



# Coachella Valley Animal Campus

## MINUTES

Thursday – November 7, 2019  
9:30 a.m.  
**Commission Meeting**  
Coachella Valley Animal Campus  
72050 Pet Land Place  
Thousand Palms, CA 92276

### Animal Campus Commission

#### City of Indian Wells

Councilmember Ty Peabody

**Chairman**

Councilmember Kimberly Muzik  
(Alternate)

#### City of Desert Hot Springs

#### City of Cathedral City

Councilmember Raymond

Gregory

**Vice-Chairman**

Mayor Pro Tem John Aguilar  
(Alternate)

#### City of Coachella

Mayor Pro Tem Emmanuel

Martinez

Vacant (Alternate)

#### City of Indio

Mayor Lupe Ramos Watson

Councilmember Elaine Holmes

(Alternate)

Scott Trujillo

(City Representative)

#### City of La Quinta

Councilmember Steve Sanchez

Councilmember Kathleen

Fitzpatrick (Alternate)

#### City of Palm Desert

Councilmember Kathleen Kelly

Mayor Susan Marie Weber

(Alternate)

#### Palm Springs

#### Animal Shelter

Gabrielle Amster –

Executive Director

#### Friends of Palm Springs

#### Animal Shelter

Tamara Hedges- President

Ex- Officio

#### City of Rancho Mirage

Mayor G. Dana Hobart

Mayor Pro Tem Ted Weill

(Alternate)

#### County of Riverside

V. Manuel Perez, 4<sup>th</sup> District

Amy Cuen, Board Assistant

Jeff Hewitt, 5<sup>th</sup> District

#### Animal Samaritans

Len D. Betz, President

Ex-Officio

Tom Snyder, CEO

#### County Staff

Laurie Dozier

Executive Assistant I

### 1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### 2. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Animal Campus Commission Meeting was called to order on Thursday, November 7, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. at the Coachella Valley Animal Campus, 72050 Pet Land Place, Thousand Palms, CA 92276, by Chairman, Councilmember Ty Peabody.

A roll call was conducted by the **County Staff, Laurie Dozier**, and it was determined that there was a quorum. The following were present:

#### Members in Attendance:

Councilmember Ty Peabody, City of Indian Wells  
Mayor Pro Tem Susan Marie Weber, City of Palm Desert  
Amy Cuen, Board Assistant, Riverside County  
Councilmember Raymond Gregory, Cathedral City  
Mayor Pro Tem Emmanuel Martinez, City of Coachella  
Assistant City Manager Scott Trujillo, City of Indio  
Councilmember Steve Sanchez, City of La Quinta

#### Others in attendance:

Dr. Allan Drusys, Director and Chief Veterinarian, County of Animal Services  
John Welsh, Public Information Officer, County Animal Services  
Chris Mayer, Commander of Field Service, County of Animal Services  
Kim McWhorter, Program Chief, County of Animal Services  
Deanna Burnett, Operations Chief, County of Riverside  
Gabrielle Amster, Executive Director, Palm Springs Animal Shelter  
Tamara Hedges, President, Friends of Palm Springs Animal Shelter  
Tom Snyder, Animal Samaritans  
Laurie Dozier, Executive Assistant, County Animal Services

### 3. FINALIZATION OF AGENDA:

The agenda was approved as submitted.

### 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes approved as submitted Raymond/Trujillo m/s.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

### **Brad Anderson:**

Mr. Anderson discussed mosquitos and to be aware of standing water, and the water that collects under your refrigerator. He also advised to be aware of mosquitos following your pets into the house.

### **Michael Phipps-Russell (Loving All Animals):**

Loving All Animals has moved from Palm Desert. They now have a full time shelter that operates 7 days a week. They plan to expand and are working with the county to expand their permit. The new facility has had everything updated and replaced. The community has been donating a lot of animal food in their personal containers. The containers have mold and may be contaminating the animal food. We have stopped accepting these kinds of donations. We would like to note that these containers that are used regularly can expose humans to foodborne pathogens. We need to remind the public that animal food is still food and we need to wash our hands regularly while handling. We ask that everyone please speak to your staff and educate them on food safety and handling. If time permits, please stop in and see our new facility.

## **CORRESPONDENCE:**

No correspondence.

## **6. ANIMAL CAMPUS COMMISSION MEMBERS AND DIRECTOR COMMENTS:**

Scott Trujillo stated that Indio High School has a mission this year to partner with different agencies working with pets and animals, so anytime you need volunteers for a project and they can assist, please contact him and he will send you in the right direction.

