

CLARK COUNTY ANIMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Paradise Community Center
4775 McLeod Drive, Town Board Conference Room
Las Vegas, Nevada 89121
June 19, 2007
6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: BIGGERSTAFF, JAN (JB)
CHEVALIER, YVETTE (YC)
SONDEJ, KEN (KJ)
POOLER, TOM (TP)
YOUNG, BILLIE (BY)

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Approval of agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made and seconded.

3. Approval of May 10, 2007 Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded.

4. Approval of Application for Spay/Neuter Funds

YC – Are these brand new? DM – every quarter state deposits funds from license plate to benefit animal sterilization. Currently only \$2,020 remains unclaimed. We have applications totaling \$15,000. Last quarter, we received \$15,185. The fund is building significantly as we go along. BY is HCW here? Or LVVHS? How many have you gone through in last quarter? KAREN LAYNE (LVVHS) – we finished \$3,000 last quarter. DM outstanding funds were given to SOS. TP – motion to approve made and seconded.

5. Appeal of Vicious Animal Declaration

DM - Vicious Declaration for a Bull Mastiff owned by Billy Meredith on College Circle has bitten on 2 occasions. The first case a 10 year old child was bitten on the shoulder while animal restrained in yard causing a 4-inch laceration to his shoulder. The most recent attack victim is a 77-year-old woman who was attacked crossing the street causing significant injuries. Photographs were passed around. You can see sutures required in her foot and hand to close up the wounds. There are additional photos for review. This animal has great potential for significant injury. He was confined and attacked one child; attacked second person while she was walking across the street. This animal poses a very significant risk to public.

TP – discrepancies as far as age of animal and spelling of Hooch. DM - The owner spelled on the second bite. First case it is spelled at it sounds. YC – one bite on 12/9/06 to 10-year-old boy, 5 months later, May of 07 to Patsy Burton.

JUANITA MANNING, grandmother to Thomas, who had been playing with Billy and another

friend. The dog was tied up but Thomas did not do anything to provoke attack. He was backing up and got within range of the dog, dog attacked him, threw him. His heavy sweatshirt saved him. Dog threw him far enough that he couldn't get to Thomas. Pictures are graphic. He has permanent scars. Don't think any other person should go through this physical and emotional trauma. Dog is not safe to be around people. Dog is not kept tied up, not confined and would hate to see another child or person killed because of this animal when it could have been prevented. Don't want anyone else to go through that. Tommy showed his scars to Committee.

PATSY BURTON has been on College Circle over 40 years. It is a small circle cul de sac with 6 residences. She was crossing the circle in that attack. Should have statements from 6 or 7 other people who were chased, one had to jump into pick up truck to get away. One child got under a car and all of this transpired in a period of 5 months. Property is not fenced in. The owners fenced it in. It has been rented for 10 years. These people have been in for about 1 year. There was a 12ft. chain link gate. The occupants upon moving in removed the gate and as a consequence it is wide open. They have 3 dogs and cats roam neighborhood. Should have several incidents. Show 3 dog bites, 12/25/06 there was another bite. We had company from OK who sustained a bite but did not report to AC. It was Christmas. Dog continued as shown in statements until taken by AC on May 12, the date of my incident. AC also quarantined the dog in February. During that quarantine, owner still did not get gate to enclose fence and still continues to run loose. Put up pen and never put dog in it. Explanation for the dog is to protect their tools and 10 vehicles in front of their yard. None of the neighbors are being protected. Got my stitches out, my left foot is still fractured, a crushing fracture from the dog's jaws. Didn't see dog coming, didn't know it was vicious. The owners knew. Had it been restrained, I would not have been hurt. Maybe would have jumped the gate, just don't know, but running loose we don't stand a chance. My neighbors nor I should not be in position where we have to fear for our lives on a daily basis. Should have a statement from a lady who went with her 3 year old to get mail and had to run into house. My husband is in a wheel chair. Great grandchildren are afraid to come to our house. Under no circumstances should this dog be released. We are entitled to our safety.

