



Animal Advisory Commission Minutes

Thursday, January 16, 2020

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CITY SECRETARY
DALLAS TEXAS

Minutes - FINAL

1. **Call to Order** – 1:30 PM
2. **Approval of Minutes** – December 12, 2019
 - A motion was made by Commissioner William Newlin, to approve the December 12, 2019 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Director, Ed Jamison welcomed our new member Commissioner Caleb Trotter to introduce himself and to give us a little information on his background. Mr. Jamison introduced Melissa Webber who will be our new Assistant Director, on February 10, 2020, who is currently at Los Angeles Animal Services, which is the 2nd largest in-take of animals (50-60,000), in the country and prior to working there she worked for Animal Care Centers of NYC.

3. **DAS Management Report**

- **Principles** – Always we let Public Safety, Compassion and No Shortcuts be the driving force behind the decisions that we make.
- **Defining Success** – Right now we are at or above 3 out of the 4 Target Goals that we have set for ourselves.
 - 35% Combined Shelter & Field Dog RTO, Q1 Actual is 36.9%.
 - 87% Timely Service Request Response, Q1 Actual is 93.7%.
 - 90% Live Release Rate* for Dogs & Cats, Q1 Actual is 90.6%.
 - -5 % Decrease in Loose & Loose Owned Bites, Actual is 7.3%.
- **Dashboard of Performance-to-Dates** – Promote Public Safety
 - **Total Dog Intake (YTD)**, includes Shelter and Field – is up 45.1% from previous years, but down from last fiscal year-to-date.

Field Dog Intake (YTD) – we've had a decrease in this category as well. In the last budget cycle, City Council gave us additional staff, so that we can have our deep night (overnight) shift, 7 days a week and also gave us additional staff so that we can have In-house Dispatching. We thought that it was important to start these new positions right away, so we pulled from other shifts and one of our Ops Teams and it has made an impact on our dog intake. Our Ops Team has a large impact, on our dog intake, so we will be looking at our next quarter, to see what it is going to look like, according to Ann Barnes, Field Operation Manager.

- **Service Requests (YTD)** – Typically when our Proactive calls (in yellow) increase, the External Calls through 311 decrease. This last quarter, we the opposite effect, again because we disassembled our Ops Team, because they do the majority of our Proactive Calls. However, we have all of those positions filled and are being trained, so we should be seeing a turnaround within the next quarter.
- **Loose and Loose Owned Dog Bites (YTD)** – In our last Commission Meeting, someone asked for information on if the animals involved in loose and loose owned bites are spayed and neutered? We pulled some information, and these are approximate numbers, because we didn't have a tracking system. However, we have built one since then, so going forward, the numbers will be more accurate. We had some unknowns and Ann said that she didn't count those, but known animal involved in loose and loose owned dog bites is 44%. It's higher than Ann Barnes thought that it would be. We're also looking to break it out by male and female. The question was, are bites going up, because they are being reported more? We're getting more information from medical facilities on bites and they are our first contact to know that I bite



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has happened, instead of the actual victim, that could be a part of it, so we are going to keep our eye on this and see what is occurring.

