

CLARK COUNTY ANIMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**Parks & Community Services Administration Building
2901 East Sunset Road, Park Police Conference Room
Las Vegas, Nevada 89120
May 12, 2004
6:30 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: HENDERSON, DAVID
 HOFF, KARIN
 HORN, KENNETH
 KRISKO, SUSAN

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. Approval of agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made and seconded.

3. Approval of April 12, 2004 Minutes

A motion to approve the Minutes was made and seconded.

4. Incentives/Penalties for Spay/Neuter Animals

DR. HENDERSON wanted to take open discussion, especially on the target population. We could consider bringing back licensing but he doesn't think it is a good idea. We need to redefine responsible pet ownership. One of the hallmarks of responsible pet ownership is to spay or neuter your pet. If not a responsible owner, then they must be a responsible breeder. One way to obtain compliance is to charge a fee for being a responsible breeder. This, hopefully, discourages those who should not be breeding. KARIN HOFF would like to hear new ideas and then have staff respond as to what is possible to do and what other issues might be important for us to consider before making a determination.

JUDITH RUIZ would like us to keep in mind that the Advisory Committee is charged with doing what is best for the animals, not what will make commissioners happy. It is a disservice to both the animals and the commissioners to take only what commissioners would like to see or do. The amount of money spent picking up an animal, keeping it in the shelter and either killing or adopting it out runs about \$107 per animal. Spayed or neutered, that same animal decreases to \$50. We need to explore spay and neuter alternatives rather than throwing money into what is essentially an animal killing shelter. Over 23,000 animals were killed last year. Animal Control organizations owe a huge debt of gratitude to organizations that are spaying and neutering animals, working 7 days a week, 10 or 12 hours a day. It is not easy and the situation is going to get worse.

HAROLD VASCO, Heaven Can Wait, assumes between the various groups they do about 10,000 spay or neuters and no one gets paid doing this. They all work hard to raise the money plus all the time they put in. We have to ask ourselves, as a government, as a human being, is it okay, is it acceptable to have 24,000 animals die each year? Animal groups think that is too many. We are not looking for a cure for cancer. Other cities have done it. Ten percent of people are causing 70

percent of problem. We did 1,000 at ground zero. That 1,000 would produce 243,000 in 2 ½ years and that is just the females. How do you get them to wake up and give you their animals? Have passed out thousands of flyers and every Friday have to scramble to get 6 dogs and 26 cats. They don't have government backing. There is no incentive for them to wake up. "Oh I am sleeping I don't want to get it today."

SUSAN KRISKO asked for suggestions. Does anybody have ideas on how to get these people to cooperate?

BILL PICKERD, NV Dog Fanciers Association, most clubs he represents are show dogs. AKC requires no spay or neuter. Most would agree on a breeder's license. Look in the newspaper each Sunday; you will see columns and columns of dogs with the same phone numbers month after month. Maybe there should be an organization to track the phone numbers and go after them and fine them.

KEN SONDEJ works with rescue animals and everything going through them must be spayed and neutered. They have been asked by Dewey numerous times to take pregnant mom or mom with brand new litters. They get spayed or neutered before going up for adoption. No responsible rescue will put out an animal without being spayed or neutered. It should be mandatory with an exception for proven show dogs. Breeder with a permit/license and then track phone numbers like Los Angeles did with breeder hunters. Then, Animal Control and police get sent out to take care of the problem. For the first offense, \$100 for breeding w/o permit; 2nd offense \$500 per animal; 3rd time \$1,000 and loss of an animal for 10 years. That will stop them. On the other hand, who is putting unaltered animals on streets? Pet stores. Target them first. They tell people they can make a lot of money by breeding them. And you see their mistakes ending up in the shelter. Pet stores are responsible for majority of the population. AARP – a lot of refund checks go to a pet store. They get a pair of purebred dogs, breed, and sell for a profit. They are told males go out for stud fees between \$250 and \$750. It's a lie. Rescue groups took less than 24 hours to get that changed and the new paragraph says go to shelter and save lives. Spay or neuter, fines, first target pet stores. If they don't want to spay or neuter, close down.

