

**Animal Advisory Commission
Regular Meeting**

FINAL MINUTES

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2015 OCT -9 PM 3:37

Meeting Date: June 25, 2015

Convened: 1:33 p.m.

Adjourned: 4:12 p.m.

Members Present:

Mary Spencer, Chair
Maeleska Fletes, Vice Chair
Judi Burnett
Julie Cassidy
Patti Cody
Teresa Gubbins
Amanda Henry
Deborah Hicks
Jody Jones
Bonnie Mathias
Rebecca Poling
Christopher Watts

Members Absent:

Molly DeVoss
Jennifer Roberts

Briefing Presenters

Catherine McManus, *Operations Manager*
Deputy Chief Scott Walton

Staff Present:

Kris Sweckard, Jody Jones, Catherine McManus, Audrey Parham, Yolanda Ramirez

Guests:

Carla Adkins, Paige Anderson, Shelia Bates, Sheri Bratton, Peter Brodsky, Lisa Dunne, Rashd Ibrahim, Melis Jones, Karen Kennedy, Mindy Owen, Larry Powell, Charles Reeder, Deborah Rodriguez, Diana Rowden, Lynn Scharoun

AGENDA:

1. Chairman Announcements

Presenter(s): Mary Spencer

Information Only:

- Ms. Spencer called the meeting to order at 1:33 pm.
- Ms. Gubbins will be setting up a DAS tour schedule for the new councilmembers.

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): N/A

2. Approval of March 26, 2015 and May 18, 2015 Minutes

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): A motion was made to approve the minutes as written.

Item passed unanimously.

3. Budget Update

Presenter(s): Kris Sweckard

Information Only:

Mr. Sweckard highlighted the below.

- A budget workshop was held and a balanced proposed budget was presented that explained the gaps. An increase on tax rate and service fees was mentioned.
- Three budget enhancements were submitted as an increase to the budget. One being a partial year funding for Southern Dallas Initiative to focus on loose dogs.
- A one-time cost saving will be used for repairs, maintenance, and landscaping.
- Operation hours could be effected if the budget does not get approved.
- Sunset review listed 19 opportunities for improvement by priority with high impact in the South Dallas Initiative.
- Ms. Jones stated the South Dallas initiative was a combination of the five year staffing plan combined priorities within the community.
- Fee study was reviewed per unit to include current fee, full cost, proposed fee and revenue impact. Some of the proposed fee per unit is higher than the respective full cost. The license and permit fees were market driven fees.

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): Ms. Burnett suggested that another HSUS study should be done for Animal Services to determine the new priorities as the result of the progress the division has made. Ms. Jones asked how much the previous ones cost and how they were funded. Ms. Burnett responded that the previous study cost was \$25,000 and funded by Metroplex Animal Coalition through a private donor.

4. DPD Ordinance & Enforcement Review

Presenter(s): Deputy Chief Scott Walton

Information Only:

Mr. Walton highlighted the below regarding the calls that Dallas Police respond to animals.

- Dog bites or fighting that become violent is a safety concern and police will respond.
- Dog is considered property so if the dog is stolen then is theft and a police report should be filed for investigation. Proper proof/evidence that the dog belongs to you (i.e., photos, registration, microchip, etc.) should be presented.
- Sale of dogs is considered illegal vending and Commission raised concerns that police do not enforce. Deputy Walton responded that is at the officer discretion to enforce.

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): Deputy Walton will be doing further research and get back with the Commission regarding what calls goes to 311/911, and what enforcement is taken on private property that sale animals. Also, to confirm that police do respond to a loose dog in the highway or median during rush hour.

5. Community Member Programs & Transfer Partners

Presenter(s): Mary Spencer and Chris Watts

Information Only:

Mr. Watts highlighted the below.

- As a result of initial collective feedback, four areas of opportunities were identified for collaboration amongst transfer partners and neighborhood/community advocates. The four areas were listed for review and input from the Commission.
- Initiating this program will be a partner between DAS and the communities. Another opportunity to saving lives.

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): Commission to share with their neighbors, friends, family, and gather their opinion/input to see if the program will work or not.

6. Dangerous Dog Ordinances

Presenter(s): Kris Sweckard and Catherine McManus

Information Only:

Mr. Sweckard briefed the Commission regarding the overview of the dangerous dog hearing process and the proposed amendments. The hearing process was strengthened to allow the director to seize a dog that has caused bodily injury to a person and impound while the hearing is pending. It also allows a dangerous dog to be removed from city limits. If the dog is deemed dangerous and allowed to remain in the city, a mandatory spay/neuter will be enforced.

