



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

Monday, July 14, 2008  
10: 00 AM  
CITY HALL  
200 N. Spring St., Room 1070  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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Commissioners:           Tariq Khero, President  
                                  Kathleen Riordan, Vice-President  
                                  Glenn Brown  
                                  Irene Ponce  
                                  Archie J. Quincey, Jr.

**ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL HEARING**

Meeting called to order at 10:21 AM. Present were Commissioners Khero, Riordan, Quincey, and Ponce. Commissioner Brown joined the meeting at 10:28 AM.

**1. Appeal of the General Manager's Decision in Barking Dog Case - BD 08316 WL**

Appellant: Harry and Jack Barseghian  
Complaining Witness: Alexander Galloway  
District Manager, North Central Shelter, Jorge Figueroa, Captain  
Hearing Coordinator, Department of Animal Services, Ross Pool, Management Analyst

Neither the appellant nor the complaining witness appeared. Commissioner Quincy made a motion to uphold the General Manager's decision in Barking Dog Case – BD 08316 WL. Commissioner Ponce seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

**Determination:   General Manager's Decision Upheld.**

**COMMISSION MEETING**

Commission President Khero called the Commission meeting to order at 10:25 AM.

**1. ORAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER**

**Response to Overcrowding:** There has been a significant increase in the number of animals that the Department is taking in as a result of the housing foreclosure crisis, animals separated from their homes on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, and the fact that summer typically is a busy time of year for intakes at the shelters. We are seeing a huge increase in the number of animals, particularly at the East Valley and South LA Animal Care Centers. The GM has been working with the Center Managers to devise a strategy to handle the overcrowding problem.

The Department is holding an Adopt-a-thon this weekend at 60% reduction of adoption fees (dogs \$43 and cats \$28).

We have implemented a strategy to put more animals on the 7-day Red Alert to give notice to New Hope organizations that these are the animals most in need of adoption and their resources. After the fulfillment of the 7-day alert, the GM will work closely with the Center Managers to utilize the Minus-1 goal to reduce euthanasia as best we can.

**Spay/Neuter Clinic Evaluations:** Although we have yet to receive Certificate of Occupancy for most of the new spay/neuter clinics that are in the process of being completed by GSD, we are moving forward on the process of evaluating the proposals we received in May for Harbor, West LA, North Central, and East Valley. We are interviewing the proposers this Wednesday (7/16) and plan to have a recommendation of award at your next meeting.

**Northeast (Mission):** We did not receive any proposals for the Mission spay/neuter clinic, because the immediate future of that Center has been unknown, making it a bit of a financial risk for vendors. The Northeast Valley is underserved and difficulty in obtaining the interest of a contractor for the clinic is one of several negative consequences of the City's decision to hold off opening the Center for at least one fiscal year.

**Permits for Circuses and Exhibitions:** In our on-going efforts to reach out to all interested and affected constituencies, we have had meetings with film industry representatives and humane organizations. We still have to meet with exhibitors of animals, and probably consult again with USDA and Fish and Game again, before bringing revised policies for your consideration.

**Registry Solicitations:** We are advertising now for dog and cat breed registries and associations who are applying to be recognized by the Board, as required by the new spay/neuter ordinance. Applications are coming in and we will have a list of registries in August for the Board's review and approval.

**LAX Task Force:** The Department has worked with LA County Public Health and CDC on the confiscation and disposition of 3 shipments of sick and underage puppies that came into LAX from Korea. A task force that the Department and Mayor's Office has assembled continues to work together on finalizing a protocol for dealing with the flow of animals coming into the City through LAX. We will keep the Commission posted.

**Santee Alley Task Force:** Reviewing our Santee Alley enforcement history in an effort to develop a new and more effective enforcement strategy. Assessment of current situation is proceeding with further discussion on strategy and implementation scheduled for latter this week.

**Animal Care in Pet Stores:** Protocol is under review of the City Attorney. When finalized the protocol will be implemented and released to the public so all interested parties in the City of LA will know what the Department's standards are for pet stores and can advise us when pet stores are not meeting those standards.