## **7. RIVERSIDE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES:**

- **Dr. Allan Drusys, Director and Chief Veterinarian:** Dr. Drusys discussed animal services' budget, and stated that there will be fee increases. The Board requires a three step process to amend or present an ordinance. The fee increases will be for Ordinance 630 and 560. On December 10<sup>th</sup> the increases will be introduced to the Board of Supervisors. On January 7<sup>th</sup> there will be a public hearing. We are looking at a full cost recovery structure for the entire department. Many of our department fees, with the exception of our unincorporated dog licensing fees, have not been addressed for 8-10 years. A 20% increase is the suggested recommendation fee which is very close to the 20% increase of the LA basin. This is just a starting point, the Board of Supervisors may have other suggestions. This was done at the request of the Board, and we did what we were asked to present. Budget proposals and requirements reduced NCC (Net County Cost) by 4 million dollars, we can no longer do more with less, layoffs, and what we require of ourselves to care for the animals and cities. We would have to close our San Jacinto Valley Animal Campus to carve out 4 million dollars to run our department. We were given 3 million dollars, with a 1 million dollar cut. Can we survive? We can survive, with fee increases. So now we move forward. Dr. Drusys stated that if the Animal Campus Commission Board would like an emergency meeting to discuss, and give input before the increases go to the Board of Supervisors we will schedule that meeting. The Animal Campus Commission members would like to see the formula, basis for the calculations, and a copy of the study used for the increase to ensure they are not being overbilled. Dr. Drusys stated that we are not requesting full cost recovery all at

once. We are looking at a 20% cola as a bench mark, the same as the LA basin, and phased in over time.

- **John Welsh, Public Information Officer:** The Board of Supervisors' Chairman praised many department's efforts due to the recent fires. Our department was not mentioned, although our department works very hard during the fires. John would like to praise our department and our staff for all the work they do. John works very hard to showcase the work our department does and uphold our image during fires, events, cases and District Attorney involved cases. Days before Halloween, and with the thought of having many children out trick-or-treating, our department did a North Shore sweep in Mecca, CA. We impounded 34 dogs. KESQ and KMIR picks up many of our stories and showcases our department, staff, and the work we do.
- **Chis Mayer, Commander of Field Services:** Field services requests have increased. Animal Services is required to staff the Emergency Operations Center when it is activated due to fire emergencies. We do not receive reimbursements for this. We work as a well-oiled machine with evacuations, staging, and the returning of animals. We recently had four incidents in one day. During the four incidents, we were required to be at all locations, as well as staff the (EOC) Emergency Operations Center. With limited staff it begins to take a toll on staff, but as a department we make it work because it is required of us.
- **Kim McWhorter, Program Chief:** The Community Cat Program, Best Friends and Palm Springs are working jointly with this program. Best Friends will be handing over the program to Coachella Valley Animal Campus in December. The impact of this program has been tremendous. Impounds have dropped by half over the past three years. We will be taking action to continue this program. With the agreement of this program comes a consultant and tools to be able to take over and keep this program moving forward. It's our responsibility as a community to keep this program going. Dr. Drusys stated dog and cat impounds have dropped to half, making our revenue decreased due to our impound rate decrease.
- 8. **ANIMAL SAMARITANS (Tom Snyder, CEO):** In December, with the Community Cat Program being handed over to Coachella Valley Animal Campus, Animal Samaritans would like to increase grants and goals to keep building up the community cat program. We want to remain a resource and partner with Palm Springs to go after grants together. The Indio clinic expansion has been progressing. This will increase the capacity, and we have hired a third veterinarian. We are also looking to grow our Ramon Road no-kill shelter, and utilize the land next to our vet clinic. Our biggest fundraiser, The Men of the Desert, will be happening on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Don't forget to purchase your tickets!
- 9. **PALM SPRINGS ANIMAL SHELTER (Gabrielle Amster, Executive Director):** Reviewed STATS handout. During Clear the Shelters in August, Palm Springs had 281 adoptions and not too many returns. We are working hard to have more open adoptions. For the month of October we have done 152 TNR intakes. Ty Peabody suggested that Palm Springs apply for a grant through Indian Wells.

**Friends of Palm Springs Animal Shelter (Tamara Hedges, President):** Regarding raising fees, the cost for caring for animals in a humane way is not easy or cheap. Palm Springs stated they raise over a million dollars every year to help with costs. Palm Springs stated they take in animals from all of our cities. They are doing programs all over the county. They will not be raising fees or charging more for spay/neutering. We are only requesting to raise our licensing

fees. They want to help the people who want to help their animals. Raymond Gregory stated he appreciates the work they are doing.

**10. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next meeting of the Animal Campus Commission is scheduled for February 6, 2020 at 9:30am at the Coachella Valley Animal Campus, 72-050 Pet Land Place, Thousand Palms, CA 92276.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 10:26 a.m.