

**DRAFT**

## MINUTES

BOARD OF ANIMAL REGULATION COMMISSIONERS  
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Al Avila, President (absent)  
Alvin Rosenbloom, Vice-President  
Linda Harris Forster, Commissioner (absent)  
Florence Jackson, Commissioner  
Kathleen Riordan, Commissioner

**Monday, July 23, 2001**  
**419 S. Spring Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor**  
**Los Angeles, CA 90013**

### ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL HEARING, 9:45 A.M.

Hearing opened at 10:32 a.m. Present: Vice-President Alvin Rosenbloom, Commissioners Florence Jackson, Kathleen Riordan. Hearing staff present: Administrative Hearing Appeals Coordinator Howard Ellis.

- I. Appeal of the General Manager's decision of May 17, 2001 in Barking Dog Case BD 00420WL (West Los Angeles) by Respondent/Appellant Rebecca Camer.

ACTION: Pursuant to oral stipulation on the record between Appellant and D.A.R. representative, Board modifies and affirms General Manager's decision, with modification to include the addition of the following statement: "In addition, you shall obey all laws pertaining to pet ownership in the City of Los Angeles to ensure the public's health, safety and welfare", and to permit Dog Owner to maintain dog outside between 10 PM and 7 AM on the side of the house away from complaining witness and complaining neighbors, but only if no further complaint of noise is received; in which case dog to maintained inside of house during those hours.

- II. Appeal of the General Manager's decision of April 19, 2001 in Dangerous Animal Case DA 01214WL (West Los Angeles) by Respondent/Appellant Julie Shapiro.

ACTION: Board affirms General Manager's decision with one modification: Item 6 of the General Manager's order, which requires the dog Spunky to be surgically altered (neutered) is deleted; appellant permitted to retain her dog unneutered. 2 Ayes, 1 Nay; Motion carried.

### COMMISSION MEETING, 10:30 A.M.

NOTE: Public may comment for one minute on Agenda items. Please fill out Speaker's Card.

- III. Call to Order/Roll

Meeting called to order at 10:57 a.m.

Present: Vice-President Alvin Rosenbloom, Commissioners Florence Jackson, Kathleen Riordan.

Staff Present: Deputy General Manager Margaret Sullivan, Director of Field Operations David Diliberto, Chief Veterinarian Casandria Smith, Director of Public Information Jacquelyn David, Systems Analyst II Napa Dumriwat, Clerk Typist Mary Bernard, Commission Executive Assistant Carmella Ortiz.

- IV. Presentation of Certificates of Appreciation

ACTION: Board commends Clerk Typist Mary Bernard of the East Valley shelter, and Systems Analyst II Napa Dumriwat of Administration for their exemplary efforts in raising over \$650 on behalf of this year's March of Dimes Walk America campaign.

V. Approval of Minutes

ACTION: Board approves Minutes of the meetings of 1/8/01 and 5/21/01 as written. Minutes for 6/11/01 are modified to include a public comment on Item VII that only a Board certified veterinarian can assess and/or train staff to assess animal behavior.

VI. Presentation by Department Regarding Audit of Animal Services Dispatch Process. Deputy General Manager Margaret Sullivan

Ms. Sullivan reported that the auditors completed the audit in January, 2001, and their written findings were received in June, 2001. In the interim, everything was being changed in the Department; it was a work in progress. Some of the problems identified in the audit were already being worked on. A new Operations Analysis Director had been requested, the telephone system was being updated, and key modules of the Chameleon system were operational. The Department had requested, and been granted, a one-week extension of the deadline to respond to the audit, so that it could be brought to the Commission before submission. Ms. Sullivan reviewed the Department's responses to the eight findings and their recommendations:

Finding 1: The Department does not provide an immediate shelter connection to handle emergency situations.

- o Develop and implement a system to enable staff involved in a current service call to immediately contact shelter staff whenever additional clarification or information is needed; and
- o Reconfigure the current Interactive Voice Response System so callers reporting animal emergencies can be immediately linked to a live operator at a shelter.

Response: Each shelter had dedicated agency lines. They had been corrupted over time. The Department had submitted a Communications Service Request to install dedicated lines for shelter field personnel only. The finding also recommended reconfiguring the IVR to provide an immediate link to a live person. The IVR had been modified. It now referred callers to 911 for human emergencies. The Los Angeles Police Department had offered to pay for direct lines from 911 to the shelters, and the Department was working with them on installing those lines. The Department disagreed, however, with the recommendation that citizens be allowed to override calls. Because so many non-emergency calls went to 911, the city was setting up a 311 system for normal City business calls. The direct line for shelter field staff and the direct 911 line for LAPD calls should alleviate some of the wait for citizens calling the shelters. Additionally, the Department got funding for a call center, and public service to residents would be part of the planning for the call center.

