



BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
Tuesday, June 14, 2022
9:30 A.M.

Dial (669) 900-6833 to Join the Meeting and use Webinar ID No. 967 5455 9817 and then Press #. Press # again when prompted for participant ID.

LARRY GROSS
President

OLIVIA E. GARCÍA
Vice-President

JILL COHEN
ALISA FINSTEN
JOSE SANDOVAL

In conformity with State Assembly Bill 361 and due to concerns over COVID-19, the Board of Animal Services Commission meeting will be conducted entirely telephonically and using Zoom software.

Sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or other auxiliary aids and/or services may be provided upon request. To make your request please call (213) 482-9558. To ensure availability, you are advised to make your request at least 72 hours prior to the meeting you wish to attend.

Si requiere servicios de traducción, favor de hacer pedido con 24 horas de anticipo al (213) 482-9558.

Members of the public who wish to offer public comment to the Board of Animal Services Commission should call (669) 900-6833 and use Webinar ID No. 967 5455 9817 and then press #. Press # again when prompted for participant ID. Instructions on how to sign up for public comment will be given to listeners at the start of the meeting.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS

1. Dangerous Animal Case: DA 213038 WLA

Appellant: Courtney Morton-Perry

West Los Angeles Animal Services Center: Lt. Botta

Complaining Witness: Zahra Maleki-Ghomi

2. Barking Dog Animal Case: BD 213133 SLA

Appellant: Martin and Juana Castaneda

South Los Angeles Animal Services Center: Lt. Spariosu

Complaining Witnesses: Kayla Gray and Ted Levy

II. COMMISSION MEETING

1. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD - (Comments from the public on items of public interest within the Board's subject matter jurisdiction that are not on the Agenda)

Note: The Brown Act prohibits the Board and staff from discussing a speakers' comments. Some of the matters raised in public comment may appear on a future agenda.

2. NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL COMMENTS - (Discussion with Neighborhood Council representatives on Neighborhood Council Resolutions or Community Impact Statements filed with the City Clerk which relate to any agenda item listed or being considered on this agenda for the Board of Animal Services Commissioners)

3. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Findings to Continue Teleconference Meetings Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361 / Government Code Section 54953(e)(3) (Action Item; Public comment limited to one minute per speaker)

Determination in accordance with AB 361 [Government Code Section 54953(e)(3)] that, while the state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as originally proclaimed by the Governor on March 4, 2020, remains active and state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing, the Board has reconsidered the circumstances of the state of emergency and that the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the Board members to meet safely in person and state or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing.

B. Approval of Minutes for the Meeting of May 24, 2022 (Action Item; Public comment limited to one minute per speaker)

4. ORAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

5. COMMISSIONERS' ORAL REPORTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

6. BOARD REPORTS

- A. Oral Report on the Shelter Operations at East Valley (Information Item; Public comment limited to one minute per speaker)

7. ADJOURNMENT

Next Regular Meeting is scheduled for 6:00 p.m., June 28, 2022

AGENDAS - The Board of Animal Services Commissioners (Board) meets regularly every second (2nd) and fourth (4th) Tuesday of each month at 9:30 A.M. For the duration of the COVID-19 emergency, the Board will meet telephonically and using Zoom software in conformity with the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20 (March 17, 2020). 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, 6th Floor, Suite 600, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Board Agendas may also be viewed on the 2nd 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, MP-3 audio files of meetings as well as electronic copies of approved minutes on the Department's World Wide Web Home Page site at <https://www.laanimalservices.com/about-us-2/commission/#three>

Three (3) members of the Board constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. 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. (For certain agenda items, speakers will have two (2) minutes.)

PUBLIC INPUT AT BOARD MEETINGS – **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. Each speaker will be granted a maximum of two minutes and the presiding officer reserves the ability to extend or limit the time depending on the circumstances of the meeting.

Notice to Paid Representatives. If you are compensated to monitor, attend, or speak at this meeting, City law may require you to register as a lobbyist and report your activity. See Los Angeles Municipal Code §§ 48.01 *et seq.* More information is available at ethics.lacity.org/lobbying. For assistance, please contact the Ethics Commission at (213) 978-1960 or ethics.commission@lacity.org.

Time Limit for Speakers. Speakers addressing the Board will be limited to one (1) minute of speaking time for each agenda item except during the general public comment period, which is limited to two (2) minutes per speaker (For certain agenda items, speakers will have two (2) minutes each).

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.*

STANDARDS 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.