KEN HORN knows there are a lot of good breeders who inspect the people they sell their puppies to. There are a lot of problems with hobby breeders. We need to come up with a way to crack down on them. Most good breeders want to be licensed. Most breeders selling animals will offer a reduced price if you are buying the animal as a pet and it gets neutered or spayed. Give rewards to people who turn in backyard breeders, as well as fines for people that buy from backyard breeders. Someone has to take control and put back in the public hands.

DR. HENDERSON- A breeder's license doesn't exist but it is something that is doable. We are all agreed we have to spay or neuter animals. MYRA GLASSMAN thinks the suggestion of a breeder's license is probably the easiest to implement for starters. Breeder's license should have to be per animal to take care of hobby breeders. You want to breed, pay for license even if you have only one animal. If no license, you have to spay or neuter the animal or we take it away. It's that simple.

HAROLD VASCO doesn't believe breeders are causing the problems. Ground zero people have no transportation and no money. In 1 trailer park, they spayed or neutered over 500 animals. That is where the problem is. How do you enforce it? Go door to door. That is not enforceable. We need a plan than can be enforced.

KARIN HOFF– Judith had some good numbers that would make any number more saleable. Dollars and cents are always good support for an argument. She wants to hear from Joe Boteilho as to the enforceability. If we had a breeder's license with a penalty attached, what would you do? JOE

BOTEILHO – we have great authority in civil liabilities and this may be an area where we haven't used it. It may be good place to implement that type of fine structure. Legislature gave us civil liability authority to impose a fine. We could say there is a fine for not having a breeder's permit. There is a loophole in the law for pet stores but there is one word transferred from the state law and that is the word "resale". We should have said "sale" period. You would have pet shops; hobby breeders and then this standard would apply to them. Not many people would be able to meet that standard. If the law reads "sale", you would catch happenstance breedings. Those who cannot or will not have their pet sterilized. It will be tough to enforce. Pet shop ordinance is labor intensive but very effective. Very few pet shops in Clark County stay in business if they don't meet the standards. It costs \$69.30 per animal to keep them currently. That will drop a year from now to \$60 per animal when we go to Lied and we will have savings if we don't have an increase in impounds. 565,000 animals are being brought to local shelters. Only about 42 percent are destroyed but that is still a high number. Civil liabilities are good strategies. It was recommended to change professional animal standards to "sale". There is no way someone in a home would be able to meet those standards. Do you want people breeding pets in their homes for profit, without meeting the standards? SUSAN KRISKO was concerned that if the criminal liability was taken out of it, pet stores might ignore all the rules. JOE BOTEILHO would look at a breeder's permit as a separate issue. That would come with civil liability, not the professional animal standards. Business impact statement will be biggest roadblock. When we invite businesses to the table to negotiate the law to make it palatable. We will have to work on that and the county has to report on a business impact statement advising how this will impact them, as this is currently a legal activity. If we keep it separate, we could apply it to hobby breeders.

The state looked at going after these people but we were told they wouldn't be followed through. STACY LLOYD called investigations and they said why do you care? They are running a business and don't even have a license for the business. The reason she was upset was they way they treated animals. He said that sounds like a problem for animal control. She was calling because they don't have a business license and was told to write a letter and it would take a couple months before they got around to it.

Assuming we get a breeder's license passed or fines, MYRA GLASSMAN would like to make sure the funds go back into spay and neuter programs and animal control rather than the general fund. It is important that we do that. They haven't even staffed an additional position in 34 years. This needs to be incorporated.

HEIDI HARRIS feels that if you impose a fine, you can't get money out of the people Heaven Can Wait deals with in trailer parks that don't care about their animals. You will have to spend time in court, but you can't get blood out of a turnip.