LAYMOND BURTON, wife was mauled by that dog. Dog was in my yard that morning and I chased him out. Yet he got my wife that afternoon walking across the street to our son's house. When he got hold of her, he was shaking his head pulling on her. I was in a wheelchair, saw what was happening and grabbed a long handled shovel and handed it to my son. I told him to hit dog as hard as he could. He was afraid dog was going to jump on him but he hit the dog. The dog stood there with a look in his eyes I will never forget, turned around and went into backyard. She lost nearly a quart of blood; hit a vein in her arm. She had passed out. Medics, fire department, policemen and AC came. Took her to hospital we followed. I have a dog of my own, a keeshond, best buddy, they think that of Hooch but if my dog had bitten one person I would have taken him to be put away. Doesn't take brains to know when different people get bit 3 times by same dog, 3 times you are out. Did you get letters? We gave them to Officer Petralia. Nobody let dog loose. Don't make sense. Didn't put gate up. Got those 3 dogs to guard his cars and tools. Would never have a dog and treat the way they do. My wife was hurt, a little boy hurt. Up to you to decide. Dog is vicious.

THERESA LANG, Patsy's daughter, last month & half, I have had 2 parents in wheelchairs. I had to take care of my mom, wash her hair, and help her shower. That dog dragged her down the street at least 5 ft like a piece of meat. If you can't have a nice animal why have one. I can't take my grandkids to my mother's without being afraid of that animal. There is a problem. I have lived my life here. Never had to deal with anything like this. Happened day before Mother's Day, didn't get to spend day with her cause she was in hospital. They never once asked how my mom was or showed any concern.

BILLY MEREDITH (BM) – most of that is true. Her son chased my dog with pellet gun. On numerous occasions dog played with their dog. If my dog is vicious why is their dog still alive? Two families with their kids are here in support. If vicious, why would I have them over? The kid that got bit was hitting my dog with a stick. My son told him not to hit him. Went over several times, call them pops and mom, asked how they are doing all the time and stand up here and say I haven't asked how she is, asked if anything I can do to help. They called my landlord to have me evicted. Yes he bit twice, unfortunately when he was on the chain. I have no idea why because he plays with their dog. We have racecars. Drug activity throughout neighborhood at night. Wife and kids by themselves. For protection of my wife and kids. It is unfortunate she got bit. I offered to help. My dog was shot with pellet gun. If my dog is vicious, why hasn't he torn up cat? They send their dog after my cats. YC – do you have a police report? Gary's family is in with narcotics division. He's a snitch a gopher. JB - when dog was shot was it in your yard or outside? BM - in my yard while on a chain. I have 3 dogs. BY – did you have veterinary care? Is yard open? 12 ft gate with bottom busted. I work a lot on demolition derby. I intend to get fixed but haven't been able to. Going to make 2 gates. TP – how long has it been broken. BM – a year, August will be 2 years I have been there. JB – how old is dog? Two years old and always chained (BM). When he was quarantined, he was in kennel with quarantine paper on gate. Chained up and on property when he had bitten. JB - how did he get out into street? My son says he was tied to kennel. I was at work, I don't know. When I saw him, AC had him. Lot of activity up there. YC – are you stating all the activity in house is aggravating dog? You haven't filed police report. BM - yes 1 or 2 in the morning, police won't do anything. Gary has watched over my dogs. First time I have seen pictures. Asked if anything I can do. They told my landlord she was in bed 3 months and asked landlord to evict us. Told him they were going to sue him. He is not vicious. YC - don't pictures look vicious? BM - yes they do but he has never shown aggression toward them or other animals in the past. Woman who jumped in pickup her pit bull was outside his fence and attacked my puppy. My dog is not the only vicious dog in neighborhood. YC - when they are guard dogs, their job is to bite. JB – 3 dogs, German shepherd, Hooch and a mutt my son's puppy, Dalmatian /Labrador. JB – no fence to hold them in. TP - tell me about pen. BM – 5 x 10 kennel that he was in when he was in quarantine. Did he climb or jump while in quarantine? (TP) BM – my son said he was tied to the kennel, don't know how he got off chain. Who paid for medical? (TP) I asked if I could do anything and they said no BM. TP - Are all dogs s/n with shots? BM - Found out about s/n when I got two citations. Officer that took dog said I could go for fancier permit. BM- my shepherd is getting spayed. Officer there the day this happened, had guns out, said no hold on, sprayed with pepper spray, he didn't growl or bark or attack, didn't come out there to attack anyone. YC - when does lease expire? BM - I am purchasing the property.