**Small Animal Rescue Team (SART):** SART is coming together. The team of ACO's will receive special equipment and training needed to rescue animals from difficult situations such as trapped in a tree, storm drain, bodies of water, etc. This team will also be of value in a disaster situation.

**Chameleon Power Users Group (PUGs):** We are in the process of identifying 2 adept users at each of our Animal Care Centers who will work together to recommend needed training for staff, suggesting possible software improvements and serving as a resource/expert at their respective Centers, so that we maintain a level of proficiency and excellence in the use of our Chameleon software.

**New Hope** - Staff has been informed of the New Hope program enhancements approved by the Commission on June 30, 2008. These changes have been implemented throughout the Department.

**Please join us at our website: [www.LAAnimalservices.com](http://www.LAAnimalservices.com)**

**Implementing S/N Ordinance:** Staff and the City Attorney's Office are meeting regularly to prepare for the implementation of the City's new s/n ordinance. The ordinance comes with many implementation complexities on an Operations level that we are working through in order to be prepared to implement come October 1st. The Department is also working with an ad hoc committee of PR firms in the community to help us to put together a marketing strategy to help the Department get the word out. The Department has no budget for public relations and we must rely on the kindness of our community volunteers and PR professionals to assist us.

**Creating a Humane LA Public Workshops** - The Department is partnering with the Human Relations Commission in scheduling a series of eleven public workshops. Each of the workshops will be held in a different Council District and will be hosted by the respective Council Member. Each workshop will focus on one of the ten components of the No-Kill Equation. Input gathered from these workshops will be rolled into the Department's strategic plan. The last of the series of workshops will culminate in the unveiling of a Department initiative that has been in development for over a year called Creating a Humane LA. It is our hope that the Mayor will host this session. First of the series will be on high volume/low cost s/n and will be hosted by CM Parks on August 6, 2008.

The Humane Society of the US had a meeting at one of our Centers with their team captains to promote Proposition 2, the Farm Animal Cruelty proposition to help educate the public.

#### Public Comment

Phyllis Daugherty: Commended LAAS on the approach the Department is taking to the overcrowding in the shelters and giving the emphasis to the animals that have the best chance. The County has a program where volunteers can foster an animal until the next adoption event that the Department should consider.

Commissioner Riordan questioned how many animals the Department is taking in from foreclosures. The General Manager responded that there has been a 25% increase or approximately 1000 animals per month. We do not have a foreclosure category in Chameleon. AGM Barth interjected that there is a new category of "Owner Relinquished" in Chameleon that indicates foreclosure, but it is often difficult to get people to admit that they are a foreclosure victim. "Landlord" or "Moving" are often used instead and these two categories also have experienced a huge increase. All categories are rising with the "Owner Relinquished" category increasing a few hundred per month.

Commissioner Riordan also questioned how many Spay/Neuter RFP proposals were received. GM Boks responded that the Department received 4 proposals from 2 different agencies.

## **2. COMMISSION BUSINESS**

### Approval of the Commission Meeting Minutes for June 9, and June 30, 2008

Commissioner Riordan made a motion to table the minutes for June 9 and June 30, 2008. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ponce and the motion passed 4-0.

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

Commissioners Brown, Khero, and Quincy had nothing to report.

Commissioner Riordan met with a number of humane groups, including HSUS, SPCALA, ASPCA, PETA, IDA, LCA and PAWS to get input for the circus and animal permits. She also has been invited by several animal handlers to come view their facilities.

Commissioner Ponce spoke with a representative from Fish and Game.

**C. Reconsideration from the meeting of June 30, 2008.**

Motion to reconsider that portion of the Revised New Hope Policy and Procedure Manual, Partnership Agreement, Information Forms, Reporting Requirements and Reinstatement of Spay/Neuter Fees dealing with Providing Addresses for Licensing Purposes, as approved by the Commission on June 30, 2008.

No motion made.

Public Comment:

Dina Douglas Takouris-Expressed concern about the cost of euthanasia in the shelters and increased fees for New Hope adoptions.