DR. HENDERSON believes the breeder's license is more of a leverage tool for these people. We are not looking to take them to court but provide an incentive for them to give up their animal to an organization to spay or neuter for them, otherwise impose a fine. We are not looking for trailer court people to become responsible breeders but responsible pet owners. If they are aware of a fine or are required to get a license, they will be more apt to get up and let an organization spay or neuter their pet. We are looking for a change in public opinion and their perception. KARIN HOFF – you either get a breeder's license, or get caught and fined and then the animal is taken away.

KEN HORN doesn't want to forget show people. It doesn't have to be expensive. DR. HENDERSON believes there should be age exemptions too. The point is stopping overpopulation. The target is the irresponsible breeder.

JOE BOTEILHO believes that if it were tied to the dog fancier permit, the breeder's permit would

provide a mechanism where you have a dog fancier/breeder permit. It shouldn't be a big-ticket item but breeding without the permit should be the big-ticket item. You get better compliance when you say come down and get it for this amount of dollars or pay a fine and when breeding, you have to meet this criteria, make sure this happens and then if not, be liable civilly.

SUSAN KRISKO asked if there was the capability of going to the newspapers and have them check for licenses on file before they put an ad in the paper. JOE BOTEILHO doesn't know if we can restrict commerce like that. They usually tell us no. DR. HENDERSON asked whether it would be worthwhile to go through paper and check on that.

DR. GLASSMAN – Animal Control has gone to schools and done bite prevention programs. We need educational programs about spay/neuter and responsible pet ownership and she would like to see it done in grade school. Child bonds closely with animal and important to start educating there.

As for the breakdown of costs, JUDITH finds Joe Boteilho's numbers incredibly low and would like to see it on paper. JOE BOTEILHO – We pay Dewey \$1,263,000 for 18,200 live animals which is then divided by 1,263,000. They handle the dead for free. JUDITH believes there is more to it than that; Animal Control salaries, trucks, gas and all this needs to be factored in. You can't separate the two. The cost to house the animals and the cost to do other things Animal Control is responsible for will bring it up.

JOE BOTEILHO – People talk about year round sterilizations, we could have had it 2 years ago but the funding sits. We could have had enough to do a healthy program yet the license plate sits out there and nothing has happened. Doing year round now but will vet community support it? We need to get funding going. State legislature gave it to you but we don't seem to be able to get money. Judith thinks that is taking a myopic view. She fought to get the ordinance passed. There were problems and to group all animal organizations together is unfair. Her understanding is that the plate will be available in September.

SUSAN KRISKO favors a menu type idea for a breeder's license although it may not address the 10 percent. Anyone look at other states and have ideas on how to attack 10 percent? She likes the education idea, but it won't bring change quickly.

Strut your Mutt is the third week in November. DEAN PICKED wondered if the mobile vet could be there to offer free spay/neuter. All agreed the 10 percent won't be at Strut Your Mutt. DR. HENDERSON doesn't see why a breeder's permit would not affect the 10 percent. If they knew they would be fined, they have an incentive to get it fixed. He understands there needs to be exceptions for show person or for age, but the others will be fined or have to buy a permit. He believes it does target them. Idea is to target straight across the board.

HAROLD VASCO agrees with Dr. Henderson. They could put an ordinance code in their flyer and give it to people that own trailer parks and they have to follow it. He thinks it addresses the 10 percent. It would be a win for humane groups. They have leverage and can put the ordinance in flyers and mailings.

As for the business impact statement, if we keep it outside of retail, we shouldn't need it. KEN SONDEJ – going back to business end impact for stores, with an ordinance to spay/neuter or show or breeder permit, or exemption from vet or show dog, how many people will blow \$800 on a dog that has to face this coming back out. Might be a way to solve most of the basic problems at same time. Your sales are to these people – must be reported every month. With monies coming in from breeders and spay/neuter programs and bringing the cost of all of that saved money could be put back into program to stop what is going on.

