



Coachella Valley Animal Campus

MINUTES

Thursday – May 9, 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, 4th District

Esmeralda Perez, Board Assistant

Jeff Hewitt, 5th 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, May 9, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. at the Coachella Valley Animal Campus, 72050 Pet Land Place, Thousand Palms, CA 92276, by Mayor G. Dana Hobart, Councilmember with the City of Rancho Mirage.

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:

Mayor G. Dana Hobart, city of Rancho Mirage
 Councilmember Kathleen Kelly, City of Palm Desert
 Esmeralda Perez, Board Assistant, Riverside County
 Councilmember Raymond Gregory, Cathedral City
 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
 Michelle Bergeron, 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 Kelly/Hobart m/s.

5. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR 2019:

Councilmember Raymond Gregory, Cathedral City, was elected for 2019 Vice-Chairman.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Brad Anderson:

Mr. Anderson is pleased to see that the fly issue has been mediated.

Mr. Anderson has submitted a letter into public record for the non-public agenda comments.

Please see attached letter.

Michael Phipps-Russell (Loving All Animals):

Reimbursements are available for routine vaccinations in the city of Palm Desert at a rate of \$25 for routine vaccinations, \$50 per spay or neuter, and for adoption costs which range from \$55 to \$113 for up to four animals per household, per year when they adopt a pet from the Coachella Valley Animal Campus or any other nonprofit organization within the City. Michael Phipps-Russell thanked Susan Weber and the City of Palm Desert for their support. Councilmember Hobart advised Loving All Animals to approach each City Council and pitch the idea to get them on board with this rebate.

Kim Hardee (Coachella Animal Network):

Spay and neuter clinics have subsidized Kim's clinics. Coachella Animal Network is up to 7000 spay and neuters! The biggest issue is getting the word out. Councilmember Hobart suggested that Kim Hardee speak at the next Indio Council Meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE: Received a letter appointing the Councilmember, Raymond Gregory from Cathedral City to serve as the representative to the Coachella Valley Animal Campus Commission, and Mayor Pro Tem, John Aguilar as an alternate. Received a letter appointing Councilmember Edward "Ty" Peabody from Indian Wells to serve as the representative to the Coachella Valley Animal Campus Commission, and Councilmember Kimberly Muzik as the alternate for 2019.

6. ANIMAL CAMPUS COMMISSION MEMBERS AND DIRECTOR COMMENTS:

No comments.

7. RIVERSIDE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES:

- **Dr. Allan Drusys, Director and Chief Veterinarian:** Dr. Drusys stated that he is the newly appointed Director of Animal Services. As promised to staff, and the Board of Supervisors, he and the department will continue to move forward with our initiatives and make the county a better place for people and animals. Councilmember Hobart asked to pass on his sincere deepest appreciation to Rob Miller and Frank Corvino for the work they have done over the years, and the experience they both have brought and have done over the years, and to let them both know they will be greatly missed. Director Drusys stated he has been consumed with budget issues, and some of that comes from the City of San Bernardino. In anticipation of questions that the Board of Supervisors had the other day, our primary goal has always been a 90% live release rate for all animals. He is happy to report that from July 1, 2018 to April 30, 2019, the live release rate was 89.2%. This is the highest it's ever been. In 2018 it was 83 or 84%. We as a department are meeting our goals. Cats are approaching a 40% live release rate, which is almost three times

higher than what it was six years ago. We believe Best Friends in the valley, which has now extended to our Riverside location has had a very positive influence on the cat population and our live release rate. Dr. Drusys explained treatable and untreatable referencing page 4 of 7 in the 2019 Staff Report for this period. Dr. Drusys gave an update regarding the City of San Bernardino proposal/contract. He stated at our Tuesday's Board of Supervisors meeting there was no motion by the board to move forward. Rates will go up across the board to be at full cost recovery. At this time we are working with the Executive Office, but the increase is unknown at this time. We do realize that cities are building their budgets for this year and have been asking for information from us, and we do apologize for the delay, but the fee structure is still being discussed. September 28th, 2019 is World Rabies Day. There will be a Public Health celebration with free rabies vaccination. Palms Springs and Animals Samaritans stated they would help out as well. Dr. Drusys officially introduced Dr. Kim McWhorter, and stated that she has graduated with her Doctoral Degree, and the department is proud to have her as part of such a productive team.