- **Loose and Loose Owned Dog Service Requests (YTD)** – These are the Services Requests coming in from 311. We've seen an increase in this last quarter and we made a decision this fiscal year that we want to dig a little deeper into the Service Request, coming from the public. We have a Service Request where the owner can call and surrender their pet and we will pick it up. The Shelter is doing some deeper investigations, into owner surrenders. We're looking at why people owner-surrender their dogs in the field and how we might prevent that from happening. Also, you cannot surrender your dog in lieu of a citation. We no longer do that.
- **Timely Response Rate** – We're doing really well on and want to keep a close eye on. We want to look at the quality of our calls. Return-to-Owner (RTO), in the field is a good quality call. We got the call, found the dog, return the dog to the owner with citations, educating them and we solved the problem. However, how many times are we doing that, with that same owner and same dog. Are we really solving the problem? The other end of the spectrum is, that we get a call for a loose dog and we go out, we're unable to find him and we close the call and our response time for the next call is even better. How can we classify quality on this call, so that we can meet in the middle, find the dog, do and RTO and maybe with a little more resources and education, we can close this call and never have to go back to that address again. We have some tools that we are currently using, that we have to tweak a little bit to be able to track that. It's going to take some training for the Officers.
- **Dashboard of Performance-to-Date – Quality of Animal Treatment**
 - **Live Release Rate Dog & Cate (YTD)** – (Includes dogs and cats only) – October was a bit more challenging, but November and December have exceeded our expectations. The community support that we have received, from adoptions, foster and volunteer have been incredible.
 - **Live Release Rate Cat & Dog Splits (YTD)** - Through the assistance from our community, we have been able to save 90.6% of the dogs and cats this quarter. When you look at the split, it's still the cats bringing the average down a little bit. They're just below 90% and the dogs hit 94.8%, when you round up it's 95%. In November and December, we didn't have to make the space euthanasia
 - **% of Dog Intake Already S/N & Microchipped (YTD)** – This is 38% of dogs coming in micro-chipped. That is huge. That is what is enabling us to get the animals in and back out to their homes so quickly and that we were able to exceed that 365 measure of that 35% of that RTO rate.
- **Dashboard of Performance-to-Date – Quality of Stay Score (New FY20 Goal=7 pts)**
 - **Quality of Stay Score** – We also increased our QSS for dogs this quarter. Thanks to our Friends of Dallas Animal Services Group. We had a steady stream of enrichment items and with that stream of enrichment items, we had more one-time groups handing them out, we had more staff and Volunteers engaging with those items and we were really able bolster that.
 - **Dog Playgroups (% of Eligible Dogs Participating)** – is up 83% in the Q1, FY20. At the end of last Summer, we were really struggling, because of scheduling and we were stretched out to 7 days per week, in the middle of last year and with the high capacity of large dogs, we weren't getting that 90% goal out that we wanted to, so We have been hitting over 90% for November and December. This is the first time that our dog enrichment number, exceed our cat.
 - **Doggy Daycations** – We also started tracking our Doggy Daycations, we started including that with our QSS, because if a dog gets to go out with a Volunteer for a whole day, that's pretty enriching. So, we wanted to go ahead and categorize that as well. We have a new system of measuring and that's going to be starting in February and that we are excited about. We'll have a schedule by week of every enrichment item that they need to get by room.



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- **Dashboard of Performance-to-Date – Quality of Animal Treatment – Medical Care**
 - **% of Dogs Getting HW Treatment** – We have increased our heartworm treatments. They have gone up by 45.8%, that tested positive and received treatment.
 - **Spay and Neuter Surgeries (YTD)**, (Prior to FY20 surgery totals were tracked manually and may include slight user error) – Spay and Neuter Surgeries are up 63.1% over FYTD 2016.
 - **Specialty Surgeries** – are up 93% over FY Q1 2019. They are orthopedics, lacerations, bone pinning, etc. Anything other than spay and neuter.
Commissioner Sandra Luhring asked if Michael Burke, Medical Manager II, if he kept track of the individual specialty surgeries and he replied yes.
- **Dashboard of Performance-to-Date – Stakeholders**
 - **Dogs Returned to Owner (YTD)** – has increased 566.3% over FYTD 2016. the Field RTO number 2432, exceeds last year's number of 2,414. The Field is returning more dogs while they are still out there and have communication with the owner and it's down a little with Shelter, but we're working on different programs and looking at doing more things to improve that number.
 - **Adoption by Visiting Parties** – We have found that quarter over quarter, we do see some ups and downs, it's down by 25% over Q1 FY 2019. This quarter we had a successful adoption event at The Galleria for about a month and had 100 adoptions and we weren't tracking by parties, so that skewed the numbers a little. We have fewer dogs in our kennels, because we have had successful adoptions and when people come to the shelter, they're not finding what they want. So, we didn't have "By the Party," but is still a huge number of people coming to our shelter.
 - **Adopted Cats and Dogs (YTD)** – We had a goal this year to increase our adoptions by 5% and we are exceeding that. Adoptions are up by 75% (3,992). We weren't sure if we could beat our last year's numbers (3,507). We just continue to grow!
Cat & Dog Transfers to Rescue (YTD) - are down. We continue to ask our Rescues to take harder and harder cases and also as our adoptions increase, some of the animals that they were taking in 2017, 2018 and 2019 aren't as available. We are looking for more creative ways and as we build our transport vehicle, we're hoping that number can go up, but we are really encouraged by all of the support that we get for the medical and behavior cases, that we do not have the capabilities of placing and we appreciate our Rescues.
 - **Animals Fostered** – we don't have data that goes back to FY16, that's very clean, we tracked it on spreadsheets. That is by quarter still, not by FYTD. We had 538 animals go out to Foster this quarter and a lot of them were big dogs.
 - **Volunteers** – the tracking for Volunteer hours was not super reliable, so we prefer to look at it by the quarter. The number of Volunteers that we have is increasing substantially and the number of volunteer hours is increasing. In Q4, we had our Clear the Shelters Event, which is our single biggest adoption event and we get a lot of one-time Volunteers. We always anticipate that this will be our highest quarter. This quarter has come so close to quarter 4, it's really encouraging.
- **December 2019 Statistics Graphic** – summarizes a lot of what was just presented. This was the December 2019 Statistics in graphic form.
- **Calendar 2019 Statistics Graphic** – 2019 Calendar year Summary. The bottom of the graph shows the completed heartworm treatments, spay/neuter surgeries by our Veterinarians, pets fostered and volunteer hours.



