



MINUTES
BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Monday, January 23, 2006
10:00 A.M.
CITY HALL
200 N. Spring St.
Room 1060
Los Angeles, CA 90012



Commissioners: Kathleen Riordan, President
Tariq Khero, Vice President
Marie Atake
Glenn S. Brown
Deborah A. Knaan

COMMISSION MEETING, 10:00 A.M.

Commission President Riordan called the Commission meeting to order at 10:10 A.M. Present were Commissioners Riordan, Khero, Atake, Brown, and Knaan.

1. REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER – EDWARD BOKS

The General Manager introduced the new mission statement of the Department of Animal Services.

A. February 9, 2006, Public Meeting at Beverly Garland Hotel

The General Manager reported that at a special meeting on February 9, the Department would introduce the new philosophies and direction of the Department to the public, and enroll them in helping the community reach the goal of “No Kill.” He would be speaking on the New Hope Program, which has resulted in dramatic increases for the number of animals being placed in homes through partner organizations in other communities.

B. Kennel Card Revision

The General Manager reported that training for staff on medical comments in regards to the kennel cards has begun. Information would be written on the back of the kennel cards and used to help place the animal in the best suited home. Behavioral assessments to evaluate and understand an animal’s needs would be performed in a way to share observations with potential adopters and rescue groups, but not render a conclusion on an animal.

C. Long-Term Foster Program

The General Manager reported on the development of a long-term foster care program with the help of Commissioner Knaan and city resident Tiffany Krug. The Department is in the process of developing the protocol for the program. Commissioner Knaan has assisted in developing the paperwork and waivers to be used. The program targets evidence animals and those animals with conditions that are more easily treatable for rehabilitation in a home environment. The Department is committed to making sure that the animals and the community is safe, and that the foster care are responsible caretakers.

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

Public Comments

Laura Beth Heisen: Commented that she has repeatedly seen employees making negative assumptions about dogs that owners have turned in

Phyllis Daugherty: Said that the employees were told not to report any negative behavior or health issues to potential adopters. The employees should be recognized as animal rescuers and commended for the hard work that they do.

Teri Austin: Thrilled about the foster program. Some animals kept at the shelters become depressed and fall into ill health.

Zsuzsa Blakely: The top reasons for owner turn-ins are moving and growth of the animal. Kennel cards are often stamped with caution warnings, discouraging adoptions. These animals are never reevaluated.

Curt Steindler: Happy about the foster program. Southwestern Herpetologist Society and Reptile & Amphibian Rescue Network do a foster program for the City, the State, and the Federal Government, but have yet to be reimbursed.

2. OLD BUSINESS

A. Amanda Foundation Valley Van Update

The vans provided services in areas where services did not previously exist, as well as the heavily populated areas of the Valley. The program now aims to reach out to the mobile home parks and rural areas. They also plan to have special days to provide spay/neutering services for feral cats. Ms. Austin further reported on the types of services that the vans provided, how the Amanda Foundation staff has dealt with non-City residents and local veterinarians, and on the special events hosted with the Los Angeles Lakers organization. She presented a brief summary on the number of surgeries performed from October 2005 to December 2005, emphasizing the importance of targeting large dogs over 50 lbs. and feral cats. Ms. Austin recommended that the feral cat spay/neuter program remain separate from the companion animal program to avoid a reduced budget for the two. She also recommended that the canvassing program receive more attention to increase the number of sterilizations for large breed and aggressive breed dogs.

Public Comments

Laura Cochrane: Stressed the importance of including a way to track the intake of feral cats.

Sue Freeman: Commended the Amanda Foundation for the great job that they have done and on their efforts to target feral cats.

Zsuzsa Blakely: Advised that the City look into the anesthesia being used in performing the spay/neuter surgeries.

Sandra Harrison: Commented on the success of the Amanda Foundation's recent spay/neuter events.

3. COMMISSION BUSINESS

B. Meetings/Events Attended

Commissioner Atake volunteered at the dog adoption event on January 21. Commissioner Brown visited the West Los Angeles shelter on January 9 and met with District Manager Derek Brown and staff. Commissioner Knaan attended the Washington Mutual dog adoption event on January 15. Commissioners Riordan and Khero had nothing to report.