SAM GOODENOUGH has known Hooch since he was 6 weeks old, is a moose, never bit me. My kids never had any problems with him. My kids play with him. None ever been bitten. When you play, is dog chained? JB – SG no, he was in the house. Not a vicious dog.

LORI MERRIT - Hooch did bite neighbor and came home was loading in ambulance. When I left my dog was in his fence with roof and shade. Don't know how he got out. Not here to deceive. Yes he bit a little boy. He was beating him with a stick. Showed the shots, rabies and everything. Feel sorry and sad for neighbor. I did bring her flowers and visited her twice. Stressed my concern for her. Love my dog. If not let out of cage, this would not have happened. Never attacked kids in pool or on trampoline.

YC has a question for Thomas and Juanita. Heard you say you backed up to dog and then later heard you were hitting dog with stick. Want you to tell the truth. It matters if you were hitting the dog or accidentally backed up to the dog. Thomas – we were playing with dart guns and shot a

dart by the dog on accident and went to get it and then backed into the dog and tripped over the walk and then the dog got me. Kids were playing with dart gun around the dogs. JB – did any darts hit the dog or any sticks. Thomas – no.

YC has a question for Patsy not related to the bite but to good will and relationship. BM mentioned that you were offered help or remorse, flowers, attention after bite. Their little boy calls you grandmom and grandpa. PATSY - Only communication was when my husband came in dumbfounded after he offered to get padlock for his dog and give husband a key. Billy and mom came first night TP – who paid for all this. Patsy - my husband and I. They did not offer to pay.

JUANITA - owner's of dog never once called to see how my grandson was, didn't care. Billy called 2x. She called me to start raising her voice because AC had called her. When I took my grandson to the hospital, it is mandatory reporting. Understand dogs bite. Understand things happen. Don't understand coldness and uncaring. Never once did anything to see if he was okay.

BM – how did Hooch get loose? We have people who come around and feed the dog, some bum. Don't know how he got loose. My son came home from school and he was roped to chain link fence. He left to go to a friend's house, came home and he was gone. I did say I would get him padlocked and this way both he and I would have a key. That way if he got off chain, we both have key.

KS – what kind of kennel? BM – pick latch up and slip it. Can't open it. KS is there any other locking system on that gate. BM no

GARY BURTON – how many times has dog got out, numerous. If he could have got me, he would bite me. I took the shovel to get it off my mom, vicious every bit, scared to death of the dog, not quiet in our neighborhood cause dogs bark constantly night and day. My mom did not provoke or do anything. Got bit by the dog, knocked her over on her back. Want our safety back.

TP we are here to decide if we uphold animal being vicious.

MYRA GLASSMAN wanted to address Committee to remind that this determination should have nothing to do with whether these people are nice, whether they get along with neighbors or whether they appropriately had animal contained, if contained still vicious. Any animal that can do this on more than one occasion is vicious. Chaining increases animal tendency to be vicious. Please focus on whether animal is vicious and not interpersonal relationships here. Thank you.

TP – explain to us definition of vicious animal as opposed to dangerous. (See Attached). YC – want to thank the audience for clarifying that we are looking at legal definition of vicious and makeup of neighborhood but because of children being involved, this dog is vicious. At same time because you intend to remain in neighborhood unfair to quiet enjoyment of their property. They were there first. You brought animals in, unfortunately, the mastiff not meshed well in community, planning to stay and purchase home unfair to have animal in that neighborhood. It is dangerous and interferes with enjoyment of their property.

Motion to accept AC declaration of vicious. YC seconds, all in favor. Decision to uphold declaration of vicious animal. BY – you are neighbors. I hope you find a way to work out these issues. Your responsibility has not been met. It comes back to what you could have done to avoid this.

LORRIE MERRIT – whoever let out dog should be responsible. Do we get to see him before he

gets put down? DM - Shelter is in possession, contact and see if you can arrange. Lorrie - Our home phone number is 644-1042.

PATSY BURTON - Don't know why anybody would take a lackadaisical attitude toward safety in their neighborhood. TP - That is why we have laws and why we have this Committee and are a sounding board for community. Sad thing. PB - Mr. Burton said Billie Meredith brags they are guard dogs; don't want to see this happen again. His other dog is a big dog.

