



Coachella Valley Animal Campus

COMMISSION MINUTES

Animal Campus Commission

City of Cathedral City

Mayor Stan Henry



City of Coachella

Councilmember Magdalena Zepeda
Councilmember Betty Sanchez
(Alternate)

City of Desert Hot Springs

Councilmember Joe McKee

City of Indian Wells

Mayor Pro Tem Dana Reed
Warren Morelion (Alternate)

City of Indio

Councilmember Elaine Holmes
Jason Chan (Alternate)



City of La Quinta

Councilmember John Pena
Mayor Pro Tem Kristy Franklin
(Alternate)

City of Palm Desert

Frankie Riddle

City of Rancho Mirage

Mayor Pro Tem G. Dana Hobart
Chairman

County of Riverside

John J. Benoit, 4th District
Patricia Cooper, Board Assistant
Vice-Chair
Marion Ashley, 5th District

Animal Samaritans

Betty Maytag, President
Ex-Officio



County Staff

Carol-Ann Myers
Executive Assistant I



Thursday, January 8, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Commission Meeting

CVAC

72-050 Pet Land Place

Thousand Palms, CA 92276

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

County Supervisor John J. Benoit led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Animal Campus Commission Meeting was called to order on Thursday, January 8, 2015 at 9:33 a.m. at the CVAC, 72-050 Pet Land Place, Thousand Palms, CA, by Alternate Jason Chan from the City of Indio.

A roll call was conducted and it was determined that there was a quorum. The following were present:

Members in Attendance:

Supervisor John J. Benoit, County of Riverside
Dana Hobart, Mayor Pro Tem, Rancho Mirage
John Pena, Councilmember, La Quinta
David Garcia, City Manager, City of Coachella
Frankie Riddle, City of Palm Desert
Fred Saunders, Ex-Officio, Animal Samaritans

Others in attendance:

Jason Chan, Sr. Management Analyst, Indio (**proxy to vote**)
Earl Moss, Police Captain, City of Cathedral City (**proxy to vote**)
Micaela Wilkey, Marketing Associate, City of Indian Wells (**proxy to vote**)
Patricia Cooper, Board Assistant, County of Riverside
Tom Snyder, Chief Operating Officer, Animal Samaritans
Michelle Bergeron, Rescue Coordinator, Animal Samaritans
Frank Corvino, Deputy Director, County Animal Services
Dr. Allan Drusys, Chief Veterinarian, County Animal Services
Jaclyn Schart, Animal Behaviorist, County Animal Services
Kimberly McWhorter, Program Chief, County Animal Services
Carol-Ann Myers, Executive Assistant, County Animal Services

3. FINALIZATION OF AGENDA:

The agenda was approved as submitted.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Lisa Blodgett (La Quinta Resident): Lisa Blodgett spoke on wanting a follow up on her concern from the November meeting regarding categories of animals being euthanized on the Staff Report. Jason Chan notified her there was an agenda item under County Animal Services that would address her question.

Coachella Valley Animal Campus

5. **ANIMAL CAMPUS COMMISSION MEMBERS AND DIRECTOR COMMENTS:** None
6. **CORRESPONDENCE:** Letter authorizing proxy voting rights to Captain Earl Moss (Cathedral City), for the January 8, 2015 meeting. Letter authorizing proxy voting rights to Micaela Wilkey (Indian Wells), for the January 8, 2015 meeting.
7. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Captain Earl Moss motioned for the change of ensuring each Elected Official's titles are written throughout the minutes. The Commission unanimously agreed for the change to be made, with approval. m/s Hobart/Moss.
8. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2015:** Mayor Pro Tem Dana Hobart was elected chair. m/s Moss/Benoit Patricia Cooper was elected Vice-Chair. m/s Pena/ Hobart
9. **COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES:** The City of Indio will be moving toward having the availability for residents to license pets at their City Hall that will accommodate both English and Spanish speakers. A computer will be located at City Hall for residents to utilize, and staff assistance will be available as needed. The City will accept cash/check from residents who do not have a credit/debit card - the City will utilize their own credit card machine to reimburse the County for the license. Supervisor Benoit inquired if Desert Hot Springs was moving in a similar direction with their licensing program. Dr. Drusys indicated in the affirmative, however they are behind on the development. The best approach would be for them to model Indio's approach. Issuance of Notice to Comply (NTC) is being issued to non-compliant residents in Desert Hot Springs. This is not a citation, only a warning notice giving the resident 30 days to gain compliance. The NTC will be issued by the Department's License Inspectors (LI) as opposed to a regular citation. Mayor Pro Tem Dana Hobart commented in respect to licensing that it does not help reunite the owner with their pet, unless the dog is brought to the shelter. Mayor Pro Tem Dana Hobart inquired about possibly including owner information on the County License Tags in order to reunite the pet with the owner; Supervisor Benoit agreed that this would be beneficial to look into. Dr. Allan Drusys stated that the State was responsible for setting guidelines for what may be included on license tags, but that this may be a possibility. The County currently has a license tag machine in the Riverside Shelter Lobby where owners can purchase a tag that displays their information on it for a fee of \$5.00. A similar machine would be beneficial in order to engrave information on the current license tags; Dr. Drusys will look into the legality of it. The commission motioned to have this added to the next agenda, and it was unanimously approved.

