

CLARK COUNTY ANIMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**Parks & Community Services Administration Building
2601 East Sunset Road, Administration Conference Room
Las Vegas, Nevada 89120
August 4, 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 6:38 p.m.

2. Approval of agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made and seconded.

3. Approval of June 23, 2003 Minutes

A motion to approve the Minutes was made and seconded.

4. Proposed Ordinance to Require Sterilization of Adopted Dogs and Cats Prior to Release

JOE BOTEILHO - 10.24.100 Release, Vaccination, Neuter And Spay For Animals Released From Shelter - The proposed ordinance removes language so it states "animal will be sterilized before release." The current contractor should not have a problem with this. Currently if an animal is under 8 weeks, they go out unsterilized. It does not preclude fostering as long as it is under the shelter's control.

Public Comment

LOU TOOMIN asked for an explanation of the procedure if an animal is under 8 weeks old. JOE BOTEILHO informed him that every animal must be sterilized before it leaves the shelter and it cannot be sterilized by the adopter's own veterinarian.

SUSAN MILLS asked how you know it is neutered before it leaves. There are a lot of puppy mills and one place was watering down shots. SUSAN KRISKO explained that this fixes the loophole that is out there. DAVID HENDERSON noted the only requirement is a rabies vaccine and has to be 3 months of age to be recognized as valid. The rabies vaccine is probably the least

significant vaccine given to animal. It is more to help the public. Health of the animal, distemper and parvo are mostly significant for health of the animals.

LOU TOOMIN questioned the purpose for not allowing your own veterinarian to sterilize an animal. Why can't they be cited for not sterilizing the animal they adopted? SUSAN KRISKO told him Animal Control can't go in without a search warrant and statistics prove certificates don't work. No animal should leave any shelter without being sterilized.

SUSAN MILLS questioned why this did not also apply to pet stores. She was informed to write to her legislators, as it cannot be done at county level.

Motion to approve was made and seconded.

5. Information-sharing by Committee Members

JOE BOTEILHO - as far as the merger in Parks & Community Services with Park Police Animal Control and PRO as one unit, the patches and badges just came in. He showed them to the Committee. This is much like what the city has done in combining Marshalls, Park Police, Animal Control, Detention and Parking Enforcement. The County felt this was the best way to provide service to the public.

KARIN HOFF asked if any changes were anticipated as a result of the merger. Dispatch is moving to another unit as part of the division and will serve a bigger function as Community Response Dispatch. There will be new uniforms and other options down the road as far as interaction to support the division. Complaints will be sorted at dispatch.

The capital budget came out but we will probably not be included so will continue to be housed in Animal Control Adventure Building.

6. Comments by the General Public

DAN RIGGS, Tropicana Aquarium, had to have an inspection done by Animal Control and he was given statutes that he didn't even know where in effect until this change and application for business license. He understands why it applies to pet stores in general. According to this ordinance, a vet has to come in to inspect each shipment of fish received before he can sell it. Compliance with this ordinance does not seem feasible as he may get 15,000 to 20,000 fish a week. It is hard to find a veterinarian in Vegas who knows a lot about fish. Most cases are sent to his wife. Mandalay Bay is the only one at \$275 per hour. With the number of shipments, the cost is prohibitive. Were the fish industry considered as part of this?

JOE BOTEILHO – All pet shops were invited to come in and give input and the Committee wanted fish included. Dogs and cats had to have an individual record, a prior history and have to be signed off individually. Mice and fish, they just look making sure animals are healthy before being offered for sale. Committee felt visual inspection would be enough. Standard for everything is inspection by a veterinarian. This only applies in unincorporated Clark County. Some people who have fish have a veterinarian do it at the wholesaler level and give them a written statement that

they have been inspected. A veterinarian signed statement certifying he has performed the inspection is in compliance. DAN called all the storeowners to ask how they are complying and they never heard of it. KARIN recommends more phone calls and if significant objection bring an item to back to discuss and clarify.

MYRA GLASSMAN - it appears that the veterinarians in this area do not have major expertise when it comes to aquatic life. Is there any way this can be revisited and maybe someone from Fish and Wildlife should be inspecting these stores.

There is one guy from Fish and Wildlife in this area and his operation is most of the west. They are mainly concerned with animals being released into the wild and causing problems for wild animals.

KARIN HOFF – is this a humane animal concern, is it a public health concern – if neither we don't want to make it onerous for business. MYRA – it is onerous if they have to have a veterinarian certify them and telling them they don't know about fish. SUSAN KRISKO – they choose to go into that business and the ordinance has been on the books.

DAN RIGGS understands what Susan is saying but he wasn't aware of the ordinance. In order to do this he has to substantiate the cost into his business dealings and if he is going to stay competitive, everyone has to do it.

LOU TOOMIN – can an out of state veterinarian do it? Is there a schedule when you check these shops?

All businesses are inspected before a business license is renewed. This was put in for safety of animals and public. LOU -What is to stop them from not having inspections after the initial inspection is signed off? If it becomes an issue, records must be provided. When you look at records you can see no veterinarian inspections. The information will be used in prosecutions.

KAREN LAYNE – AAC spent last couple years on sheltering process, what will committee do next in terms of being proactive in terms of animals going into the shelters. Will it look beyond some of the issues out there right now? What is your strategic plan?

KARIN HOFF – The committee has been preoccupied with getting the sheltering contract done which was precipitated by a request for an extension by the contractor. It is always the option of the public at any time to ask for an agenda item. We will get updates from staff on a couple of issues improving sterile rates and getting animals off the streets. There are issues coming in and you can put stuff on the table for us.

