

CLARK COUNTY ANIMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Clark County Government Center
500 South Grand Central Parkway, Commission Chambers
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101
March 5, 2003
6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: HENDERSON, DAVID
 HOFF, KARIN
 KRISKO, SUSAN
 MARCH, DEBRA
 RIVKIN, SAMUEL

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:42 p.m.

2. Approval of agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made and seconded.

3. Approval of February 10, 2003 Minutes

A motion to approve the Minutes was made and seconded.

4. Information gathering for contract negotiations with Animal Foundation

JIM SPINELLO summarized the Board's direction to negotiate with AFI, the City of Las Vegas and the City of North Las Vegas to effectuate a contract for a regional shelter. The Board also directed staff to involve the community as much as possible. Preliminary discussions have been held with AFI and the City of Las Vegas but no provisions will be worked out without input from this Committee and the public.

Public Comment

LORETTA CAMPBELL found a pure bred Australian Shepherd in November and took to it AFI on November 23. Staff had to be asked to scan for a microchip, which was found. She was told Avid could not be contacted about the registration information until Monday. She had indicated her desire to adopt the dog if she was not reclaimed. She returned to AFI to see if they found the owner. They had not called Avid and when she pressed the staff at lost and found, she was told she was banned from the property and they threatened to call police. She went to the front office and they called Avid but were unable to locate the owner. On Wednesday, she returned to check the dog's status and neither the dog nor the paperwork was

found. It took ½ hour to find the paperwork and they found the dog in surgery. Friday she adopted the dog. The contract needs to have standards for accountability and a means specified to keep the standards as well as sanctions for non-compliance.

OLI LEWIS has a rescue in town and wants to establish a relationship with whoever has the contract as a breed specific rescue for St. Bernards. She would like to have all St. Bernards come to their rescue program as not just anyone can handle that breed. There are many breed specific people who feel the same way. She would like a liaison with the shelter that works specifically with the rescue organizations. They are serious about rescue, want to protect their breed and work with animal shelters.

MELANIE DOBASH is also a breed specific rescue for Cavalier Spaniels. People know what a St. Bernard, poodle, German Shepherd are but when breeds are not common, they get misregistered. Animal shelters do not want to work with the breeds. She has beautiful posters that could have been put up. Cavalier Spaniels are trendy now and have major heart problems and are expensive to maintain. They place them and check the homes and also would like a liasaon to work with them. The more dogs they take, the less shelters have to work with.

TINA KEITH from English Mastiff rescue agrees with Oli and Melanie. She wants the shelters to work with them when pure breeds come in so they can talk to the owners and help to solve problems.

KAREN LAYNE wants to make sure no outside agency has access to the rabies database, that AFI is not going to license animals and will not have access to the rabies database. Statistics should be maintained separately for each agency so we know what animals come from what localities. Standards for animals that are sold need to be maintained. People who adopt a sick animal must be notified. AFI should be required to maintain Clark County standards. Performance objections should be to lower the euthanasia rate for Clark County to the current City of Las Vegas euthanasia rate. Contract should state clearly who makes decision as to who gets adopted and who gets euthanized. Include notification to outside groups if they have chips, rabies tags or other identification. All animals going out must be spayed and neutered.

JUDITH RUIZ is concerned about what will happen in the future with AFI. A program to spay/neuter feral cats at AFI with vets who donated their time was cancelled because AFI thought the program was failing. It is one of the most important things they can do to reduce number of kittens and killing rate. Financial accountability and performance accountability must be included. Management at AFI should remove the Herro family.

ELIZABETH DAVIS established a relationship 5 years ago, at the request of Joe Boteilho, with Dr. Freer and with Herro. Every animal should have the ability to be adopted. AFI vaccinates dog on a case-by-case basis, the cute dog not the Siberian that jumps a fence or the huge St. Bernard. Dogs can be treated for kennel cough. Dogs that are sick are kept in a sick dog room and are not treated. Every dog should get a chance for adoption regardless of breed, age, illness etc.

KEN SONDEJ has spoken to Joe Boteilho regarding size of shelter. It cannot just be double the current size. A ten-year contract means room for expandability. One thing is breed identification. An Otterhound got out of Dewey listed as an Airedale mix. Will adoption fees for rescue be a set fee or at the whim of AFI? AFI should have a website similar to what Dewey has that would show animal by breed.