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

AYSHA DEFESTA brought in an ad for Committee to see. This is a free paper and you can get pit puppies for \$20 or less. It is time we have people get breeders licenses and pay for it. We are overrun with pit bulls. YC – too bad they accept ad and place pictures, AC could still call and find out what they are doing. DM we can call and see where they are. The biggest challenge is most of the sellers will not tell you where they live. We cannot go undercover to find out where they live, friend in humane orgs helping us. When we find intact animals, we issue citations if no fancier permit.

KS – what is AC doing about this? Same phone number 3 different ads. It is not hidden but out in the open. Understand they will not give you an address. Remember 2, 3 years ago I asked what you needed to follow up on skip/trace, still waiting for answer. DM we have reverse directory but not as accurate as we like. They move and keep same phone numbers. Staffing as well is an issue. We currently have 4 ACO positions we are trying to fill. Down significantly. KS – I know a lot of politicians that may be able to work this out. JOE BOTEILHO – anything you can give us to find somebody we will take it. That's why we purchase cross directory, call cell phones, anything you got send it. We have been doing calls, need address, license plates. We can request license plate run. KS end of 2003/04, I brought this up, nothing ever said. We will see what we can do on the state level to get you some access to more information. If you could get some of Metro's access will solve some of problem.

YC more people have cell phones than residential phones and prepaid service and don't know how other than going undercover.

JOE BOTEILHO - give us an address, make some calls, send to us. We have people working with us who have met with them, gotten us info and that's how we have been successful.

KS has had phone calls complaining about people selling dogs in parking lots. Some people willing to come forward but don't know what they have to bring forward to get response.

JB – Karen Layne and I chewed over ordinance discussed at last meeting and would like to bring back with some changes. Handed in changes to AC.

YC how would process work. DM we prepare a draft review on our end and work with Karen on language, iron it out a little more, take from legal standpoint and bring it back. YC between the night we voted and today, I am not pleased with my voting against but still would not vote for it unless distinctions are made between AKC folks and general population and somewhere in between. A clear distinction somewhere in between to distinguish between fancier/enthusiast and pet owners.

TP it is incumbent upon all of us to find a solution for problems. Big problem is overpopulation, people continuing to breed. I applaud anyone with fortitude to stand up and come forward. Seem

stuck in the mud. Do anything that might cost money, they are here hollering. Not a lot of people stepping forward and giving good ideas. It is a community problem and community needs to find solution. Asking for ideas to stop the killing and make animals more valuable to people. In some countries, it is a privilege to own an animal and you have to go to school before you can own. We have so many we just kill them, every day. Thomas Paine said, “ When we obtain too cheaply, we esteem too lightly.” Attitude has to be overcome and the only way is with tough legislation, don’t just get rid of cause of bad habit, train the animal. We as a committee are not the only ones to come up with ideas. If we have 50/60 versions-we need to do something to get going.

7. Comments by the General Public

MYRA GLASSMAN is involved with a group on yahoo called lasvegaspets.com deals with postings regarding placing animals that need a new home, animal supplies and information such as where you can get s/n and shots at reasonable price. Small group but keeping a good number of animals out of shelter by finding homes. Cause for hope. Other thing I have been able to do, have had 2 different families posting to give up animals and was able to get them help they needed to keep animals, such as getting s/n or shots and telling woman where she can get inexpensive obedience class for dog. Trying to do some education but things are happening. Next point would like to ask Ken to get political friends in action. She has been calling some of these ads and problem needs to be solved at state level, not in Clark County. Others bring in animals to sell from Pahrump, from Utah; one guy I can’t even get a name gathers various animals together and then he is selling them through these freebies newspapers in LV. Problem does not stop at Clark County’s borders. Some kind of s/n legislation does not take place on state level. Ken spin your wheels and help us with that. Last thing, several states that have passed legislation for TPOs to be able to apply to family pets.

KS – lot of legislation regarding s/n. Once it infringes on individual rights it is a violation of constitution. They cannot be mandatory or it is an infringement of rights. MG – no right in constitution to own an animal. CA and AL have right to own property. As long as property rights involved, have a problem. KS - Mandatory s/n in Albuquerque increased population in shelter 40 percent since April and had the same effect all over the place.