Finding 2: The department does not deploy its entire shelter-based field Animal Control Officers to the field.

- o Establish management controls to ensure all Animal Control Officer I and II employees can be accounted for every day they report to work; and
- o Fully deploy all shelter-based Animal Control Officer Is and IIs to the field.

Response: Commander David Diliberto reported that officers had gotten lax about filling out their

Daily Activity Logs (form 60's) for all daily activities. He had re-issued a memo to all supervisors and personnel indicating that all 60's must be filled out daily. All personnel were required to sign that they had received copies of the memo, and were informed that discipline would occur if they were not filled out. Some personnel had been disciplined already. Supervisors had been informed they must daily reconcile time sheets, blotters and call reports. Every officer, including Commander Diliberto, was completing a daily form 60. Supervisors were documenting the reconciliation of employee forms on their own form 60's.

Officers had always been deployed to the field; however, they had other duties that required their absence from the field at times, such as court appearances, hearings, training, completing reports, inspections, and investigations. Some officers were on light duty due to injuries, one officer was pregnant and on office duty. There had been a lot of training this year. Several officers attended a two-day shelter operations class in Pasadena last week. Commander Diliberto issued a memo to keep officers in from the field only when absolutely necessary. Mr. Diliberto and a Senior Animal Control Officer II were auditing officers' use of time. Some officers were only filling in their 60's with one line describing their whole day; everyone was now required to log in every half hour during the day.

Finding 3: The current deployment of Animal Control Officers does not provide comparable levels of service throughout the City.

- o Re-evaluate deployment of shelter based field Animal Control Officers to ensure a similar level of completed calls in the areas of the City; and
- o Continue the deployment of Animal Control Officers to the Special Enforcement Unit.

Response: Commander Diliberto reported this study was performed before the new South Los Angeles shelter opened. That shelter had now been assigned more officers. He always felt a minimum of twenty officers was required to provide service in South Los Angeles. The chart distributed today showed previous levels of deployment, current levels, and planned deployment in future. A new class of officers graduated on April 15, 2001. More officers were sent to South LA from that class. Now South LA would have 34% of the Department's calls, and 34% of its officers. Commander Diliberto studied completed call responses from last month, and they were up. North Central lost an officer, West Valley had two officers on light duty. South Los Angeles would have 25 officers, and Mr. Diliberto wanted to station an extra Lieutenant there for span of control. The number of Animal Care Technicians was being increased at South LA also, and more supervisors would be needed.

The Department agreed with the auditors that it was desirable and effective to continue to deploy the Special Enforcement Unit.

Finding 4: Required reporting by field Animal Control Officers is burdensome and duplicative.

- o Review all current forms used to document animal investigations and consolidate and/or revise as appropriate and feasible;
- o Develop and implement policies and procedures and other internal controls to ensure information on the Daily Activity Logs, Call Blotters and Daily Time Records are accurate and corroborative; and
  - o Fully implement the field services segment of the Chameleon software program. In the long term, this will require the addition of mobile digital terminals to Department trucks.

Response: Commander Diliberto reported that the Department was reviewing all forms and documenting investigations. All documents were being updated. Controls were being implemented to ensure that reports were accurate and corroborative, through daily reconciliation by supervisors as

outlined above. Ms. Sullivan reported a pilot project was in place to implement the Chameleon dispatch module. Two thirds of the Department's calls went through ITA's radio room, and something was lost in translation, creating a more complicated system than was desired. The auditors' findings were based on studies up to January, 2001. The Department did not get approval for the Call center until later on. The Department would be planning the Call center to include consideration of centralizing dispatch, and looking into the feasibility of direct entry into Chameleon and transmission to ITA through it. There would be over 130 employees to train on the system. Ideally, officers would have laptops in their vehicles. Laptops were requested, but did not make it through the budget process. The request would be resubmitted.

Finding 5: Records and reports used by the Department are inconsistent and vary from source to source.

- o Immediately begin to use the Department generated report entitled "Summary of Animal Regulation Interactive Voice Response Statistics for (month, year)" as the basis for information pertaining to calls for information and service;
- o Develop and implement policies and procedures to ensure all staff at the Animal Control Officer I and II levels complete and submit a Daily Activity Log;
- o Fully implement the Chameleon software program .