HEIDI HARRIS worked at AFI and their fostering program was a nightmare. It sounds good, but the animals never came back. People's numbers were disconnected. As nice as it is to not see animals put down, they went out into the community and were never seen again. Constantly sending out animals that are just potential breeders.

JUDITH RUIZ - We foster and keep close controls on our animals. It saves a great deal of money and we are able to devote every cent raised to animals. It is a lot of work. We don't just let anyone who walks in the door foster an animal.

KEN HORN – Ten percent cause the problems but there are a lot of new renters and new homebuyers and if they are not involved with dogs and cats, they don't think about the laws. Should have laws and ordinances in there to let them know that if their pet is unaltered, it has to be shown or here is coupon to spay/neuter if you cannot afford. Then lot of people coming in may take care of it.

SUSAN KRISKO – There is a lot to think about and work with. She will work with Dave March from Animal Control to write something up for next month.

5. Amendment to County Code Section 10.28.030 and 10.28.040 that provides for the confinement of animals that have bitten human beings.

KARIN HOFF – it looks like a simple change. SUSAN KRISKO the only difference is if an animal is out at large at the time of biting it will have to be quarantined at a veterinarian's office or by animal control. Until now there was no provision for a dog with current rabies but running at large. This would end that loophole. DR. HENDERSON thinks it is a good idea. Change approved, motion seconded. This creates a cooling off period. RAL (running at large) is one of the biggest problems.

MYRA GLASSMAN asked about animal on animal attack and was told by SUSAN KRISKO that that opens up another whole can of worms. JOE BOTEILHO - most often there are a lot of different circumstances. We will criminally prosecute if a dog on a leash is being walked and another dog walks over and attacks but the citizen has to initiate it.

6. Information-sharing by Committee Members

SUSAN KRISKO would like the Tethering ordinance on the next agenda. They have over 200 signatures on a petition. JOE BOTEILHO was told today that the Mobile Emergency Shelter has been approved. We will get one unit with multi jurisdictional ownership and operation. Once this becomes a reality, we need to see how this can be used and how we can make best use of it.

ROSEANNE CONFORTO can we help those who have emergencies. We were contacted by senior protective services to see if we could help a lady who had to go into the hospital but had no friends or family and no one where to place her dog.

KEN SONDEJ – assistance for low income for shots, etc. He spoke to someone this week and they got some money together and want to put out service available to people who cannot afford to take animal for shots. Dora? Will contact her and see if she can come to next meeting.

MYRA GLASSMAN has been trying to get swap sitting exchange for seniors for situations like that. Trying to match up senior citizens with people in same zip who have a similar pet, cat with cat, and small dog with small dog so they don't have to worry if they have to go into hospital. Still trying to get someone to help her set up. If anyone interested, would appreciate the help.

JOE BOTEILHO – Bow Wow Ow video we helped produce won a Telly award, in conjunction with the bite prevention program. He can present a video, about 8 minutes at next meeting if they would like. Sales are booming. DR. HENDERSON noted that a video was presented to SUSAN KRISKO that is a documentary Film Festival that won 3rd about homeless pets and a lot about some programs here locally. If you want to play it, we can put it on agenda to play for next time.

DR. GLASSMAN spoke with Diane Orgill last week and said they should be breaking ground for new building within the next few weeks. Preliminary soil tests were done and they waiting on city permits which are supposedly on the fast track. JOE BOTEILO reported that they are on target.

Next Monday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the County manager will have a final budget meeting and there is an animal control position on there so as many people who can come and speak would be good. Two were asked for but not funded. If it is still on there, it would be good to show support.

Tethering, two videos and proposed change for spay and neuter.

7. Comments by the General Public

None

8. Set date, time and agenda of next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, June 16, 2004, at 6:30 p.m. in the Park Police Conference Room at Sunset Park.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.