A. Approval of the Minutes for November 14 and December 12, 2005, and Minutes for January 9, 2006

Commissioner Riordan read the following motion:

Proper tracking of the effectiveness of the work of the Department of Animal Services (LAAS) requires the thorough collection of data on all aspects of department activities and programs. Until now, it has been difficult to respond to criticisms of certain practices due to the absence of clear data on them. As LAAS continues to adjust and expand its programs, more importance will be placed on obtaining accurate, measurable results to determine the effectiveness of those programs.

NOW, I THEREFORE MOVE that the Department of Animal Services' data collection program be expanded to include, but not be limited to, the following categories:

1. Neonatal: For each litter of unweaned puppies and kittens released, the number of animals, the identity and location of the person/entity they're released to, and the disposition of that litter, including survival rates and spay/neuter surgeries.
2. Sick/injured/not-ready-for-sterilization animals: the identity/location of the person/entity they're released to; recorded verification within 45 days that sterilization has been accomplished or that it is still impractical; continued follow-up until it is accomplished and recorded in the database.
3. Shelter transfers: the identity of all animals transferred between shelters; the purpose of and stated need for the transfer; the census of the "donor shelter" at the time of transfer; the census of the "receiver shelter" at the time of transfer.
4. Extended hours: all adoption-related data for the adoptions taking place specifically during the extended hours at each shelter on days when they are open until 7 p.m.
5. Rabbits: record and report intakes, adoptions, euthanizations and sterilizations of rabbits broken out from the rest of the "other animals" category.

Commissioner Knaan motioned to have item 5: PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD from the minutes for November 14, 2005 transcribed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Khero and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

Commissioner Knaan motioned that the minutes for December 12, 2005 be accepted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

Commissioner Brown asked that the resolutions for the Administrative Appeal Hearings for Barking Dog Cases – BD 04605NC and BD 05516EV be added to the minutes for January 9, 2006, and that its approval be tabled to the next Commission meeting.

Public Comments

Zsuzsa Blakely: Strongly felt that there is a lack of adequate venues for the City's spay/neuter programs.

4. GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR NEW BOARD ACTION

A. None

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

B. Introduction of New Programs

- New Hope Program
- Plus 1 – Minus 1 Program
- Makeover Program

The General Manager gave a brief overview of his New Hope Program. "New Hope" describes the Department's commitment to transferring the animals over to partner groups to actively find them suitable homes and proper care. As part of the program, the General Manager wanted to have special extended hours at the shelters specifically available for rescue groups so that they would receive complete staff attention. He also wanted to find a way to assign professional groomers to each of the shelters to address the animals' grooming needs.

Action Item: Update on the New Hope Program to be tabled as an agenda item for the next Commission Meeting on 02/13/06.

Public Comments

Zsuzsa Blakely: The shelters should not be considered rescue groups because they still kill animals. The numbers on euthanasia are down from a year ago only because impound numbers are also down.

Lisa Janes: Commented that the Rescue and Humane Alliance wanted to meet with the Department to review the New Hope Program in detail and develop something better to submit to the Commission.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Sandra Harrison: The Humane community is working diligently to rescue all the Angel Puss cats from the South Los Angeles shelter. Asked for more time to allow for the rescue.

Phyllis Daugherty: The Quick-Spay Education film was complete. Filming on "How to Start and Operate a Spay Neuter Clinic" was also complete and ready for distribution. Mentioned a news story about cats kept in a North Hollywood apartment in an attempt to prevent them from being euthanized at the shelters.

Teri Austin: Announced that Downtown Dogs and the Amanda Foundation would be hosting "Pimp Your Pet" in Watts on Saturday, February 11. On Saturday, February 4, the Amanda Foundation would host a library day for children in Watts and also promote the "Pimp Your Pet" event.

Zsusza Blakely: Commented impound numbers are down due to the success of the spay/neuter program. Said the only the General Manager should authorize the euthanasia of animals at the shelter. Upset that animals are only being released to individuals carrying bailout cards.

Curt Steindler: Would like to see a regular reports on the disposition of animals available on the Department and at public meetings. Wanted to follow-up on the acceptance of credit cards for online license renewals.

Lisa Janes: Requested that all Commission meeting handouts be made available to the public on the Department Website.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 12:25 P.M.