Response: The auditors had recommended using the "Summary of Animal Regulation IVR Statistics". There was no system on agency lines to track calls; these still needed to be done anecdotally. The Department was working on this. Form 60's were being handled as outlined above.

The auditors recommended fully implementing Chameleon, and this had always been the Department's plan. Two modules had been implemented last year. Dispatch was being piloted now. The Cham Cam module would be next, with links to websites. The Visual Kennel would be the last module brought up. Mr. Rosenbloom asked for clarification of the section reading "thirteen agency telephone lines". Ms. Sullivan explained the 888 number had 15 lines; the Department had 13 corrupted internal lines for calls from other agencies. There was no way to count calls on those lines.

Finding 6: The Department does not have appropriate dedicated staff to support the dispatch function.

- o Re-evaluate the proposed use of the Clerk Typist position as the primary position designated for the dispatch function;
- o develop and implement a plan to transition one Clerk Typist position at each animal shelter to the Communications Operator classification; and
- o develop and implement dispatch protocol procedure that details staff with primary responsibility for dispatch, as well as secondary and tertiary backup for the dispatch function.

Response: Now that the Department had received funding for the Call Center, it was considering all of the auditors' recommendations as part of planning for the Call Center.

Finding 7: The Department could improve the process to dispatch service calls.

- o Fully implement the Chameleon software for dispatch; and
- o Reduce the reliance on the Information Technology Agency Radio Room for the Department's animal Services dispatch process to decrease duplication in the process.

Response: The Department would study feasibility of full implementation of all the dispatch module during planning for the Call Center. Funding for the Call Center would be insufficient to run it 24 hours

a day, so there would probably continue to be some reliance on the ITA Radio Room. However, if service through the Call Center proved to be significantly better, the Department would ask for more funds to expand its hours. Mr. Rosenbloom asked Ms. Sullivan to clarify if the ITA was a Citywide agency. Ms. Sullivan explained that the Information Technology Agency was Citywide. The representative of Actors and Others for Animals asked from the audience how long it would be before the Call Center was implemented. Ms. Sullivan said it would be 6 months to implementation. The program manager started last week. Although a new employee to the department, she had been with 911 for 14 years, and had extensive supervisory experience.

Finding 8: There is no standard procedure for field Animal Control Officers to identify seized animals.  
o Immediately develop and implement standardized policies and procedures to identify animals at time of seizure that will be compatible with the Chameleon software program for impound at time of impound via remote access.

Response: Commander Diliberto reported the Department had issued a memo requiring standardized numbering of cages on trucks. This would eliminate confusion between similar animals when impounding. Mr. Diliberto and the Senior Animal Control Officer II would audit for compliance. The representatives of the Controller's Office were present. Mr. Avila asked them what the process would be from this point. Sharon Loudd explained that when her office received the Department's response, it would inform the Department they would return in 3 years to be sure recommendations had been implemented. Mr. Rosenbloom asked what would happen if the Controller felt the Department's response was inadequate. Ms. Loudd indicated in that event the auditors would return.

Public comments: the Animal Issues Movement representative felt people were not so stupid as to call an animal line with human emergencies. People had a lot of trouble with the system. She was hoping she wouldn't have to wait two or three years for emergencies to be put through to shelters. She felt regarding the new position for the dispatch system that it was great she had experience, but she hoped the Department would learn from departments with great systems, and this person didn't have any animal experience. Ms. Sullivan explained that operators at the Call Center would have a manual with frequently asked questions. Ms. Riordan said she would like to see the manual when it was available. Mr. Rosenbloom asked if there was any action the Commission needed to take. Ms. Sullivan said there was not.

ACTION: Sense of meeting (the Controller's representatives being present): the Controller's Office will inform the Department, when it receives the Department's response as presented at the meeting, whether it is accepted and the Controller will return to audit implementation of these findings in three years. Staff will report to the Board when the Controller's response is received.

VII. Update on status of AB 161, SB 236. Commander David Diliberto

[Note: AB 161 was mistakenly identified as SB 161 on the Agenda]. Commander Diliberto reported that SB236 had become a two-year bill. The Department would follow its development, but no action was required today. Provisions of AB 161 defined a breeder as any entity that sold, transferred or gave away all or part of three or more litters or 20 or more dogs during the preceding 12 months: required breeders to provide dogs with adequate socialization and exercise; and banned primarily housing dogs on wire flooring. The Department recommended the Commission submit a letter of support for AB 161 to the Mayor. Mr. Rosenbloom asked how the law would impinge on the City or Department. Ms. Riordan asked if it would affect pet stores. Commander Diliberto said the Department did not feel it

would be impacted by the bill, and said it did not affect pet shops.