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- **Ordinance Revisions** – We have reached out to every City Council District and at a time or place of their choosing, we want to have a meeting with the citizens in their district in February or March, to get their ideas and what they would like to see changed or added. We’re looking to make some revisions, such as:
 - **Edit definitions**
 - **Add clarifying language**
 - **Remove all language about “registration”**
 - **Change language from “Feral” to “Community Cat”**
 - **Remove stray hold for Community Cats and Prohibited Animals** – Says that you can’t have them, but it doesn’t say what and how we can do with them.
 - **Add section defining expectation for humane trapping**
 - **Reviewing current 7-4.12 – Duty to Locate Owners of Loose Dogs** – Says that you have a criminal duty to report a lost animal, this is an in between ordinance. If you find an animal that it lost, you’re supposed to take it to a Veterinarian to be scanned for a microchip or call the number on the tag or call 311 to have the animal picked up for identification screening or taking the dog to Dallas Animal Services. It’s hard for us to enforce. None of that has to do with the ownership of the animal. We’re looking at this. There are some groups that are taking animals and purposely not bringing them to the Shelter and we want it to be plain and clear.
 - **Divisional Contacts**
 - **Executive Leadership**
 - **Ed Jamison, Director** – Edward.Jamison@DallasCityHall.com
 - **Melissa Webber, Assistant Director** – *Starts February 10th*
 - **Jordan Craig, General Manager** – Jordan.Craig@DallasCityHall.com
 - **Cindy Hall, Executive Assistant** – Cindy.Hall@DallasCityHall.com
 - **Field Division**
 - **Ann Barnes, Manger III** – Ann.Barnes2@DallasCityHall.com
 - **Medical Division**
 - **Michael Burk, Manager II** – Michael.Burk@DallasCityHall.com
 - **Shelter Division**
 - **Marian Cannell, Manager II** – Marian.Cannell@DallasCityHall.com
 - **Administration**
 - **Ernie Lampkin, Manager III** – Ernest.Lampkin@DallasCityHall.com
 - **Whitney Hanson, Manager II** – Whitney.Hanson@dallascityhall.com
 - **Leah Backo, Public Information Coordinator** – Leah.Backo@DallasCityHall.com
- **Employee Satisfaction Survey** – was created by Ryan Rogers, former Assistant Director and the employees take the survey every year. We have a good baseline of how the department has been, since Ed has been the leader. We’ve stuck with the same questions, because we wanted to compare apples to apples. Commissioner William Newlin asked about the turnover rate and it’s not something that the City has tracked-as-a whole, in the past and so we don’t have anything to compare it to, especially since we only have two full years of a department under Ed’s leadership, but what the City does track is the vacancy rate and our vacancy rate is 11.3%. The turnover rate that we found for FY19 was around 30%, but we don’t know what that means exactly, and we don’t know what it compares to, to others in the animal welfare industry, because it is a high stress industry. Thanks to his question, we are looking into it more regularly, as we track vacancy rate. Our Budget Analyst is also tracking this other information, so that we can get a better picture of what is going on.



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- **Tuesday Morning Reporting: Dashboard** – The 3 documents that we look at every Tuesday
 - **Our Reporting Dashboard** - with our statistics
 - **Our Procurement** – tracking
 - **Our Hiring** – vacancy rate is important to the City and want to make sure that we are moving on these and on track. We evaluate all of this every single week. We'd rather be proactive and ahead of any problems that we may have, rather than reactive and too late.

