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EDWARD A. BOKS
General Manager

Report to the Board of Animal Services Commissioners

Edward A. Boks, General Manager

COMMISSION MEETING DATE: June 9, 2008

PREPARED BY: Miki Shaler

REPORT DATE: June 4, 2008

TITLE: Management Asst.

PUBLIC COMMENT WILL BE TAKEN AT THIS MEETING, BUT THE BOARD WILL HOLD CONSIDERATION TO JUNE 23, 2008

SUBJECT: Revised New Hope Policy and Procedure Manual, Partnership Agreement, Information Forms, Reporting Requirements and Reinstatement of Spay/Neuter Fees.

BOARD ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the Board:

1. Reinstatement of payment of compensatory spay/neuter fees or deposits for adoptions by New Hope Partners of animals on the New Hope Alert, excluding rabbits (to authorized New Hope rabbit rescues) effective July 1, 2008; and,
2. Adopt the remainder of the revised New Hope Policy and Procedure Manual, Partnership Agreement and Information Forms, and Reporting Requirements as described in the body of this report, to be effective as of July 1, 2008, and requiring all current organizations to complete new program paperwork by September 1, 2008.

SUMMARY:

The Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) includes a provision for the General Manager to reduce fees to 501 (c) 3 rescue organizations who sign a participant agreement (LAMC 53.11 (o)). The Department revamped and improved these partnerships through the development of the New Hope Program in July 2006. The goal of the program is to

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Subject: Revised New Hope Policy and Procedure Manual, Partnership Agreement, Information Forms, and Reporting Requirements.

maximize the Department's and the rescue organizations' resources in their shared mission to save lives and bring Los Angeles closer to its goal of becoming the first major "no kill" city in the United States.

New Hope Partners are given 24/7 access to Animal Care Centers to select animals on the New Hope Alert at no charge, including waived fees for spay/neuter surgery, microchipping, vaccinations, and upon occasion, additional medical treatment. The Program also includes concierge service and a New Hope Coordinator assigned to each Care Center to facilitate adoptions by New Hope Partners and to find homes for animals most at-risk for euthanasia.

The program has proven to be very successful, with more than 134 organizations signed on as New Hope Partners to date. The quick growth and increased awareness of the Program prompted the Department to review existing policies and procedures and to convene an ad hoc group of New Hope Partners to consider any necessary enhancements or clarifications. The experiences of the past two years and this review have revealed the need for some technical corrections to the New Hope Policy and Procedure Manual, Partnership Agreement and Information Forms, and Reporting Requirements, and that there have been inconsistencies in the application of the Program's rules. At the same time, both the City Administrative Officer (CAO) and the City Council expressed concern over the drop in the Department's revenue due in part to fee waivers under the New Hope Program.

The Department revised the New Hope Policy and Procedure Manual, Partnership Agreement and Information Forms, and Reporting Requirements in December 2007. These revisions were presented to the Board at the December 10, 2007, Commission meeting. Among the revisions were the reinstatements of payment of compensatory spay/neuter fees or deposits for adoptions by New Hope Partners of animals on the New Hope Alert. The Commissioners decided to hold a special meeting regarding item on December 17, 2007. At the meeting, it was announced that a donation of \$160,000 had been received from Dr. Gary Michelson of the Found Animal Foundation, and as a result, the recommendation to reinstate the \$28.00 fee could be tabled until July 1, 2008. The recommended revision to the Policies, Procedures, and forms were deferred so that further input from New Hope Partners could be considered.

Commissioner Riordan convened another ad hoc committee who met twice to discuss the other proposed program changes and to provide input.

The current fiscal year comes to an end on June 30, 2008 and the Department has been forced to cut \$2.5 million from its Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Budget. At the same time, there is pressure to close revenue gaps. Also, a recent audit by the City Controller's office once again singled out the Department's fee waivers for New Hope adoptions and licensing as key issues that must be addressed.

Subject: Revised New Hope Policy and Procedure Manual, Partnership Agreement, Information Forms, and Reporting Requirements.

To help address these concerns, the Department therefore recommends the following revisions to the New Hope Program:

- FEES:

- A. New Hope Alert Animals

- 1. For dogs and cats adopted by New Hope Partners from the New Hope Alert list, all adoption and microchip fees will be waived. The New Hope Partner will pay all spay/neuter fees or deposits and any applicable license fee required by law.

- B. Animals Not on the New Hope Alert. Applies only to animals that have been available to the public for adoption through one complete weekend.