Public Comments: The Cat and Dog Rescue representative said she felt the City Attorney would not enforce the law because there was only a \$1000 fine. The Polanco bill had been in effect for 10 years and there had been no cases. If it became law it would cost taxpayers money, but be unenforceable. The representative of the California Federation of Dog Clubs said she had been involved with the bill for 4 years to amend the bill passed 10 years ago. She distributed a packet of information to Commissioners. SB 236 had no state mandate in it now and was a two-year bill. Regarding AB 161, it was a pet warranty bill, a consumer protection bill. It interjected a veterinarian to arbitrate, only allowed the aggrieved party to take to the City Attorney to prosecute. She was telling people to go to small claims court, or return the dog to the breeder. It only lowered the threshold of dogs from 50 to 20. It reinforced dogs as a consumer product rather than develop the human-animal bond. The animal Issues Movement representative stated the bill was an effort by the Fund for Animals to reduce the number of animals produced, to socialize animals, keep them in better conditions. She favored the bill to help make animals family members. The representative of Actors and others for animals said she wished to echo the previous speaker. Part of the bill had required dogs to be socialized to humans or animals; it now said "and". She was concerned about attacks by unsocialized dogs. She was not talking about good breeders such as those speaking today. This bill was for bad breeders. She had gone to Sacramento to lobby the judiciary for it.

Commissioners Riordan and Jackson felt they were not prepared to vote on the item today. Ms. Riordan felt it should apply to rescuers, also. Mr. Rosenbloom said although it was not a cure-all for all ills, it addressed at least one. He asked to what extent the Department had reviewed it. Commander Diliberto said he did have some concerns about enforcement, and agreed it would be hard to do. Ms. Riordan asked if there would be enforcement provisions later on. Speakers interjected from the audience there would not be. Mr. Rosenbloom was concerned that this bill, in the Health and Safety Code, would preempt one of the Department's ordinances. He invited a motion to postpone consideration. Commissioner Riordan moved, and Commissioner Jackson seconded a motion to postpone consideration of recommendation of the measure until September 10<sup>th</sup> in order to elicit more information.

ACTION: [SB 236 is a two year item - on hold, so no action] Consideration of the measure to recommend passage of AB161 to the Mayor's Office of Legislative Affairs is postponed till the September 10, 2001 meeting to permit further Staff study of the issue. Staff to report back prior to 9-10-01 meeting.

VIII. Request to Formally Change the Name of the Department of Animal Regulation to the Department of Animal Services (AKA, LA Animal Services). Deputy General Manager Margaret Sullivan

Ms. Sullivan reported that the Department requested authorization to change the name of the Department and the Commission, and to utilize the Department logo and City Seal on Department documents. The term "regulation" was archaic, and did not reflect current Department mandates. Mr. Rosenbloom asked if the previous Commission had had concerns. Commissioner Jackson recalled this was a motion by Commissioner Kim Hunter. Mr. Rosenbloom understood this was following through a prior Commission's motion. Ms. Sullivan indicated the authority to use the logo was a change, and explained that since it was desired to add it on official Department letterhead, the Department wanted Council endorsement. Mr. Rosenbloom felt the new name as proposed sounded convoluted, that "a Department of the City" sounded redundant. Unless the City Attorney said there was a legal reason

why not, he favored the name Los Angeles Department of Animal Services.

Public comments: The Animal Issues Movement representative said she opposed changing the name. There was a private company in the area called Animal Services. The Department was mandated to care for animals, and was the regulatory agency to enforce animal law. The name change would waste millions of dollars reprinting forms, the Municipal Code, etc.

Commissioner Riordan understood the mandate for regulation, but said public understanding had evolved to realize that public safety involved the valuing of life and the bond with pets. Serial killers began by hurting animals. She agreed it could be expensive to change letterhead. Ms. Sullivan explained that letterhead was kept on computer now, and was no longer printed. Forms would only be changed when the old stock was used up. The cost would be nowhere near what the cost was to change the new administration over recently. Mr. Rosenbloom said he favored passage in deference to the previous Commission. They felt it worthwhile, and he could still see its advantages. He was in favor with modification of the name. Commissioner Jackson inquired about the logo. The Cat and Dog Rescue representative interjected from the audience that former Commissioner Barrett had it created at a firm in Santa Monica, and many different logos were considered before choosing this one, which both public and the Commission liked. It came pro bono. Mr. Rosenbloom proposed a companion motion authorizing the General Manager to request the Council to permit the use of the logo.