Deputy Director Frank Corvino spoke on the importance of microchipping. The County has been in contact with a new company called "Finding Rover," which is an application downloaded via a smart phone that uses facial recognition in dogs in order to reunite them with their owners. The owner uploads a photo of their pet to the Finding Rover database. Any Good Samaritan locating a lost dog can take a photo of the dog and upload it to the Finding Rover database to receive information to reunite the dog with its owner. The department will begin to notify new adopters of this application as well as have a press release sent out. Finding Rover does not cross-reference websites such as Pet Harbor. Supervisor Benoit mentioned that in the future, the County may need to reference the application upon impound of all animals. Dr. Drusys stated that this may be an internal process that the County adopts in the future once they begin to use the application.

Animal Behavior Assessment (Jaclyn Schart): Prior to the start of the presentation, Mayor Pro Tem Dana Hobart presented the concern that adoptable animals are being classified as having behavioral issues by demonstrating typical animal behaviors such as “food aggression.” Mayor Pro Tem Dan Hobart also added that Riverside County claiming to be a “no-kill facility” diminishes the concern from residents to adopt. Dr. Drusys clarified that the Department of Animal Services does not claim to be a no kill facility and that the health of the animals changes on a day-to-day basis based on various exposures from being in a shelter environment with other animals. The Department does not euthanize animals classified as healthy and adoptable. Jaclyn Schart, the County’s Animal Behaviorist and Riverside Shelter Supervisor, attended the meeting in order to discuss how behavior is assessed at each of the Department’s shelters and what behavior classifies an animal as “treatable” or “untreatable.” Jackie reminded everyone that the department is a “shelter”, and that the intention is not for animals to stay under the shelter’s care long term. Jackie also stated that animals react differently in different environments and do not have resources for protection, thus increasing their reactions. Each division within the department is trained to observe the animals’ behavior from the moment of intake, including in the field. Jackie also added that the kennel staff observes most of the animals’ behavior as they are responsible for taking care of them on a daily basis. Many dogs in the shelter have been there for 30, 60, and even 90 days. Over time, behavioral habits may develop in the dog, including aggression. Dr. Allan Drusys added that the number one dog bite occurrence happens when staff is trying to break up a dog fight in the kennels. The county offers many adoption specials and waives the adoption fees in order to increase the number of adopted animals. Events such as the Indio Fair are the perfect opportunity for the department to not only adopt out animals, but to provide education for the public as well. Another tactic that the department uses to increase adoptions is by creating unique names for each animal that will draw positive attention. The County also advertises animals on the LED sign in front of the Riverside shelter. Mayor Pro Tem Dana Hobart inquired about the opportunity for sponsorship on specific animals. Deputy Director Frank Corvino stated that would not be difficult and offered to present the department’s “Euthanasia Reduction Plan” at the next commission meeting as it covers all adoption initiatives being discussed. The plan addresses all ideas to reduce euthanasia and increase adoption. Michelle Bergeron who runs the Adoption Alliance Program for Animal Samaritans added that their group works closely with County staff to provide resources for animals with mild behavioral issues. If Animal Samaritans does not feel the animal is behaviorally sound, they will not transfer it out into the public due to safety. City Manager of Coachella, David Garcia, inquired about where these types of animals go and if Animal Samaritans defers animals to the county that are not adoptable. CEO Fred Saunders stated that they will find a rescue for the animals. City Manager David Garcia also pointed out that the flow of animals coming into the shelter exceeds the demand of people wanting to adopt animals and rescues. Jackie also added that if an animal is not behaviorally sound but someone is still interested in adopting, the shelter will ask the individual to sign a waiver form and we would then adopt the animal to them; this is handled on a case by case basis. Kimberly McWhorter, Program Chief for Animal Services pointed out that length of stay contributes to behavior issues and the health of the animals.

Case Updates (Frank Corvino): A puppy was impounded with a wound that appeared to be caused by a rubber band wrapped around its mouth. The owner received three years of probation, and the Department was able to treat the injuries and adopt the puppy out.

10. ANIMAL SAMARITANS & ADOPTION ALLIANCE UPDATE- Fred Saunders CEO: A facility in Indio is being built in order to serve the unincorporated areas of the East Valley. The expected completion date is the end of March or the beginning of April. Animal Samaritans is currently working on hiring staff and is in need of Veterinarians. The clinic in Indio will be open six days a week and can perform approximately 29 surgeries per day. Mr. Saunders

thanked the City of Indio for their assistance throughout building the facility. Mr. Saunders was also interested in the possibility of being able to sell licenses at the new Indio facility, and will report back to the County regarding altering the current license tags issued by the State. Tom Snyder introduced the Ritz Carlton Men's Fashion Show, an event that is taking place March 7th. Michelle Bergeron reported that 7,122 animals have been saved through the adoption alliance program.

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting is scheduled for March 12, 2015 at 9:30AM at CVAG: 72-710 Fred Waring Drive Palm Desert, CA 92260

12. ADJOURNMENT

Jason Chan, City of Indio, adjourned the meeting at 10:46 a.m.