MARLENE JOHNSON, Great Pyrenees and other breed rescue, is also a dog trainer. She suggests people looking for specific breed be referred to rescues. She would like to see the temperament of dogs in the shelter. She get calls that dogs adopted have bitten . Dogs need to be tested for behavior problems, especially aggression. The public does not have experience. Shelter staff need to have better training in working with animals, be consistent in how they work with them, use more humane training methods and be consistent. If dogs come in for behavior problems, someone on staff should be able to help. Offer obedience training using qualified trainers. Raise adoptions raise fee by \$5 and include a book on dog training and behavior.

DR. MYRA GLASSMAN adopted two animals from AFI, one of them was a difficult to place animal that had been placed twice and returned for problems. They kept working with her; one of the volunteers took her home to address the problem. She is hearing a lot of criticism and believes in many areas they have done a much better job than Dewey.

PATTI MERKT, Las Vegas Bulldog club, wants the shelter to work with breed rescues according to county ordinances and NRS codes. To date, they have not had cooperation. Mr. March is emphatically against having breed rescues as first choice for their breed, and believes that the public should have first choice rather than breed club.

CHERYL LENTZ, Siberian Husky national rescue, has not heard anything regarding training standards. Training standards need to be in place so right hand knows what left hand is doing. They were called as a rescue group for 3 animals but when she returned the call, they could not tell them about any of the animals. She was merely thanked for her time. The training should consider communications and put standards clearly in the contract, with accountability for who called, when called and what is to be done as follow up.

GABRIEL RUEBEN would like an oversight committee to make sure AFI are doing their job right. He prefers rescue people and volunteers be on the committee as they are the ones who are rescuing the animals. Herro management needs to go.

TARA THOMPSON proposes that the contract mandate that independent of animal control and this board, individuals who ensure that national humane society standards are met, be brought in for audits. The contract should mandate AFI to put forth best and most honorable face of our city and support programs like spay and neuter program. It should be forward thinking. Have money for expansion. Contract should mandate money so they are not coming back to the treat taxpayers regularly for increases. An independent financial audit of their

financial dealings should be done. Citizens from City of North Las Vegas, Las Vegas and Clark County should be allowed to hold a position on their board. It is their city, their county and she wants to know that they are going to do about animals. When AFI becomes regional, they should not deny anyone coming into the building to look for an animal because they are a member of a group that doesn't like them. Herro should not be the face of the shelter.

MADLINE DAYTON went into Lied and was told by Diane Orgill she was not welcome. Wants to know why the oversight committee has been abolished.

Commissioner Kincaid suggested a task force but staff was not directed by BCC to form that committee. JIM SPINELLO spoke with the Chair about this and asked if she wanted it held as an item to consider if negotiations failed. She said no. The Board did not adopt the task force.

MADLINE DAYTON wants all rescue groups to be allowed into AFI and wants the 6-day limit removed. No euthanasia for easily treated diseases. Veterinarians only should make decision for euthanasia. No one should receive any monies except the Foundation and monies should go to animals. No money from licensure should go into anyone's pocket. Risers in the dog kennels – why are they not there. Dogs sleep on cold concrete. Why are they not on Internet? As far as Mary Herro and her family, they have caused town to be regarded as a disaster area in animal community.

A County that will do business with an organization that has their reputation and their past disgraces TINA TRENNER. Animals are being killed. Animals are missing. How do you go with that? Animals are what she cares about. A really tight contract is necessary. They should be audited every 6 months. People reported they have adopted animals as they were coming off the trucks, have paid \$300 or \$400 dollars for an animal and she has been told there are hundreds of animals missing. AFI must be accountable for every thing they do. Write a contract that is tight and have someone who can stand up to them. They should be responsible for every nickel and creature that goes through the door.

SUSAN LAURENCE, Samoyeds, keeping website similar to what the volunteer who goes to Dewey puts on the website. She would like to see potential adopters screened by what breed they adopt so they are not getting dogs that are not compatible with their lifestyle. Wants to see customer service improved. Bottom line is the shelters are not open long enough for people to come look for lost pets. It is the animals' life they are standing up for

MARILYN DAVIS, English bulldogs, want laws to work with rescue groups and to transfer ownership to another releasing agency to be carried out. They consider rescue organizations to be releasing agencies. Wants coordination with shelters and animal control for all the entities. Animals need to be taken care of.

LAURIE DIAMOND, breed specific, went to Henderson shelter as they had two Westies that were asked to leave as a pair. She had homes that would take both as a pair and she was willing to pay what they wanted. They told her dogs don't need to be rescued from the shelter.