ACTION: Board approves motion to instruct the General Manager to request that the City Council change the name of the Department from "The Department of Animal Regulation" to "Department of Animal Services of the City of Los Angeles", after determining from the City Attorney that there is no requirement preventing adoption of this simpler name rather than that originally proposed by the City Attorney's Office. Department is to instruct the City Attorney's Office to prepare an ordinance changing the Department's name in all existing and appropriate documents. This formal request would extend to changing the name of the City of Los Angeles Animal Regulation Commission to the "City of Los Angeles Animal Services Commission." Unanimous.

ACTION: Board approves motion instructing the General Manager to request Council's authorization to use the Department's new logo in addition to the City Seal, when representing the Department. Unanimous.

IX. Motion Regarding Moving Up Tethering/Sheltering Issue on Commission Planning Calendar.

Mr. Rosenbloom said he wished to make a motion to move to recalendar this item to consider it as soon as possible. He asked staff how long it would take to prepare a report. Ms. Sullivan stated she had consulted with the General Manager. He still had more research to do, and when he returned in August, his schedule was already fully booked. If the intent was to move up the item to provided shelter this winter, it must be said that this would be a very long process. The General Manager could bring it back in October; that would move it up by a month. Commissioner Riordan said it sounded like it would miss passage this year. Ms. Sullivan said it must go to the City Attorney, to Committee, and to the full Council. Mr. Rosenbloom asked if a report could be ready in time for the tentative outreach meeting on coyotes, on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Riordan felt that meeting would be long, and moved that the tethering/sheltering issue be moved up to October 15<sup>th</sup> for consideration. Commissioner Jackson seconded.

Public comments: the representative of Proper Care and Attention said she was heartened by what she

heard in the meeting today, and she felt she saw the consciousness of a body moving toward humanity and educating the public. She did research for Mr. Knapp and volunteered to do any more research that needed to be done. Mr. Rosenbloom thanked her for continuing to push for the measure. The representative reminded Commissioners she had provided packets containing relevant state laws.

ACTION: The Board moves consideration of amending tethering and sheltering ordinances from the November 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting to the October 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

X. Comments. Public may comment for three minutes on any item within Commission's authority

The Cat and Dog Rescue representative distributed brochures for a crematorium company. The city pays Bandini to take dead animals, Sanitation pays to transport them. The service costs \$50- to \$60,000 per year. She suggests a crematorium at each shelter to run 5 days a week. On other days the City could rent usage to other cities. She estimated the system would pay for itself in 4 years, and would save close to \$100,000 from other jurisdictions' use. She would bring her idea to Public Safety and was trying to meet with Laura Chick.

The Animal Issues Movement representative had a major press conference at the County on Thursday regarding pet theft. Theft was mostly in the City, but the City didn't keep figures. Every media outlet interviewed her. The m.o. is the same for most thefts; David Carradine's dog was stolen. Twenty dogs were stolen in the last few months, many from backyards while the owner was there. All were adult dogs, and rewards were exceeding their worth. They were all turned over quickly without waiting for reward. Composites would be put up in shelters. Some were taken from cars. Brazenness was the new element. No one knew why they're being stolen. Commissioner Riordan asked if some could have been taken by raptors. That was unknown; they were taking extremely small dogs, that were not good for lab work.

XI. General Manager's Report. Deputy General Manager Margaret Sullivan

Ms. Sullivan directed Commissioners to the new Grand Jury report in their notebooks. The jurors audited 14 shelters in the county, and mixed all together in the report. They recommended permanent kennel employees; the Department got 19 full time kennel employees to replace as-needed employees. The report noted showers were needed at some facilities; that will be addressed by the facilities bond. The report asked for hiring of more officers to improve response time; the Department is hiring more officers. The jurors asked steps be taken to eliminate odors at east Valley and West La shelters; this was being looked into.

XII. Comments by Board Members on Items Not on the Agenda

Commissioner Riordan asked everyone to remind the public not to feed raccoons, to be sure of public safety. Commissioner Rosenbloom said he went to East Valley shelter to get a companion for his cat Otis, and now had Katy.

XIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.



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ATTEST

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PRESIDENT

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