



ANIMAL CARE SERVICES CITIZENS ADVISORY

MINUTES

January 30, 2007

ATTENDANCE

Members

Pat Wilcox
Moe Ortiz
Molly Kenneth
Debra Armstrong
Ashle Crocker
Eugene Lukehart (new member)

Staff

Donna Wicky
Hector Cazares

Public

Marge, Puppy Love Rescue
Teresa Corrigan
Laura Turner
Mitch Prefax
Dia Good

*Note: MSP is used in the minutes as an abbreviation to indicate Moved, Seconded and Passed.
MSF is used in the minutes as an abbreviation to indicate Moved, Seconded and Failed.*

I. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

Meeting called to order at Sacramento City Hall Building, 915 "I" Street, Room CH 1217, Sacramento, California 95814 at 6:05 p.m. by Pat Wilcox.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 24, 2006

Motion to approve the 10-24-06 minutes was made by Moe, and seconded by Molly.

MSP by unanimous vote.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Dia Good voiced her concern regarding chronic staffing problems at shelter, specifically with kennel technicians. Dia reported that, in June, she spoke to Kathy Vos regarding staff vacancies at shelter. Kathy and Hector proposed limited term positions with benefits, in an attempt to address the problem. Dia does not think this has eliminated the problem. Donna advised that many staff are on light duty or disability, and there is a shortage of workers. Dia has received several e-mails regarding a lack of staff/help at shelter – of particular concern is that dog rescue groups are not able to get access to

take pictures of the dogs; also, rabbit rescue got a rabbit from the shelter, and it was in very poor health and eventually died.

Dia also raised a concern regarding the shelter's consideration of stopping use of a certain cleaning agent (trifectant).

Pat Wilcox commented that if the committee were to look at HSUS report, the number of staff they suggest for the shelter is well in excess of the actual number of staff at the shelter.

Hector agreed that staffing is an issue, not just in Sacramento but across the country. It is entry level work, low pay, and stressful. It is also a springboard for people to move up in the City.

Donna reported that a staff person that has been off for a year is now returning to work full time. Another staff person has also just been added. Shelter also has an interim volunteer coordinator (Claudia) who is doing a great job.

Dia concluded by suggesting that the shelter identify the problem – whether it be salary, hierarchy, or a combination. She doesn't think it is acceptable to just accept the fact that staffing at all shelters are low. Hector said they are working on remedying the problem, for example, with the limited term positions, but he also pointed out that salary is not within the shelter's control; it is within the purview of the unions. The political reality is that animal control officers tend to be under-compensated generally.

Donna said that they have a handful of employees that have been there 4 or 5 years, and they have quality staff. Also, she pointed out that the shelter is letting people go if they don't perform well – they don't want to have staff that are not committed to the animals. She also notes that on-the-job injuries are very common.

Dia asked that the committee take on the issue and bring it to City Council.

Mitch Prefax said that we have resources to help get more people at the shelter. She supports Dia's request for research into the staffing issue.

Teresa Corrigan and Marge and Laura also support Dia's request. Resources are available to get more people to the shelter. Hector said they don't have a shortage of applicants; they have trouble finding good people. Also, the City has allowed the shelter to hire more employees than they have available positions, by hiring for temporary/limited term positions.

Hector said the total number of kennel tech positions in the shelter is 16. Right now, the shelter has 14 slots full. Shelter also "double-baps" to make sure all slots stay full. One limited term employee is expected to go permanent, making total staff 15. Donna also said they have been raising the bar on the skill level and care of animals. Shelter looks for animal lovers, people dedicated to animals.

Pat clarified the issue for the Committee as looking into and researching staffing and salary issues. The Committee can put this item on the agenda for the next meeting.

Hector suggests that committee appear at the City Council meeting in April or May, when Council considers the budget. Hector said the business as a whole is underpaid. Pat suggests that the committee write a formal letter to submit to the Council when budget is presented to Council.