Questions:

- **Commissioner Robert Trimble** asked if we could give him the number of citations issued and have it categorized and how did they end?
- **Director Ed Jamison** replied that we report that information on our monthly fact sheet. Those are the numbers that we issued. The follow-up gets a little bit trickier to follow-up, on that side to track down, on a that citation number. The citation data that we reported on last month, that had the graphs, I got end of the year numbers directly from the Courts and they sent every single citation (20,000). I think that we can request the overall data from the Courts, but it might not match up. Mr. Trimble said that there should be a record of if a citation was dismissed or not and that they Courts should be responsible for getting that information to DAS. Mr. Jamison replied, that the Courts give us that information, but we look at our unanswered and communicate with the Marshalls office every month. We are looking at repeat offenders.
- **Commissioner Charlotte New** asked what is the current policy on people reclaiming their animal?
- **General Manager Jordan Craig** replied that as long as the animal is at our facility or in our care, we are going to return them to their owner. There are fees, when the owner comes to reclaim their animal, the first day of impound there some leniency, but there fees for surgeries and a couple of different things. There are circumstances where the owner is not able to pay, we do work with owners as much as we can. There is no tier for fees.
- **Commissioner William Newlin** asked about our data/metrics, what does it all mean?
- **Director Jamison** replied that there was a lot of information on Intake. At the end of the day it falls into the three buckets, Public Safety, Compassion and No Shortcuts. So are we making decisions that are keeping people and animals safe, are we doing things that are making the compassionate decisions, did this animal get an opportunity to be responsibly placed to have a good life, are we being compassionate to the humans that we are serving and on the No Shortcuts, in this industry there are things that you will get yelled at less for, but they may not be responsible, be it in public safety, be it in the best interest of the animals. We try to never ever warehouse animals. Is there any one metric in particular? What is that affecting? This is an eco-system that I look at. The old thinking was secure the animal and find him a home. There is not just one thing that saves lives. We want to keep people safe, we want to be compassionate to the animals and we want to know that animals are getting a chance, without us giving them a bad quality of life while they are in our care and the public will be safe.
- **Commissioner William Newlin** asked, does the historical data tell us this?
- **Director Jamison** replied that on the historical data, a lot of programs that we continue to do and there were programs that we started and stopped, because we weren't getting any bang, we feel for this great big huge intake, we feel that we are being pretty successful in trying to provide a quality service to the two-legged and four-legged residence in our city right now and I hope that one day the message about securing your animal will really get across, because so many ordinances have been discussed over and over again, that if the animal was secured from the beginning, there would be no need for anything else to happen on the ordinance. There



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would be nobody getting a ticket, no deeming. What can we do to help people to be the best pet owners? People love their pets in Dallas.

- **Commissioner Shelby Bobosky** asked a question that was asked at the City Council meeting yesterday by CM Atkins asked how the Council can better fund DAS? Now is the time to pounce on that if you need more Field Officers and they were impressed with you presentation.
- **Director Jamison** replied more that more Officers, more trucks, more shelter staff, more medical, more admin. there is a certain output that you will get from that. The people that are giving us grants now, it's because we can get specific and we have all of these measurements. We can talk about a kitten nursery and say exactly how many lives got saved, because we started a kitten nursery. If there were more satellite offices, we could do more, but that is expensive.
- **Commissioner Shelby Bobosky** said that DAS is doing a good job, but the Citizens are not. It's about education. How do educate them that with the loose dog bites, there is an owner behind them.
- **Director Jamison** replied that we couldn't agree more. We have tried various marketing ideas and we don't always get as much bang as we thought. Word of mouth starts it, meeting with City Councilmembers and people are coming to the Shelter.
- **Commissioner Robert Trimble** asked about are we citing people for tethering.
- **Manager III Ann Barnes** replied that straight tethering is a low priority (8) call and always has been. Our Priority 8 calls first get responded to by getting a letter to the Violator and the Complainant explaining what the violation is and what needs to be done to correct it and it also explains to the Complainant that if it doesn't get resolved, then to contact us and Animal Officer get dispatched to resolve it in person and a citation will be issued.
- **Commissioner Robert Trimble** asked if a Citizen is being investigated for an animal cruelty case, does DAS get a report of the outcome of the case?
- **Director Jamison** said yes and no. We become an assisting party. Depending on if it is a live active situation, we probably will be there until the end and be the live transport piece, if animals are getting ceased. It is mostly yes. They do send us quarterly reports and it comes from DPD and they get the warrants.
- **Commissioner Karen Kennedy** has asked about tethering. She walks by a yard the dog it tethered, he's wagging his tail, he looks like he's fed, taken care of, barks a little bit, I walk by another yard and the dog jumps up, starts pulling on the tethering and is barking viciously would that be a higher priority?
- **Director Jamison** replied no, the dog would have to be loose and cause injury to another dog.
- **Commissioner Pat Rodriguez** asked about the if they can see the quarterly reports that we get from DPD on cruelty cases.
- **Manager III Ann Barnes** said that DPD can present again.
- **Commissioner Pat Rodriguez** suggested that we need a Continuous Improvement Expert, to make the Volunteer process better.
- **Director Jamison** replied that he is looking at our App. and possibly Chameleon. We are working on some things and hopefully they can get here quickly. He could agree more.
- **Commissioner Pat Rodriguez** said that it his her hope that people will start telling their neighbors that if your dog is loose, you will get a citation, if your animal has not been spayed/neutered, you will get citation and that we will see a change and fewer animals in the shelter.
- **Director Jamison** said that DAS is one of the few places in the Country, that if someone doesn't want their pet, they can surrender it at no cost and we ask to see your ID, we need to try and prove to the best of our knowledge that the animal is yours, so that we can try to place that animal. I didn't want to make things hard for people and put safety behind.



