

Animal Advisory Commission
Regular Meeting

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FINAL MINUTES

Meeting Date: ^{2016 MCH-8 PM 12:40} May 26, 2016

Convened: 1:30 pm

Adjourned: 4:24 pm

Members Present:

Peter Brodsky, Chair
Maeleska Fletes, Vice Chair
Christopher Watts
Karen Kennedy
Sandra Luhring
Jody Jones
Deanna Saucedo
Ryan McComber
Jean-Paul Bonnelly
Judith Burnett
Patti Cody
Teresa Gubbins

Members Absent:

Molly DeVoss

Briefing Presenters:

Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager
Kris Sweckard, Code Compliance Director
Jody Jones, DAS Senior Program Manager
Ann Barnes, DAS Operation Manager
Catherine McManus, DAS Operations Manager

Staff Present:

Joey Zapata, Kris Sweckard, Jody Jones, Chief Robert Sherwin, Catherine McManus, Ann Barnes, Vernon Sawyer, Rita Hammelman, Lorri Ellis, Patricia De La Garza, Chris Bowers, Scott Goldstein

Guests:

Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Erik Wilson, Councilperson Tiffinni Young, Andie Comini, Philip Walker, Diana Rowden, Deborah Whittington, Mary Spencer, Fran Gaconnier, Laura Stankosky, Charlie Howell, Karen Froehlich, Susan Oakey, James Bias, Debby Cody, Deborah Rodriguez, Gabriela Pataro, Elisabeth White, Bonnie Mathias, Carlin Seale, Jeremy Boss.

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order and Chairman Remarks

Presenter(s): Peter Brodsky
Information Only: N/A

2. Approval of March 17, 2016 Minutes

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

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3. Strategic Plan Update

Presenter(s): Peter Brodsky

Information Only:

Mr. Brodsky updated the Commission regarding the DAS Strategic Plan:

- Private funding has been secured for this project.
- Boston Consulting Group (BCG) has agreed to provide consulting services.
- The study will take approximately 11 weeks to complete, and should begin within a couple of weeks.
- Utilizing this funding in another way by DAS was discussed. This funding was specifically provided by the private funders specifically for the development of a DAS strategic plan. This funding would not have been available to DAS for any other purpose.

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): N/A

4. Dog Attack on Antoinette Brown

Presenter(s): Joey Zapata

Information Only:

Interim City Attorney Chris Bowers update:

- The family of Antoinette Brown has filed a \$5M Texas Tort and Federal Civil Rights claim against the City.
- Mr. Bowers stated that an important fact to remember is that the City did not own the dogs that attacked Ms. Brown or control them.
- The City feels that the Texas Tort Claims act makes it clear that animal control is a governmental function and it requires that any plaintiff plead and prove that Ms. Brown's death was proximately caused by a City employees' use or misuse of tangible personal property.
- In addition the City feels the law is quite clear that a failure to respond to complaints, failure to enforce code or state law does not make the City liable.
- For the City to be liable under Federal Civil Rights laws, the plaintiff would need to show that the City's employee or agent committed an act that violated the constitutional rights of the plaintiff and that the employee or agents' acts were the cause of the plaintiff's damages.
- Plaintiff would have to show that the City had an official policy that was the moving force and the actual cause of the loss of constitutional rights and was the cause of harm.

Mr. Zapata's update:

- The City is deeply saddened by the death of Ms. Brown on May 2.

- Our primary function is to keep our residents safe. The City needs to pick up dogs, particularly in areas where the evidence is showing a high incidence of animal attacks and injuries.
- Will prepare and release a time line of the attack.
- This will require the full organization, including DPD, 311, DAS, City Manager's Office to address the gaps identified.

Member discussion:

- Ms. Burnett noted that the City has had a loose dog problem since the 1960's.
- Ms. Fletes asked about the DPD presence at DAS. Mr. Zapata stated that DPD Chief Rob Sherwin has been imbedded into DAS. That Mr. Sherwin and Ms. Jones will report to Mr. Sweckard.
- Mr. Brodsky stated that while we are developing a long term solution, we need to address the problem at hand. Mr. Brodsky stated that dog field intake is down, and he does not feel that the TAI strategy is working. Mr. Zapata acknowledged that we need to pick up more dogs in high incident areas, but feels that it is too early to tell if the strategy is working, and that spay/neuter and education is needed.
- Mr. Brodsky asked what happens after citations are issued. Mr. Zapata responded that we are working with the Marshall's office to give priority to animal violations.
- Mr. Watts stated that DPD needs to be active in enforcing the law.
- Ms. Saucedo asked how citizens that have an animal problem can get help today, while waiting for all of the changes to be implemented. Mr. Zapata responded that residents must make a 311 call, so that we can track and provide control to these areas.
- Mr. Brodsky asked what DAS can do in the short term for citizens having loose animal problems. Mr. Zapata stated again that citizens must call 311. Additionally, DAS introduced the loose owned call type so that officers would have an address for the animal to issue citations and bring citizens into compliance. That fixes the processes, the next challenge will be the resources. Animal Control Officer positions are filled, so there may need to be more officers to provide responses citizens are expecting.
- Mr. Bonnelly asked what does City Council or leaders define as pick up dogs, and asked if additional resources were being planned for DAS in the next budget cycle. Mr. Zapata responded that the budget process is still underway. Mr. Bonnelly stated that we need education, spay/neuter and outreach to be included in the loose animal solution, otherwise the solution will fail.
- Ms. Fletes stated that when a citation is issued the dog is not picked up, and that is why citations are up and intake is down.
- Ms. Kennedy stated that the main problem is intact animals and that needs to be the main citation issued and enforced.
- Ms. Jones said that the City will be looking at the ordinances, locally and state wide to address chronic abusers of the law.

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): N/A

5. Community Animal Resource Effort (CARE) Program

Presenter(s): Ann Barnes

Information Only:

Ms. Barnes presented an overview of the CARE Program:

- CARE program will take what was learned during the Targeted Initiatives and target areas with the highest volume of animal issues utilizing citizen feedback, data, stray animal extraction, enforcement, education and pet products and services.
- All but one of the positions for this initiative is in place.
- Service request volume will be analyzed.
- A sustained presence will be effective 5 days per week in identified area and will utilize:
 - Education and outreach.
 - Patrols.
 - Reporting and evaluation.
- Areas are identified by:
 - Service requests mapped by volume into census tracts.
 - Approximately 2 census tracts are worked each month.
 - Areas approximately 4-5 times larger than the Target Initiative areas.
- Goals of the CARE program are:
 - Education and outreach to connect residents with DallasPETS and available resources.
 - Keep pets in their homes by educating on compliance and offering resources.
 - Provide an ongoing support presence, resources and reporting on progress at community level.
- Care program partnerships:
 - Big Fix for Big D
 - City of Dallas Public Information Office-DallasPets.org
 - Dallas Companion Animal Project
 - Low cost wellness resources such as Hillside Veterinary Clinic, TCAP and Vaxx Shack
 - Spay Neuter Network
 - SPCA of Texas
 - Sponsor Adoptions
 - Volunteers and community members

Member discussion:

- Mr. Brodsky asked what evidence in assessing the TAI was used to determine it a success and that it should be expanded. Ms. Barnes responded that we used information that officers brought back with them from the target areas, along with the data that has been released. That by utilizing the CARE program along with Smart Sweeps there will be better opportunities for change.
- Ms. Barnes stated the metrics to be used for the CARE program are:
 - Calls for service to increase 100% initially, then gradually reduce over time.

- Proactive calls for service increase by 50%.
- Percentage of high priority calls will decrease by 50% initially and gradually level out.
- Loose owned call to increase by 75% initially, then gradually reduce over time.
- Loose dog calls to increase by 50% initially, then gradually reduce over time.
- Mr. Sweckard added that the metrics are for the CARE areas and are not City wide.
- Mr. Brodsky asked if dog bites were going to be tracked by the CARE program. Ms. Barnes stated that by using census tracks, and if we are collecting the information, that it can be provided even though it is not one of our stated metrics.
- Mr. Brodsky would like bites tracked whether stray or owned. Ms. Jones provided bite statistics as follows: 2015 owned controlled bites-438, owned loose bites-438, stray bites-224. Year to Date 2016 owned controlled bites-173, owned loose bites-142, stray bites- 22.
- Ms. Jones asked if the success of this program is largely reflection of the citizens ability to engage and help us identify where they want and need the services. Ms. Barnes stressed that we need the community's help to make this program successful.
- Ms. Jones asked Chief Sherwin about the Community Policing Models that DPD uses and how effective they are. Chief Sherwin explained that the DPD Community Policing Model is based on knowing that Dallas can't arrest our way out of a situation, can't enforce our way out of a situation, but that we have to use all of the resources available in the community to reduce crime. That means engaging our communities, our partners, our groups, with a multitude of projects and policies which include education, outreach and enforcement. The CARE program sounds very similar to DPD's model. Crime in the targeted areas in the Community Policing Models has decreased.