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): N/A

7. Status of X-Ray Machine (Grant & Procurement)

Presenter(s): Kris Sweckard

Information Only:

Mr. Sweckard thanked the commission for their support in making the grant possible. An outlet upgrade was completed. Policy & Procedures are currently in the process of being developed. A 30-day operation progress will be given to the Moody Foundation.

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): N/A

8. DCAP Update

Presenter(s): Maeleska Fletes

Information Only:

Ms. Fletes reported the following highlights of the program.

- The statistical data for Spay Days, Lucy Fund, and Pets for Life were mentioned. Additional animals were added into the Pets for Life database. The history and contributions of Dallas Companion Animal Project were reviewed.

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): Donation request to the Lucy Fund (for owned animals) are encouraged.

9. Animal Services Manager's Report

Presenter(s): Catherine McManus

Information Only:

A briefing regarding the review of Animal Services operations, priorities, and accomplishments were identified. Some of the highlights included the following for February 2015-April 2015:

- Dallas Animal Services attended three Community Outreach events.
- Facility updates are ongoing to include interior and exterior work. A new bid was submitted for interior painting, restructure of front desk, awning and storage room.
- Training with 311 Strategic Customer Service has continued to include Call Process, Ride Along, and CSR.
- Medical unit continues to increase spay/neuter surgeries, cruelty exams, heartworm test and treatments. The monthly vaccine clinic partner initiative resulted in 234 rabies vaccines.
- Record Placement Results showed 1,956 adoptions and a new live release record for dogs and cats to be 58% live release.
- Lost & Found results showed 461 were returned to their owners. Transfer results showed 1,262 with three top rescue groups.
- Everyday Adoption Center continues to have an adoption increase. Pet Supermarket program showed a low adoption number.
- Field Services update was reported to have 571 surgeries through the Officer Outreach Program. National Animal Control Appreciation Week was celebrated.
- DPD pet of the week was initiated and has so far been successful.
- Volunteer day at DAS with Earth Day, McAfee, and DPA were held.
- Media coverage fluctuated between Broadcast News, Print/Online News, Blogs, Tweets, and FaceBook.
- Staff attended three conferences that included Hoarding, SAWA, and the 69th Annual James Steele Diseases in Nature.

- DAS was awarded with the John LaBella Award ELPO.
- Adoption promotions were highly featured during May-July to include Finding Rover, Feline Frenzy, price reduction of adoptions, and waived fees to sterilized animals.
- A Kuranda Bed drive was held.
- New hires were reported as 2 Senior Office Assistants and 2 Veterinary Technicians.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation(s): N/A

10. Public Comments

Information Only:

The following citizens stated their full name, address, and raised their concerns:

Ms. Scharoun is the Community Activist for TOP (Texas Organizing Project) and wants action to be done regarding loose dogs in Pleasant Grove. She encouraged education so that pet owners are familiar with the rules. Mr. Sweckard responded that staff to include Animal Services and Code would be participating in an educational code walk with Councilmember Callahan in the Pemperton Hill area.

Mr. Reeder serves on the TOP Executive Board and is concerned about the loose dogs. A particular grocery store is feeding these dogs and they become aggressive. He would like for signs to be placed regarding feeding and leash law, and to call 311 for city service.

Ms. Rodriguez expressed her disappointment regarding the Volunteer Program not being in place after a year of funding. Among her five questions, she asked if the Meadows Foundation grant has been paid out? If so, has it been spent? The citizens are hungry to see this program back up and want DAS to make it a priority. Ms. Jones responded that the position is much vested. The city has a process and anticipates launching the program a lot sooner. The grant was received and moving forwarding to hiring for that position.

Ms. Brown has been a foster for DAS and would like to see a much broader program with fosters. The community should be involved and suggested an internship program to photograph the adoption animals. Ms. Jones responded that technology is very limited and can only do so much with the limited resources in place.

Ms. Adkins is an independent rescue and is forced to pick up dogs to protect them. She would like something done with loose dogs. She would like to have a better life and see more programs where the community can be involved, especially the Volunteer Program. Ms. Fletes encouraged Ms. Adkins to volunteer with DCAP.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation(s): Ms. Jones to follow-up with Ms. Rodriguez and respond to her questions.


11. Next Meeting

Information Only:

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on September 24, 2015 beginning at 1:30 pm.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation(s): N/A

Mary Spencer
Chair


Yolanda Ramirez
Coordinator