**BOARD OF
ANIMAL SERVICES
COMMISSIONERS**

LARRY GROSS
PRESIDENT

OLIVIA E. GARCIA
VICE PRESIDENT

COMMISSIONERS

JILL COHEN

ALISA FINSTEN

JOSE SANDOVAL

City of Los Angeles

CALIFORNIA



ERIC GARCETTI
MAYOR

**DEPARTMENT OF
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ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER
Administration

DR. JEREMY PRUPAS
CHIEF VETERINARIAN

NOTIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL HEARING

To Be Held: Tuesday, June 14, 2022, at 9:30 A.M.

This hearing will be held telephonically. To appear, please follow the instructions below.

Pursuant to Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 53.18(q)(4) this serves as formal notice to the following parties and witnesses of an appeal hearing before the Board of Animal Services Commissioners in the case listed below:

- 1. Dangerous Animal Case: DA 213038 WLA**
Appellant: Courtney Morton-Perry
West Los Angeles Animal Services Center: Lt. Botta
Complaining Witness: Zahra Maleki-Ghomi
- 2. Barking Dog Animal Case: BD 213133 SLA**
Appellant: Martin and Juana Castaneda
South Los Angeles Animal Services Center: Lt. Spariosu
Complaining Witnesses: Kayla Gray and Ted levy

Due to concerns over COVID-19, this appeal hearing will be held telephonically. To appear at the hearing, DIAL (669) 900-6833, ENTER Webinar ID No. 967 5455 9817, and then press #. Press # again when prompted for participant ID.

If you have any questions or need further assistance with your telephonic appearance, please contact the Department at (213) 482-9558.

As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services and activities. 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 hearing.

For additional information, please refer to the Board's "Rules and Procedures for Appeals", or contact the Department of Animal Services at (213) 482-9558, or visit the Department's website: <http://www.laanimalservices.com/>. Written statements are to be submitted to the Commission seven days prior to the hearing and, if in excess of 50 pages, seven hard copies must be provided. You may submit your statement (50 pages or less) via email to: ani.commission@lacity.org. This hearing will not be rescheduled, except for good cause.

Para información en español, llame al (213) 482-9558.

"Creating a Humane LA"

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Visit our website at www.LAAnimalServices.com



**BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES**



**MINUTES
TUESDAY, May 24, 2022 at 9:30 AM**

VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

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

Larry Gross, President
Olivia E. García, Vice President
Jill Cohen
Alisa Finsten
Jose Sandoval

Meeting called to order at 9:33 a.m. Commissioners present were Gross, García, and Sandoval. Also present from Los Angeles Animal Services (LAAS) was Interim General Manager Annette Ramirez, Assistant General Manager (AGM) Curtis Watts, Board Secretary Francine Acuña, and Deputy City Attorney Steve Houchin.

Commissioner Gross opened the meeting, introduced staff, provided an overview of the meeting agenda, and provided instructions to the public on how to make public comments for this virtual meeting.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS

1. Dangerous Animal Case: DI 216159 SLA

Appellant: Stephanie Renteria / Juan Renteria
South Los Angeles Animal Services Center: Lt. Spariosu
Complaining Witness: Martha Rodriguez, Dianne Marcial

The Board discussed the merits of the appeal, the evidence provided to the Hearing Examiner, and the grounds supporting the General Manager's determination.

Commissioner Gross made a motion to uphold the decision of the General Manager.

Commissioner Sandoval seconded and the motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Ayes: Gross, García, and Sandoval.

Noes: None.

Absent: Cohen and Finsten.

II. REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment was made by:

- **Linda Bailey** - reported a bunny hoarder situation several times and asked how the Department is going to resolve this issue.
- **Sherry Brewer** - stated that the pipes above the kennels are overheating and stated that the appointment system is beneficial for the animals at East Valley.
- **Claudio Kusnier** - recommended that shelter appointments be confirmed 24 hours in advance and unconfirmed appointments should be opened up for walk-up appointments. Also stated that the appointment times should be extended to allow for adoptions.
- **Jill Jaxx** - stated that the volunteers are overwhelmed and expressed concerns about customer service at the shelters and the lack of care for the small mammals.
- **Brian Gilles** - spoke about three dogs that are on hold from an evidence case and expressed concern about the homeless situation outside of the West Valley shelter. Also stated that the appointment system is not working and opportunities for adoptions are being missed.
- **Tom Kiesche** - invited the Commissioners and staff to shadow a volunteer for a day at the shelters and stated that the shelters should be fully staffed on the weekends.
- **Jeff Mausner** - stated that David Cook who was a longtime volunteer at the West Valley shelters has passed away and requested this meeting be adjourned in his honor.
- **Paul Darrigo** - provided examples of how to be involved with the shelters to resolve issues and asked what the Commissioners are doing to address the concerns being raised by the public.
- **Emma Rault** - stated that she was denied a permit for TNR and asked for clarification on how to obtain a permit.
- **Cathy Serksnas** - expressed sympathy for the loss of David Cook and spoke about incorrect information for animals posted on the Department's website.
- **Sharon Brewer** - asked for clarification on how funds can be used from the Animal Welfare Trust Fund and other trust funds and asked where one can find information on city permits for petting zoos.
- **Michelle Cornelius** - stated that the Department has a certified behaviorist and his skills should be utilized to improve things at the shelters. Also spoke about the shortage of staff on the weekends and expressed concern for where the kittens are being housed.
- **Julia Pennington** - asked for a status on mobile adoptions.
- **Whitney Smith** - stated that the Commissioners need to visit the shelters and asked for the protocols for seriously injured animals that enter the shelter.
- **Cat Edwards** - spoke about spay/neuter issues with animals and stated that more enforcement is needed to ensure every pet has access to spay/neuter services.
- **Gail Raff** - asked for a report on the status of the mobile spay/neuter vans and suggested that shelter employees wear name tags.
- **Carolyn** - spoke about the difficulties with weekday appointments and stated