- **John Welsh, Public Information Officer:** Discussed the Puppy Dump case in the Coachella Valley. A woman dumped a bag of puppies (7) behind an auto parts store in Coachella on Thursday afternoon and now she's being investigated for animal cruelty. 54-year-old Deborah Sue Culwell was arrested by Riverside County Animal Services Commander Chris Mayer. She faces seven felony charges of animal cruelty and seven misdemeanor charges of animal abandonment. One of the seven puppies has died. There were a total of 38 dogs on Ms. Culwell's property and we ended up impounding all of them from her residence. For Animal Services this has been a very significant case. We have reached every media outlet, including the New York Times and TMZ.
<https://www.ksq.com/news/one-of-seven-puppies-thrown-in-coachella-dumpster-dies/1072415528>
Staff at Riverside County Animal Services are nursing a baby burro back to health after it was found lost and injured. Officials believe the baby burro got separated from her mother and herd sometime this week. She's only a couple days old. Reche Canyon resident Roger Eldridge, who immediately called Riverside County Animal Services, found the burro Wednesday. The animal suffered a laceration in her back area, but she has now been treated and bottle-fed and she is expected to be OK. She is being fostered and bottle fed by an animal services staff member until she is healthy and old enough for her next adventure - maybe adoption or a donkey refuge. Animal Services took many hits on the social media front regarding the possible contract with the City of San Bernardino. The city of San Bernardino approached our department to contract with, we did not seek them out. Their shelter is over 50 years old and solicits ice blocks for their animal kennels to keep cool in the summer. At this point, we are not sure what will happen. Social media does not reflect that. Breaking news just came through from KSQ regarding another dumped puppy, possibly tortured in the Coachella Valley.
- **Kim McWhorter, Program Chief:** Today the Coachella Valley Animal Shelter's Volunteer Program is having an event with Keller Williams Realty for Red Day. It is going very well, there are over 40 volunteers washing, walking and socializing dogs and cats. We are in our 3rd year with the Best Friends Community Cat Grant, and it has been very successful in the Coachella Valley. Cat impounds have decreased by half, which shows the program is working and live release has increased. Best Friends will be implementing their program in our Riverside, San Jacinto and Blythe shelters. A foundation has been working with Best Friends and would like to fund this program.
- 8. **ANIMAL SAMARITANS (Tom Snyder, CEO):** Michelle Bergeron spoke on behalf of Tom Snyder. To date and with help, Animal Samaritans have saved over 15,000 lives. The Indio clinic expansion is progressing well. We are in search of a veterinarian, although there seems to be a shortage at this time. Our new website has been launched. We are hoping to see it grow as we

move forward. From May 1st at 8am to May 18th at 5pm there will be a Feed the Fur Babies food drive. There are three different drop-off locations. Animal Samaritans Shelter, Thousand Palms Vet Clinic, and the Indio Vet Clinic. For more information, please visit our website. <https://ansams.staging.wpengine.com/event/feed-the-furbabies/>.

9. **PALM SPRINGS ANIMAL SHELTER (Gabrielle Amster, Executive Director):** Adoptions have increased and In-takes are becoming less than out-takes, which shows our efforts are working. This will be Ms. Amster's first kitten season with the Palm Spring Animal Shelter and she is interested to see the TNR results and the difference it has made. Ringworm has been an issue. We now have a protocol in place and we are trying to eliminate it all together.

Friends of Palm Springs Animal Shelter (Tamara Hedges, President): Puppy and dog dumping seem to be happening much more often, and on a much wider scale. They are dumping animals on trails, in the middle of nowhere, and a popular place seems to be Walmart in Palm Springs. Kim Hardee stated different cultures need to be educated and due to a lack of knowledge regarding resources and until we are able to break this mindset there will be no change. Education and assistance is a good place to start. Commander Mayer stated that the investigation in the Palm Desert puppy store, along with the diligence of Sergeant Hernandez and the department, the owner of puppy store finally closed shop. Dr. Drusys stated that state legislature requires puppies to come from shelters. The business only needs to become a 501C3, meet federal standard, then technically, and legally they are able to sell puppies. This has caused a loophole, and the author of the original Bill is looking for wording to close this loophole.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting scheduled for August 8, 2019 has been reschedule to Thursday, July 11, 2019 at 9:30 A.M. at the Coachella Valley Animal Campus: 72-050 Pet Land Place, Thousand Palms, CA 92276.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.