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): N/A

6. 2017 Bond Program/South Dallas Shelter

Presenter(s): Kris Sweckard

Information Only:

The 2017 Bond Program update:

- City compiles a 'needs inventory' of capital improvements to present to Council.
- In November 2015, an additional shelter (building only) for \$23M in southeast Dallas was requested and included in the needs inventory.
- Council/Committee briefings are currently taking place to discuss the bond package.
- In September/October focus will begin to narrow down items to be included.
- Town hall meetings will start in October for citizen input.
- October 10, 2016 the Quality of Life committee will discuss the need for an additional shelter.
- November 2, 2016 the draft needs inventory will be presented to City Council.
- January 4, 2017 City Council will again be briefed on the draft needs inventory.
- January 2017 second round of public input.

- February 1, 2017 Council will approve the final bond package to be voted on.
- On May 6, citizens will vote to approve/disapprove the bond package.

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): N/A

7. FY2016-2017 Budget Update

Presenter(s): Kris Sweckard

Information Only:

Fiscal year 2016/17 Budget:

- Council priorities are Streets, Code and DPD.
- At the May 4 Council briefing, the budget gap is \$37.3M.
- DAS was asked to submit alternative maintain bid that did not eliminate the Southern Dallas Initiative funding received in FY15/16.
- Next Council budget update will be June 8.
- August 9, Mr. Gonzalez will present the final budget recommendation.
- Town Hall Meeting process August and early September.
- September 21 Council will adopt budget.

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): N/A

8. Soft Side Campaign

Presenter(s): Jody Jones

Information Only:

Ms. Jones presented the Soft Side Campaign:

- Campaign originally launched in Baltimore to help address animal cruelty.
- Show Your Soft Side organization working with Dallas to launch a Dallas campaign.
- Dallas program 'Only a punk would hurt a cat or dog', recruiting local celebrities and sports figures for an ad campaign of them with their pets.
- DCAP partnered with Show Your Soft Side, and created the Dallas photo shoot.
- Outdoor ad campaign is currently raising money.

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): N/A

9. Animal Services Manager's Report

Presenter(s): Catherine McManus

Information Only:

A briefing of DAS operations, priorities and accomplishments was presented. Some of the highlights included the following for March and April 2016:

- Community outreach continued with 17 events which included Neighborhood Associations, Crime Watch Groups, Career Days at area schools, and Community meetings.

- Medical update: 1,824 spay/neuters in house/facilitated, 7 cruelty exams, 1,198 heartworm test, 25 heartworm treatments and monthly vaccine clinic partner initiatives continuing.
- Field Services: 2,019 impounds from field with 780 citations issued.
- Proactive calls for service initiated by Officers to decrease citizen's calls for service.
- Placement Results for March were 1,407 live releases resulting in a 66.8% live release rate for all animals. In April there were 1,440 live releases resulting in a 66.0% live release rate for all animals.
- Top placement partners for March and April 2016: Rockwall Pets, Dallas Pets Alive, SPCA of Texas, Operation Kindness, Humane Society Rescue, Second Chance Rescue.
- DAS/Spay Neuter Network's Trap, Neuter and Release program: 958 lives saved, \$250 remaining funding, need \$3,700/month to continue the program.
- Volunteer update: DAS volunteers – 163/Hours 491 DCAP volunteers – 9/Hours 32

Action Taken Committee Recommendation(s): N/A

10. Public Comments

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

Deborah Whittington thanked Mr. Brodsky for bringing in BCG. Would like Commissioners to follow the City's Code of Ethics when referring to some animal advocates. Wants enforcement and more data provided from DAS.

Susan Oakey voiced her support of DAS and appreciates DAS's efforts.

Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Erik Wilson stated that he will soon be appointing a person to the Commission. He acknowledged that this is a people problem, and agrees that we cannot enforce this problem away. He is, and would like all of us, to be committed to working with and acknowledging our partners, but stated that we have to expect that there will be an increase to our euthanasia rate to get this problem under control. He is hearing from his community that they just want the dogs gone, and they are not concerned as to the outcome of the dogs due to the size of the problem.

Jeremy Boss stated that he completely disagrees that the euthanasia rate needs to go up if intake increases. Would like to see more dogs transported out of Texas to other areas of the country. Also feels that Austin Animal Center is a good model that Dallas should be following.

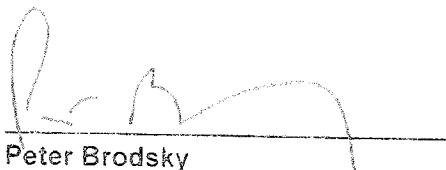
11. Other Business

Mr. Brodsky requested an additional meeting be scheduled for Thursday, July 14, 2016.

Animal Advisory Commission
Regular Meeting - May 26, 2016

12. Next regular scheduled meetings

September 15, 2016 at City Hall, Room 6ES at 1:30pm
December 15, 2016 at City Hall, Room 6ES at 1:30pm



Peter Brodsky
Animal Advisory Commission Chair



Rita Hammelman
Coordinator III