IV. QUARTERLY SHELTER STATISTICS FOR YEAR END 2006

Donna passed out the statistical comparison from 2002 to 2006. She pointed out that the total euthanasia numbers for adoptable animals have gone way down, which is great news.

Dia said that the number reported on the report -- 3% of the cats -- euthanized last year is not an accurate representation. She has been going to the shelter for many months, and she has seen more cats than that be euthanized. Donna said the numbers are input into data base, and are accurate records.

V. FOCAS FUND – FIRST QUARTER 2007

Donna passed out the FOCAS account summary for the Committee's review

VI. INFORMATION ITEMS

a. Division Manager's Report

Hector passed out the report.

- 1) Volunteer hours. Hector reports great volunteers, and good numbers.
- 2) Cattery design. RFP is set for spring, groundbreaking for June 2007, expected 1 year construction time. Construction costs have increased dramatically.
- 3) Meet and greet area. New cement has been poured. New canopies will be installed in next month or two. More exercise areas will be available.
- 4) Plan to demolish volunteer trailer, in February.
- 5) Capital improvement projects.
- 6) Bulletin boards in front office will be redone. The shelter's accomplishments must be celebrated. Employees and the public should be proud of all they have done.
- 7) New hires – Claudia Schlachter, and Sara Harden (new ACT). Also, Martin has returned to his position as an ACT.
- 8) March 30 is the Tour for Life, sponsored by North Shore Animal League. Shelter joining with the County this year as co-sponsors. Big adoption event.
- 9) Law library event Friday, April 20. Sac County law library is putting on fundraiser for shelter. It is called "Yappy Hour". \$10 donation. Food, wine, cheese, pet psychic, bee columnist, authors.
- 10) Groomers. Two groomers have offered free services – 1 dog and 1 cat per week.
- 11) Volunteer orientation – first one for 2007, to be held on February 14, 2007.

- 12) ACT assist. Rosemary shuttles privately owned cats to Placer County, where they can get altered for low cost. Shelter provides van and driving services to deliver cats, have them altered, and bring them back.
- 13) Mock emergency disaster drill, conducted at SPCA with shelter, Noah's Wish. Noah's Wish brought their equipment. In Sacramento we have HSUS, United Animal nations, and Noah's Wish, to help in emergency situations.
- 14) Angelina's birthday party. 8 year old had party at the shelter – asked guests to bring gifts for the animals. It was a great event.

b. Training update

Hector said that field officers will be receiving training in Marin. Shelter sending 4 officers there for 2 weeks for Humane Officer Training (Cruelty & Neglect Investigations).

California Animal Care Conference is coming up in April 22 – 24, 2007, in Sacramento. Conference is open to the public, with registration fees between \$100 - \$250.

VII. VOTE ON UCD PAIN STUDY PROPOSAL

Dia said that she did not receive information that a vote would take place at this meeting. However, the action item for a vote is on the agenda.

Moe made a motion to vote no on the pain study proposal. Molly seconds. MSP by unanimous vote.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Debra said the Shelter's spay/neuter clinics are staffed with vets through the end of the year – July is the only month she has no vet to work. All these vets will be donating their services for free. Donna expressed her thanks.

Debra said Puppylove Rescue is increasing its spay/neuter program for low income people. Its emphasis is to decrease the City's overflow. Plan to expand to Rio Linda, Del Paso, and engage vets in different areas. Debra thanked Hector and Pat for good references, and she will be looking for more grant money to supplement Puppylove's funds. They have 15 vets lined up in Sacramento.

Debra's term is up in March, and she will be leaving then. She thanked Marge for getting her to every meeting in the last 3 years.

IX. SET FUTURE AGENDA

Agenda items: (1) Call to order and roll call; (2) Approve minutes of 1/30/07; (3) General Public Comment; (4) Staffing and Budget Issues; (5) Spay Neuter; (6) Information Items; (7) Announcements; (8) Set Future Agenda

X. ADJOURNMENT

Debra made motion to adjourn at 7:40 p.m. Molly seconded. MSP by unanimous vote. Meeting adjourned.