for households earning under \$40K. The new, higher prices will apply to everyone else. The public can take advantage of Clinico's pricing plus use one of the Department's \$30 coupons or \$70 vouchers. Clinico can not afford to give service below cost and stay in business. They do not offer any additional services that allow them to make money. Clinico is only doing S/N.

Commissioner Quincey requested to see a breakout of a \$100 surgery.

AGM Barth suggested that the Commission contact Clinico directly for an additional breakdown of their prices.

Commissioner Riordan requested to see the old prices vs. the new prices.

Public Comment

Laura Beth Heisen – She expressed her concern about opening the S/N clinics. She wants a commitment from Clinico about their prices.

Commissioner Riordan requested:

- (1) An updated progress report on the opening of the S/N clinics
- (2) A comparison of the old and new prices
- (3) The option to vote on the new prices

B. Draft procedure for designating animals as discounted under the Green or Red Alert Program.

AGM Barth stated that staff has been working to codify into a SOP for the Red Alert.

Commissioner Riordan asked to reconvene the New Hope Committee for further discussion.

Public Comment

Laura Beth Heisen – She agrees with reconvening the New Hope Committee, but she would like the meeting to be public and open to all New Hope groups.

Phyllis Daugherty – She clarified her opposition to New Hope fee waivers.

Elle Wittelsbach – She stated that New Hope groups do not profit from adoptions of Red List animals.

Commissioner Ponce requested more clarification on the policies.

C. Update on progress of Licensing Changes and the On-Line Licensing Program.

The Commissioners were given screen shots of how the online licensing renewals and new donations pages look and work. The Department is moving to do all of its licensing online. There are a lot of steps to get to on-line licensing.

Public Comment

Laura Beth Heisen – She urged for amnesty for licenses to be given for unaltered dogs. She believes the STAR and Foster programs should be removed from the donation page.

Phyllis Daugherty – She suggested that bar codes be used on licensing and that emails be captured for future use. The City Council does want to consider dog licensing fees separately and left as an ordinance.

Jeff de la Rosa – He stated that there needs to be a revamping of the licensing program.

Rachael Pap – She would like to help edit the on-line page.

D. Oral report on the Letter of Agreement with the Puppy Store (Orange Bone).

Held over to next meeting

E. Oral update on efforts to implement recommendations of the Spay and Neuter Advisory Committee.

AGM Barth handed out notes on a series of recommendations that the Department is trying to tackle.

Public Comment

Laura Beth Heisen – She feels that S/N is still not a priority. The Department still does not have an S/N Coordinator. She wants a new RFP issued for the clinics.

Phyllis Daugherty – The County will supplement \$50 for County vouchers for S/N.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Pam Holt – She made a plea for Stu's freedom.

Elle Wittelsbach – She read letters on behalf of Marie Atake and Carole Davis to release Stu.

Jeff de la Rosa – He demanded to know what happened to Commissioner Quincey's motion. He read the letter of settlement offer from the City Attorney.

Laura Beth Heisen – Read a letter from Jane Garcia regarding the Stu case. She then gave her personal opinion about the case and due process issues.

Phyllis Daugherty – She stated that the new City Attorney is very fair. She further commented on her letter about the fee ordinance and rescuers making a profit.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner Ponce requested to be briefed on what transpired during the closed session on May 11, 2009. She requested that Commissioner Quincey's motion be put on the next agenda.

Commissioner Riordan wants clarification about what GSD means about priority to be given spay/neutering the City's animals over the public's animals at the clinics.

Commissioner Quincey made a motion that the General Manager institute a comprehensive dog licensing canvassing program to collect the license tax.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Riordan made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Quincy seconded the motion and the motion passed 3-0.

Meeting concluded at 9:25pm.

Next Commission Meeting is scheduled for 10:00 A.M., June 8, 2009,