

CITY OF COSTA MESA
MEETING OF THE ANIMAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
August 15, 2018; 5:30 P.M.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Animal Services Committee meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Jay Litvak at 5:31 p.m. on August 15, 2018 at City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, California.

Roll Call

Present: Chair Jay Litvak, Vice Chair Tracy Hughes, Committee members Marilyn Brooks, Harriet Brown, Dana Lavin, Becca Walls, and alternate members Linda Kwoun and Angela Minjares

Absent: Committee member Christie McDaniel

Staff Present: Justin Martin, Parks & Community Services Director; Tracy Habiger, Recreation Coordinator; McKenna Ewing, Recreation Leader IV; Police Sergeant Victor Bakkila; Community Education Specialist Brenda Emrick

Council Liaisons: Mayor Sandy Genis, Councilmember John Stephens

2. **Approval of the July 18, 2018 Meeting Minutes:** Chair Litvak moves to approve the minutes/Seconded by Committee member Lavin.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Chair Litvak, Vice Chair Hughes, Committee members Brooks, Brown, and Lavin

Nays: none

Absent: Committee members Walls (was not present for the vote) and McDaniel

Motion Carried: 5-0-2

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. Patricia Snodgrass, resident, asked for the Animal Services Committee meetings to be announced on the Costa Mesa Minute for increased public awareness.
2. Roberta Buchanan, resident, commented on the posting of the Animal Services Committee meeting minutes and on the coyote problem that she sees in the City. She recommended that a policy be set in place regarding coyotes.

Chair Litvak closed Public Comments.

4. **PRESENTATION**

Community Education Specialist and Committee Involvement

Ms. Brenda Emrick presented information regarding an upcoming Pet Preparedness event on September 20.

As part of the event, Dr. Anthony Rizk of Newport Center Animal Hospital stated his intent to provide low-cost dog vaccines at the event.

Committee member Lavin affirmed that the Animal Volunteerism sub-committee would like to help with the event.

Committee member Walls suggested a vaccination coupon for cats as an addition to the event.

Statistics of Impounded and Adoptable Animals

Ms. Tracy Habiger reported.

General discussion ensued regarding the amount of underage kittens that are currently in foster care.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Sub-Committee Reports

1. Animal Advocacy

2. Animal Adoption Promotions

3. Animal Volunteerism

4. Bark Park

Chair Litvak asked the Committee about their opinion on tabling these reports to the September meeting. The Committee consensus was to table the Sub-Committee Reports to the next meeting due to time constraints.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Community Relationship with Animal Control

Mr. Martin started the discussion by stating the importance of Animal Control having a positive perception in the eyes of the public, which the committee and staff can help with by promoting the great work and the successes of the Animal Control Officers accomplishments.

A constructive discussion ensued with Police Sergeant Victor Bakkila and the committee, regarding the public's view of Animal Control and the concerns that were addressed regarding a new animal adoption facility during a recent Planning Commission meeting.

Councilmember Stephens suggested for Animal Control and staff to create a video demonstrating the stages an animal experiences, from being impounded to the point of adoption, for the public to gain additional awareness of Animal Control's contribution to animal welfare.

The Committee and staff were in agreement that the positive portrayal of Animal Control as a vital part of the animal impound and animal adoption process is a vital component to a successful operation.

B. Review and Discussion of Current Animal Shelter and Animal Adoption Contractual Services Operations

Ms. Habiger reviewed the current animal shelter and animal adoption operations with NCAH and PPR.

Mr. Martin provided an overview of the existing contracts and included other shelter options worth exploring, such as the Orange County Animal Care shelter.

Chair Litvak indicated the importance of researching other options to ensure the committee selects the best solution.

Committee member Walls stated that OCAC only accepts animals brought in from Animal Control and not owner surrenders in all cases.

Mayor Genis mentioned that going to OCAC may limit the City's involvement and control regarding the impounded animals and adoptions.

Committee member Walls proposed the concept of using other local animal rescues that are established community partners in addition to using PPR.

Ms. Habiger read the following potential language:

The Animal Services Committee has confidence in the contractual services provided by both NCAH and PPR due in part to the high level of service and the synergistic relationship that has resulted in a positive and effective benefit to the residents and animals of Costa Mesa.

The Committee is potentially interested in engaging in a longer-term contract with the current operational process, but will first review the county shelter implications for comparison purposes.

The Committee will make a formalized recommendation in the last quarter of 2018.

MOTION/SECOND: Committee member Walls moves to approve the potential language and begin reviewing OCAC shelter information for comparison/Seconded by Chair Litvak.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Chair Litvak, Vice Chair Hughes, and Committee members Brooks, Brown, Lavin, and Walls

Nays: none

Absent: Committee member McDaniel

Motion Carried: 6-0-1

7. COMMITTEE/COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS:

Committee member Walls suggested for the committee to do their own animal care research and be aware of the happenings within the City.

Alternate committee member Kwoun stated the importance of sharing the website with the public.

Committee member Lavin asked for staff to respond to emails.

Chair Litvak commented on the recent Planning Commission meeting and the need to focus on fact-based information.

Mayor Genis mentioned animal education and the topic of having animals in cars as a potential future item for the Committee to consider.

8. STAFF COMMENTS:

Ms. McKenna Ewing mentioned the Volunteer & Foster Orientation hosted by Priceless Pet Rescue that is scheduled for August 16.

Ms. Habiger thanked the committee members who volunteered at the committee booth during the Concert in the Park series.

Mr. Martin informed the committee on upcoming topics that will be discussed in future meetings, which included coyotes, Orange County Animal Care, TNR program, use permits, dog licensing, and tours of the Newport Center Animal Hospital and Priceless Pet Rescue facilities. He also mentioned that some emails were not being delivered to staff due to being tagged as spam through the City's server and that staff are working with the IT Department to find a solution.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Litvak at 7:16 p.m.

**The Next Meeting of the Animal Services Committee
is on Wednesday, September 19, 2018**