- 1. If the available animal is adopted at the same time as an animal on the New Hope Alert: New Hope Partners will pay required spay/neuter fees or deposits if any and applicable license fees required by law. LAAS waives microchip fees and all other adoption fees for the available animal.
 - 2. When the New Hope Partner is not adopting a dog or cat on the New Hope Alert at the same time as adopting the available animal: New Hope Partners will pay required spay/neuter fees or deposits if any, microchip fees, and applicable license fees required by law. LAAS waives all other adoption fees for the available animal.

- Organizations must provide LAAS with the address of all adopters and transferee rescues that reside in the City of Los Angeles for purposes of follow-up on licensing, as well as the name and zip code of adopters that do not reside in the City.
- Unweaned animals may be adopted to a New Hope Partner who is willing to pay the spay/neuter fee at the time of the adoption, with the understanding that State law says that no animal that is under 8 weeks and/or unweaned may be adopted to a new owner.

Alternatively, New Hope Partners may foster unweaned animals under the existing Bottle Baby Foster Program rules which state that:

- a. Fosters will return kittens and puppies to LA Animal Services at 8-10 weeks of age.
 - b. Fostered animals may be adopted by the foster by paying the spay/neuter fee. The fee will be waived if the foster

Subject: Revised New Hope Policy and Procedure Manual, Partnership Agreement, Information Forms, and Reporting Requirements.

provides proof that that the animal has been altered. No fee will be charged for the required microchipping.

- c. If a fostered kitten or puppy should die during fostering, the foster must return the body to LA Animal Services.
- The Policies and Procedure Manual will now encompass New Hope adoption of dogs, cats, and rabbits, rather than a separate set of forms for rabbit adoptions. New Hope partners are required to specify the primary breed that the organization rescues on the Partnership Information form. As before, rabbits can only be adopted by approved New Hope rabbit rescue organizations.
 - All individuals who adopt animals under the New Hope Program must be bonafied members of an approved organization and active in the organization for six months.
 - Only the President or Director of the organization is authorized to make additions or changes to the Partnership Information form. All changes must be made in writing.
 - A California Driver's License or California Identification number must be provided for all members authorized to adopt animals on behalf of a New Hope Partner organization, including the President or Director. Anyone adopting an animal on a New Hope Alert must be willing to present a valid driver's license or California ID if requested.
 - Organizations must provide a valid phone number and email address to both their adopters and LAAS that will be responded to within 24hrs.
 - Any dog, cat, or rabbit adopted by a New Hope Partner that does not require sterilization or is being released with a medical release (D300), must be picked up within 24 hours of the adoption transaction.
 - New Hope Partners will submit monthly reports (as opposed to quarterly). LAAS has devised a report listing adoptions made by the organization and space for providing the requested information, including a spay/neuter report for unsterilized animals released from LAAS, a status report on all New Hope animals adopted from LAAS including medical and third party adoption status, microchip registration information, and address information of dogs adopted to residents of the City of Los Angeles. New Hope Partners who fail to submit their completed monthly reports by the date requested two months in a row will be suspended until their reporting is brought up to date.

Subject: Revised New Hope Policy and Procedure Manual, Partnership Agreement, Information Forms, and Reporting Requirements.

- LAAS may ask to see receipts for medical and/or boarding costs incurred, and/or proof of third-party adoption records at any time, for animals adopted by the organization through LAAS' New Hope Program.
 - New Hope Partners shall transfer registration of the animal's microchip to the adopter at the time of a legal adoption of animal (s) by a new owner from the New Hope Partner organization. The Department requires that both the adopter and New Hope Partner be listed as registrants on the microchip and prefers that the adopter be listed as the primary registrant and the New Hope Partner as the secondary registrant, but will not require it.
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FISCAL IMPACT:

The proposed revisions to the New Hope Policy and Procedure Manual, Partnership Agreement and Information Forms, and Reporting Requirements will result in an overall increase in revenue for the Department. Fee waivers, almost all of which are from the spay/neuter account, increased \$149, 072 from Fiscal Year 05/06 to Fiscal Year 06/07. Therefore, the Department expects to raise approximately \$149,000 in revenue when the proposed fee revisions in the New Hope Program take effect. In addition, the Department will be able to capture the name and address of adopters for dog licensing follow-up purposes. The overhead for administering the Program will remain largely unaffected, due to the use of technology to generate reports. Some minor costs will be incurred due to the extra staff time needed to monitor the monthly reports and to track information. This cost however, is minimal when compared to the increase in program efficiency and accountability, as well as the increase in revenue to the Department as a result of the revisions to the New Hope Program.

Approved:

Edward A. Boks, General Manager

BOARD ACTION:

_____ Passed	Disapproved _____
_____ Passed with noted modifications	Continued _____
_____ Tabled	New Date _____