KAREN LAYNE– there was a huge kitten problem this year. We need a real education effort in the neighborhoods to address problem in terms of neighborhoods. There are language issues where we can't communicate in terms of providing services because they don't believe or are suspicious. Some of these groups perceive police and law enforcement in a different light, not as there to help but to cause problems.

JOE BOTEILHO – we completed the animal sheltering item and tremendous work on the exotic

animal ordinance that is sitting waiting for personnel to do enforcement. If we put more laws on the books, we need more personnel to enforce them. We have the highest standard in country for pet shops and it is labor intensive. We cannot absorb more duties without additional personnel. We have recommended doing away with quality of life enforcement such as barking dogs or dead animals.

JUDITH RUIZ sees the public as beginning to view animal control officers as friendly people. She believes we are taking a step backwards with animal control, park police and code enforcement having the same uniform badges.

KARIN HOFF brought up the matching funds project for the mobile spay and neuter units. We need more cooperation among humane groups. The City of Las Vegas Animal Control wanted to see if they could get a mobile clinic funded. The Red Cross will not allow you in a shelter with an animal. The second week in August there will be a big exercise in Clark County called Determined Promise. A question was raised regarding whether the City of Las Vegas would share the clinic with the county. If the City gets the funding, they are the boss.

SUSAN MILLS questions how there cannot be funding in this state. We don't need Palm trees and flowers on the strip. It is unbelievable. Everyone sits back and does nothing. We need animal police like in New York.

JOE BOTEILHO pointed out that it has to be done in Carson City. Animal Control in the beginning was like New York with police powers and guns but through legislation it has come to where it is today.

KAREN LAYNE – if you listen to Thom Reilly there is no discussion (animal control always been the orphan child of the county). It may be for this Committee to take some of these issues, such as animal population, and to make some of those points to the Commissioners that there are issues not being dealt with at this time. Animal Control is never funded to the extent that it should be. Staff can only do so much. It is up to the public to appear before commissioners and make the request.

There needs to be more money. SUSAN MILLS – rodeo people come here, why isn't that money here.

LOU TOOMIN – How many officers do you have now? 12 – How many for the last 10 years? 12!

JOE BOTEILHO - We are pretty close at getting the restitution ordinance. Funding sources are out there and possible. The County provides a lot of sterilizations. No one puts pressure on other entities to come into compliance. We are the strong link in the chain but the other weak links are sitting out there. Impound fee goes to entity or someone else instead of toward sterilization or microchipping. Nobody talking to other entities. Plan to look at combined ordinances.

KAREN LAYNE believes we need an educational effort devoted to Latino community. There are language barriers and we need to get the word out that there are resources out there in terms of

low or free spay or neuters.

KARIN HOFF questioned the effectiveness of education. We need to recommend something that has a track record. Spay and neuter in Hispanic community doesn't go over well. It is a big hurdle. JUDITH suggests Julio Inglasis to do a PSA.

LOU TOOMIN – in light of population explosion wants to suggest county find a way to fund animal control

The money Animal Control collects goes to do microchipping and sterilizations, not to operations. We need to look at it more globally. The County is looking at restructuring, going through a big program review, and it comes down to who has the most important programs.

MYRA GLASSMAN suggests Committee develop stats regarding number of animal control officers per thousand. JOE pointed out that it was done 5 years ago. The ratio is 1 animal control officer for every 16,000 citizens. We are currently at 1 per every 42,000 citizen. NACA puts out a report that shows about 40 different cities and what the ratio is and we have presented it to the board. We have been through normal channels to get more personnel. We need to look at what they want provided and what is important. KARIN HOFF suggests that rather than going to staffing levels, we should look at services, the range of services provided in communities. What is the norm, what is the mean, what do you lose or gain by providing these services and have something substantial to respond to.

The Las Vegas Valley Humane Society has gone to Mary Kincaid and Rory Reid asking for tax assessors to put a box to give optional contribution of \$1 to go to spay or neuter. They will meet with them again. If given enough publicity it could help.

KARIN HOFF believes everyone wants to go in same direction but we need to develop info as we did on the shelter but we have to do that in a succinct bite. What do we need to do and why do we need to do it.

MYRA GLASSMAN – bite prevention program at schools – maybe way to get to parents is through the kids – educate spay and neuter programs – particularly when there are language problems.

Every year for the last 5 years, Clark County Animal Control has provided bite prevention color books and standardized curriculum to all 1st graders in the State of NV. We worked with the State Department of Agriculture and several legislators to put together a cartoon, within the next 6 months bringing to life curriculum given to nurses and hopefully a videotape to every school. It costs State Farm about \$15,000 a year in coloring books. If we had that type of benefactor for spay and neuter.....

JOE BOTEILHO – Animal Control is at bottom of the barrel. We have a pretty good program but no additional people. A lot of other jurisdictions should take a look at what we are doing. Need movement somewhere else.

SAM – how many animal control officers in the City of Las Vegas? NLV has 7 and there are 14 or 15 in the CLV, not counting seniors. We have 7,605 square miles, including Laughlin, Indian Springs, Moapa, State Line, etc .

7. Set date, time and agenda of next meeting

Next meeting will be held on October 6, 2003 in Administration Building at 6:30 p.m.
Chemical sterilization – change to restraint ordinance. SUSAN KRISKO - mandatory spay or neuter must be statewide or it won't stem the problem. For that specific issue, we would need a business impact statement. We would have to have business owners come in and have a compromise. At the state level, one person can put it in.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m.