KAREN LAYNE to KS doesn’t think your views reflect rest of humane groups. Your views are so different. She can’t imagine any group that would not support mandatory s/n. Am canvassing right now and telling you people will not s/n animals. They offer free s/n, target an area but plenty of people tell me they want to breed. They want to have more puppies. It is a money making proposition. Until we take away the money it is an economic issue for each puppy bred. Hope we come back with ordinance with a breeding disincentive to sell intact s/n animals. KS has no problem with s/n out of shelter. When mandatory or special licensing falls under 4th amendment and there is a problem. Will cost money to go to court. Am sure there is a way. Those people who want to breed do you have address. KL we do and will provide to AC. KS is aware there is a problem but have to look at broad spectrum. It has to appeal to everyone, has to protect everyone. The thing is once you start infringing on people’s rights, constitution problems come up.

YC – we have heard all of this. We have drug laws in this country and yet we have millions of people using drugs. Lawbreakers will breed anyway. Law abiding citizen will follow but that is not a puppy that would end up in shelter anyway not reaching people who break law every day. Next time will have an idea

DR DAVE HENDERSON(DR H) has been working in industry for 27 years, practicing since 82 here and has been working on animal overpopulation for over 20 years. He spent 10 years on

AAC, went through lot of ordinances, heard same complaints on ordinance we passed 3 or 4 years ago and no lawsuits. Heard same derogatory comments, if that case why any laws. Some segments of population will not do unless we make them. The segment that won't obey, do we take away the laws? No, we need something; AC needs something that we can use as leverage on these people. People will not get animals s/n even when it is safe and free. They think they need to breed dog or cat and don't consider themselves part of the problem. Not going to neuter my dog we heard tonight. We have to define what a responsible pet owner is. There will be people who fall through the cracks but others who will get caught and prosecuted and after a few instances of judicious enforcement people will eventually do right thing. YC - why can't we provide birth certificate for each pet so each animal is recorded? Why do you have to decide to s/n before you know whether puppy can be shown? DR H ordinance said apply for permit, not s/n. Nothing that would offend responsible breeder. YC distinguish between fancier and pet owner. DR H- who cares? We are trying to reduce source where people get their pets. Maybe we can tweak it. I have been involved for over 20 years. It just isn't working. Go down there and watch the slaughter. YC believes in individual rights and property owners and we are punishing people who may not be contributing to the problem. DR H – There was nothing that said they had to s/n an 8-week-old puppy. It said either get permit or s/n. YC everybody said they do not want fancier to be something anyone can get. DR H – many of the people who apply will not get it. If animal not showable, no permit. They have to s/n. BY – this is public comment time. We are not here to debate. We recognize everyone's time is valuable. Debate should be when taking action or before or after. Committee's time has already been provided. DR H in favor of bringing back ordinance or some modified version of ordinance. It will require enforcement on AC's part and no law is 100 percent enforceable. Murder against the law yet still occurs.

JUDITH RUIZ – AKC has had several lawsuits for fraudulent behavior. High volume breeders because has papers does not mean it is a good animal. Assn of Veterinarians For Animal Rights has lawsuit against AKC for this behavior.

HAROLD VOSKO – It starts from the top. Almost all groups adopt animals s/n. Yet there are groups out there adopting animals intact. We can't get groups to adopt out animals s/n if we can't set right tone. We keep puppies 12 weeks and cats 10 weeks. Voucher system they all do not get s/n. We are all looking for solutions and we can't even get it right ourselves.

BRUCE HALSTEAD we have contracts that ask if dog will be shown. There are specifications upon the seller and purchaser to complete training. It cannot be shown, has to go through training course. Seller has right to repurchase dog if altered or changed. New owner cannot give away or turn loose w/o notifying original breeder who sold dog. We have complained about attempts to expand permit. BC had mandatory freeze at one time of no growth. We need to stop population growth. If not, address gang bangers. Are we going to s/n these teenage kids who are selling drugs, socialism, Nazism, population control. If you don't want to put control on people population how can you force people to give up their rights. Teaching therapy dogs. PETA and Nazi are the same things, educate people.

BILLY MEREDITH – confused s/n or fancier permit. He doesn't know what it is. Hearing you have to show dog, didn't know that. Is there another appeal? TP your next step would be in court. DM – district court. You will need to get an attorney, get an injunction so animal can be held.

MYRA GLASSMAN – YC and JB – who do you represent on committee – YC animal handler and JB is general public.

8. Set date, time and agenda of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 9/18/07 at 6:30 p.m. at the Paradise Community Center.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.