She has homes waiting. She checks for fences, temperament of dog, and has taken dogs into her home and worked with them if there is a problem. Places in wonderful homes. She only gets calls when they are extremely sick. The pictures are not correct, should be more specific and have a liaison and specific breed identification. Rescue groups are not rescuing from shelter - only want the opportunity to place dogs in excellent homes.

Concerns with management have already been stated. ELIZABETH DAVIS wants to know why AFI gets a ten-year contract. You still won't own it after 10 years.

Diane Orgill told MADELINE DAYTON that Lied was taking the contract because the County asked them to. If that is correct, all the work has been in vain. In 10 years, we will own nothing. We are not going forward.

JIM SPINELLO pointed out that in 2000 staff received direction from this advisory committee to pursue, at a minimum, adjacent facilities with the ideal being a regional animal shelter camps. Based on that, the city was contacted regarding leasing land adjacent to their shelter. We were asked if there was any interest in us buying the land. In initial stages, we asked for a campus type environment. Later when directions were more specific, we received very few proposals. Our first interest was in buying or leasing land. If we stayed with Dewey, we would be in the same boat.

MADELINE DAYTON wants the County to do what other states have done. No kill means working together and inviting Susan Ash from up north. Will there be something that says we can bring forward that issue and turn in around from a slaughterhouse to a no kill sanctuary? Is it possible are we going to be able to help with that? A no kill is an ideal approach.

JOE BOTEILHO addressed the issue. He hears about Maricopa and NH and what they are doing in those communities. This is a big process. If we get a regional shelter and amenities, the question is not for the community or me. It is are you willing to work with us, willing to work with everyone, every group holding hands and being part of the solution. Then we can get Maddies funds. We will have a regional shelter with the City of Las Vegas, Clark County, City of North Las Vegas. Another component is a veterinary clinic, which will do nothing but sterilizations, costing nothing, available to everybody. This is his dream. Another component is about teaching vets and vet techs. We have vets interested, barn areas, an adoption component that does long term no kill for dogs and cats, a dog training facility to train and learn how to handle the animals. We are trying to provide solutions in all these areas, to be proactive. If you look at numbers and pay attention to what is going on in impounds, statistically we have gone down when population has almost doubled. If we do our part, being an island in middle of desert, we can get a Maddies fund grant and provide free sterilization. He would like to see free microchipping. Animals have a better life with veterinary involvement and animal control not be a condition of dealing with all strays but be a proactive tool. Rather than going for first choice of animals, send the people who want the animals to the shelter. Work together, his only goal is to make this better for animals.

Someone mentioned that the average public should be able to walk in and get a purebred animal. However, those who are breed specific rely on rescue. A cavalier puppy now costs \$2,000. People who want certain breed are not general public and want that kind of dog for a specific reason. They cannot rescue every animal. MELANIE DOLASH believes this benefits the animals, shelters and rescues to take animals away from shelters

KIM HALEY wanted to know if there was a way for people to get together and talk about it. The Animal Advisory Committee is the venue. JIM SPINELLO reiterated that he and Joe Boteilho are available. This kind of venue is generally how government operates. The Committee is subject to the open meeting law.

PATTI MERKT had one bulldog, which was 5 months of dealing with her between health and behavior problems. As first come first service, public gets that dog. Doesn't understand why he is against - many work with them. General public are not the only ones who should have first choice

TARA THOMPSON knows the problems and the need to compromise. We were cooperating with Lied, SOS, Heaven Can Wait and then contract came up and now she cannot walk in the building. If AFI is taking the lead, let's be forward thinking. Make sure contract reflects your dream and those of us who are here share it. Maricopa County, NH worked a long time to get there. If there is a starting point then let's do it. Let's save some animals and act like a community that believes in the future and that we can do more than play political games.

LAURIE DIAMOND wonders why a rescue group is not called to help with behavior problems. Things are sliding. You can call rescues and we will take them.

JUDITH RUIZ notes that somehow all the cards have to be put on the deck or the dream will not happen without correct management.

PATRICIA FLURRY, St. Bernard rescue is her concern. If there was a public address on television during the day, during the night, it would be a big help to tell people this is what you are doing to your best friends by allowing them to multiply and die.

MADLINE DAYTON's request is that Lied become open to public. Let's see them have an open policy law. You want us to work together. We can't if one entity has their doors locked.

5. **Information-sharing by Committee Members**

None

6. **Comments by the General Public**

None

7. Set date, time and agenda of next meeting

Next meeting will be held on April 7, 2003 in ETD Room 3 at 6:30.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m