that the shelters should be open to increase adoptions.

- **Hillary** - offered assistance with building a behavior team under the guidance of Thomas Kalinowski.

2. NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL COMMENTS - (Discussion with Neighborhood Council representatives on Neighborhood Council Resolutions or Community Impact Statements filed with the City Clerk which relate to any agenda item listed or being considered on this agenda for the Board of Animal Services Commissioners)

Public Comment:
None

3. COMMISSION BUSINESS

- A. Findings to Continue Teleconference Meetings Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361 / Government Code Section 54953(e)(3) (Action Item; Public comment limited to one minute per speaker)

Determination in accordance with AB 361 [Government Code Section 54953(e)(3)] that, while the state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as originally proclaimed by the Governor on March 4, 2020, remains active and state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing, the Board has reconsidered the circumstances of the state of emergency and that the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the Board members to meet safely in person and state or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing.

Commissioner Gross moved to approve in determining accordance with Government Code Section 54953(e)(3) that this Board has reconsidered the circumstances of the COVID-19 state of emergency and that the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the Board to meet safely in person and state or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing.

Commissioner García seconded and the motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Ayes: Gross, García, and Sandoval.

Noes: None.

Absent: Cohen and Finsten.

Public Comment was made by:

- **Claudio Kusnier** - stated that the Commission meetings should be allowed to meet in person and suggested that a volunteer become a member of the Commission.

- **Whitney Smith** - stated that the Commission meetings should be allowed to meet in person and continue meeting through Zoom.
- **Julia Pennington** - stated that in-person meetings could be more effective.
- **Paul Darrigo** - requested a hybrid option for meeting.
- **Jeff Mausner** - prefers the virtual meetings and suggested that attendees use their cameras when speaking.
- **Sharon Brewer** - stated that the City Council makes the determination for Commissions to meet virtually.

B. Approval of the Minutes for Meeting of May 10, 2022.

Commissioner Sandoval moved to approve the minutes for the meeting of May 10, 2022.

Commissioner García seconded and the motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Ayes: Gross, García, and Sandoval.

Noes: None.

Absent: Cohen and Finsten.

Public Comment:
None

4. ORAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

Interim GM Annette Ramirez discussed the following:

- Update on Covid: An additional 15 staff members have been placed off duty due to Covid.
- Update on Licensing: Each license application and documents must be reviewed and processed by a live person and cannot be automated due to the fact that sterilization certificates and rabies vaccinations must be confirmed for each animal. There is a backlog of approximately six months for the live mail and web licenses. The budget request for additional licensing staff was not approved.
- Kennel repairs are submitted to General Services who will make arrangements to have a repair person complete the needed repairs or order the necessary parts to complete the repairs.
- The Department has an open case investigation against the person who owns a large number of rabbits and the Department is working with him to surrender the rabbits.
- It was brought to the Board's attention that the animals surrendered by owners are not showing up as available for adoption for a few days on the website. It was found that there have been inconsistencies with staff

entering the stray hold date instead of the available date for adoption. Staff has been reminded of these instructions and the issue should be corrected.