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- **Commissioner William Newlin** said that success breeds complacency and asked how often do we do an internal review?
- **Director Jamison** said we are constantly reviewing reports and until the day that I have zero animals euthanized for space, maybe I'll start to get a little complacent and know that we got every placeable animal placed, until there's a number of dog bites that we can all agree that this is just a natural number that's going to be there no matter what you do, then maybe we will stop looking and stop pushing. Even with some of our 365 goals, there have been some people that are saying that Council doesn't even want you to do that good, why are you putting that number on there. The staff has met every challenge that I have thrown at them so far and so we just keep going. The external reviews are the ones that I like even better. We were accused of things, we brought in DPD and asked them to tell us if we are doing something wrong.
- **Commissioner William Newlin** asked what percentage of the budget goes to marketing and social media?
- **Manager II Whitney Hanson** – Technically we have \$20,000 advertising budget. Last year we exceeded that, because of our signage overhaul, but this year we are planning that some of the funds are going to have to go to life-saving issues. We try to do our best to take advantage of what is free, in addition to the generic social media, we do a lot of Next Door. It's been a big help for us. We're always trying to improve relationships with the Media, so that we can get educational messaging out that way. It's a challenge and even when we do spend money, like Ed said, 2 years ago when they spent a significant amount of money with CBS and iHeart Radio and there were not high enough results to sustain that level of investment. So, part of it comes down to trying to figure out, where that money will be effective, then we might be able to spend a little bit more at that point.
- **Commissioner William Newlin** – to answer the Councilmember's questions what do you need, would that be part of the answer, more marketing dollars?
- **Director Jamison** – said that there is a great Councilmember that is extremely supportive of DAS, he wants more Field Officers, in District 8, deep south, there are some issues there, that are not everywhere else. Part of my answer is, wants it to be a complete answer. It's not just Officers, it's not just marketing, it's not just equipment, but it's a component of all that to try to get this resolved. It's what this District will see, as well as equity around the City. It's kind of yes, that's a piece of it. At the end of the day, people are starting to come to our Shelter, people are calling 311, when people see our trucks they are coming out and having a conversation with our Officers, so the human component of everything we do is the single most important thing. That's like a generic answer, but the human component. My Officers, the Commissioners on the Board, the residents of the City, that human component saying yes, DAS is who should call. The news didn't want on, unless it was bad story for a long time. I had an talked to the News yesterday, because we had a City Council meeting that put some good information out to the public. We're not on Channel 5 everyday, unless somebody is getting mauled by a dog, we're not on Fox every day, unless something bad happens at the Shelter. Now they are asking us for those types of things, we would love to have those weekly spots, like some of our great really good Shelters have, we would like to be thought of on that level.

4. **Public Comment** – No comments

5. **Adjourn**

- The meeting adjourned at 2:56



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Animal Advisory Commission
October 29, 2020

Stephen Edison
Animal Advisory Commission Chair

Cindy Hall
Board Coordinator