**3. GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR BOARD ACTION**

**A. Mandatory Collection of the One-Time \$5.00 Cat Registration Fee for New Adoptions and Owner Redemptions**

That the Board reconsider and approve making mandatory, collection of the existing one-time voluntary \$5.00 cat registration fee, payable at the time of adoption or reunification only, and direct the General Manager to implement this policy effective immediately.

Commissioner Riordan requested that this item be tabled since the online link to the report was not working and the public did not have an adequate chance to access it. Commissioner Khero requested that the minutes from the meeting at which this item was first considered (April 9, 2008) be sent to the Commission for review. Commissioner Quincey questioned whether a cat is considered a predatory animal in the state of CA and therefore a wild animal. If this is the case then can LAAS license cats in Los Angeles? GM Boks clarifies that this is not a cat license, but a voluntary registration, and that there is no State law that identifies cats as predatory animals although there is one that is used in reference to feral cats, but it is not an interpretation that the Department or City Attorney share.

Public Comment

Phyllis Daugherty: Many cities license cats in CA, i.e. Lomita and LA County. Cats are pets and people need to start taking responsibility for them. She proposed a "Home Again" idea where registered cats would not be impounded but kept in a special cage and the owner called to pick them up from the shelter.

Commissioner Riordan made a motion to table this item until the next meeting and Commissioner Quincey seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

**B. Customized Gift Certificates for Incentive Program for New Homeowners**

GM Boks explained that this program was born out of the housing foreclosure crisis and discussions with local realty groups that wanted to create a solution based program. The program would allow realtors to give new home owners at the time of the sale of a home a gift certificate to adopt an animal. The program is called "A House is Not a Home without a Pet." The Department is still working on the actual logistics of the program.

Commissioner Riordan suggested that the realtors also be given wildlife pamphlets to distribute. She also questioned what kind of promotion the Pet Care Foundation would be receiving. GM Boks clarified that they would not be receiving any special promotion by the Department. AGM Barth clarified that the realtor would make a donation to the Pet Care Foundation for \$100 in order to receive one of these special certificates. We are providing a separate gift certificate in a separate number series with the special heading A House is Not a Home without a Pet.

Commissioner Riordan stated that since this does not promote the Foundation and since the Department already has a gift certificate program that this item does not seem to need Commission approval to move forward. City Attorney Lesel agreed. The only concern is that this program limits the gift program to one non-profit organization. He also expressed a concern regarding the tax-exempt status of the donation. AGM Barth asked the Board to consider that they will be used as a marketing tool by the realtors and that it is important for the Board to understand how the program will be used and how it was established.

#### Public Comment

Phyllis Daugherty: Concerned that the program will encourage people to get a dog before they are ready for one. She believes that the certificate should not become active until 30 days after the close of escrow and that it should only apply to animals over the age of 4 months and include the notice of licensing. Also the \$100 certificate should be able to be applied to a S/N voucher for an existing pet as well.

GM Boks agreed that the Department will work with the City Attorney's office to iron out the issues concerning the program.

No Board action necessary for the Department to pursue this item.

#### **4. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**None**

**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.)

Phyllis Daugherty: She questioned why the program has to go through a 501 (c) 3 since a broker or real estate agent can write-off the purchase of the certificate as a business write-off. Encourages Department to include the aforementioned provisions.

#### **6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Commissioner Ponce requests discussion and review of the proposed design for the new South LA shelter before BOE finalizes the design.

Commissioner Brown would like to continue addressing the issues on the list of outstanding agenda items.

Commissioner Riordan would like to receive a breakdown of cat and dog adoption fees.

#### **7. ADJOURNMENT:**

Commissioner Riordan made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ponce and the motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

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**Next Commission Meeting is scheduled for 10:00 A.M., July 28, 2008**, at Los Angeles City Hall, 200 North Spring Street, Room 1060, Los Angeles, California 90012.

Please join us at our website: [www.LAAnimalservices.com](http://www.LAAnimalservices.com)