- There was an attempted break-in at the East Valley shelter's Community Room over the weekend. The person was unable to fully break the window and unlock the door. A request for repair has been submitted to General Services.
- General Manager Adoption discount events were held at all six shelters this past weekend and an additional discount event will occur next weekend.
- SNPLA held a vaccine clinic at North Central and will be offering another vaccine clinic at Chesterfield Square on Thursday.
- The Department hosted our second SpayDay LA at North Central where we educated and worked with the public to sterilize their pets and inform them of our available voucher program.
- The Department participated in an air transport of animals with Petco Love, Dog is my Co-pilot, and Paws for Life canine rescue and transported 90 animals to Oregon, Washington, and Idaho.
- Staff will be attending adoption events at Pet Food Express, Monty's in Echo Park, Bob's Skechers in Manhattan Beach, and Petco Love.
- Pet Food Pantry was held on May 8, May 15, and May 22. On May 8, there were 783 pets served. On May 15, there were 869 pets served and on May 22, there were 877 pets served.

Public Comment was made by:

- **Paul Darrigo** - stated that the Department needs to follow up with General Services on the requests for repairs and recommended that the Department contact Bunny Foundation to assist with the bunnies.
- **Claudio Kusnier** - spoke about the Department's behaviorist and a dog named Mamba.
- **Cathy Serksnas** - spoke about the impound dates for lost pets listed on the Department's website.
- **Gail Raff** - spoke about the importance of licensing and asked for an update on the hiring of a veterinarian for the Harbor shelter.
- **Julia Pennington** - recommended that the mobile pet adoption events be listed on the calendar.
- **Carolyn** - spoke about a dog named Regal who has not been taken out of a kennel for months.
- **Tom Kiesche** - stated that the volunteers are willing to help and Department staff are not performing well.
- **Whitney Smith** - spoke about the inconsistencies of information related to animals available on the website.
- **Brian Gilles** - stated that the Department needs to utilize the skills of Thomas Kalinowski.

5. COMMISSIONERS' ORAL REPORTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner Gross:

- Asked the Department to update the cat limits on the website and stated that the link to purchase Pet Lovers license plates is not working.

Commissioner Cohen:

- Absent.

Commissioner Finsten:

- Absent.

Commissioner García:

- Asked the Department to review the website to ensure animals are listed correctly.
- Recommended that employees wear name tags for accountability.

Commissioner Sandoval:

- None.

Public Comment was made by:

- **Claudio Kusnier** - spoke about an appeal case regarding employees.
- **Carolyn** - asked for a report on the number of dog walking volunteers and their retention rate.
- **Tom Kiesche** - recommended that City and Department staff along with volunteers meet to work together on issues being raised.
- **Paul Darrigo** - asked what the Commissioners are doing to help with the Department's issues.
- **Whitney Smith** - asked the Commission to agendize the protocols for incoming animals at the shelter that require emergency care and asked for a report on the volunteers.
- **Julia Pennington** - offered her services to meet with City and Department staff to work together on issues being raised.
- **Gail Raff** - asked for a report on the amount of volunteers who spend time in the cat room and asked for clarification on the responsibilities of the Commissioners.

6. BOARD REPORTS

A. Oral Report on the Shelter Operations at West Valley (Information Item)

ACT Supervisor Shawn Colon provided an oral report on the Shelter Operations at West Valley.

Public Comment was made by:

- **Michelle Kelly** - stated that guinea pigs are being housed in rabbit cages and suggested they be moved into a shelving unit similar to the one being used at West Los Angeles and asked where the rabbits are being spayed or neutered.
- **Carolyn** - stated that the shelters would not survive without the help of the volunteers.
- **Brain Gilles** - stated that the back door at the West Valley shelter is broken and added that rescue only dogs should be reevaluated.
- **Claudio Kusnier** - stated that the volunteers are helping with a variety of tasks at the shelters.
- **Tom Kiesche** - stated that the volunteers are assisting the shelters in their own time.
- **Whitney Smith** - stated that the animals need to be prioritized and commended Shawn for his work at the shelter.
- **Cathy Serksnas** - spoke about the homeless situation and the danger it poses to the shelter.
- **Julia Pennington** - thanked Shawn for all of his hard work and requested that returns are documented into these reports to provide accurate information.
- **Jeff Mausner** - provided photos of the homeless situation to the Chatsworth Neighborhood Council and stated that Councilmember Lee's office is responsible for this area.
- **Gail Raff** - stated there is no employee retention within the Department.

B. FY 21-22 3rd Quarter Financial Reports (Information Item)

SMA Sharon Lee provided an update on the FY 21-22 3rd Quarter Financial Reports

Commissioner Gross asked that updates from The Glue be presented with the next financial reports.

Public Comment was made by:

- **Jeff Mausner** - spoke about the importance of spay/neuter and wanted to ensure that these funds are used properly.
- **Cathy Serksnas** - spoke about the expenditures for The Glue.
- **Whitney Smith** - asked for a report on the bequeathment donations to the Department and how those funds are being used.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned in honor of Volunteer David Cook at 12:20 p.m.