

CITY OF COSTA MESA
MEETING OF THE ANIMAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
September 19, 2018; 5:30 P.M.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Animal Services Committee meeting was called to order by Parks and Community Services Director Justin Martin at 5:34 p.m. on September 19, 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, Christie McDaniel, Becca Walls, and alternate members Linda Kwoun and Angela Minjares

Absent: Committee member Dana Lavin

Staff Present: Justin Martin, Parks & Community Services Director; Tracy Habiger, Recreation Coordinator; McKenna Ewing, Recreation Leader IV

Council Liaison: Councilmember John Stephens

2. **Approval of the August 15, 2018 Meeting Minutes:** Committee member Brooks moves to approve the minutes/Seconded by Committee member Brown.
The motion carried by the following roll call vote:
Ayes: Vice Chair Hughes, Committee members Brooks, Brown, and Walls
Nays: none
Abstain: Committee member McDaniel
Absent: Chair Litvak (was not present for the vote) and Committee member Lavin
Motion Carried: 4-0-1-2

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Roberta Buchanan, resident, commented on the coyote issue that she continues to see in the City. Ms. Buchanan also asked for the Animal Services Committee meeting minutes to be posted sooner. She requested a plan of action in regards to coyotes in the City.
2. Patricia Snodgrass, resident, expressed her appreciation that the Animal Services Committee meeting was announced on the Costa Mesa Minute.
3. Al Melone, resident, commented on the potential of having the monthly 'Impounded and Adoptable Animals statistics' available on the City's website or with the agenda; the new City animal shelter that was mentioned during the September 18 City Council meeting; and, limiting the planting of trees and light installations inside the Small Dog Area of the Bark Park that reduce the open space.

Mr. Martin closed Public Comments.

4. PRESENTATION

Statistics of Impounded and Adoptable Animals

Ms. Tracy Habiger reported.

General discussion ensued regarding owner requested euthanasia and incorporating the progression of monthly statistics on the City website or in a newsletter.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Sub-Committee Reports

1. Animal Advocacy

Committee member Brooks presented research on forming a newsletter/blog, coyote protection vests for animals, incorporating a community call center, educating the public on stray cats and a Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) Program, and bonding the residents of the community through workshops, clinics, and food banks.

2. Animal Adoption Promotions

Alternate committee member Kwoun spoke about having quarterly press releases to focus on the “feel good” stories and displaying a bulletin board at the Newport Center Animal Hospital or other local locations to advertise found and lost animals.

Committee member McDaniel suggested the promotion of the Animal Care Services to the public, placing donation boxes at local business, and holding fundraiser nights at local dining establishments.

Mr. Martin mentioned that the Newport Rib Company had reached out to City staff in the hopes of including the Animal Care Services in their ‘20 Days of Charity’ celebration. He asked the Committee if they were interested in participating in this event.

The consensus of the Committee was to proceed in enrolling in the charity program.

3. Animal Volunteerism

Committee member Walls discussed having volunteers with specified interests to help support Priceless Pet Rescue and the education and literacy programs within the community.

4. Bark Park

Vice Chair Hughes commented on the Bark Park survey on the City website, incorporating the survey data when deciding on Bark Park upgrades, and on-site donation meters.

Mr. Martin mentioned the current grass renovation in the Large Dog Area and the upcoming grass renovation in the Small Dog Area of the Bark Park using Kikuyu sod instead of seed as has been done in the past.

Chair Litvak commented on the use of St. Augustine grass having effective results.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Prioritizing Committee Plans & Initiations

Mr. Martin asked the Committee about their opinion on tabling these plans to the October meeting. The Committee consensus was to table the 'Prioritizing Committee Plans & Initiations' item to the next meeting due to time constraints.

B. Discussion of Orange County Animal Care Shelter

Mr. Martin provided a synopsis of the questions and answers that staff sent to the Orange County Animal Care Shelter (OCAC). He asked the Committee for their feedback and for any follow-up questions that they may have.

Committee member Walls proposed to ask how many Animal Control Officers OCAC employs, remarked on owner surrender situations, and maintaining the hands-on culture of Costa Mesa's current animal care system.

Chair Litvak commented on the Veterinary Practice Act and stated that only a veterinarian should make decisions relating to euthanasia. He also shared his opinion that contracting with OCAC may decrease the "local feel" and input regarding the City's animals.

Committee member Brown stated the significance of having the flexibility to change and would prefer to stay with the current animal shelter and adoption contractors.

Committee member McDaniel asked for further information on all of the City's sheltering options and inquired if the City Manager Association is still affiliated with OCAC.

Mr. Martin replied that the Committee may continue researching other future sheltering options during a long-term contract period. He mentioned that the City of Irvine is open to discussing a partnership when their new facility is complete in three or more years.

Committee member Walls suggested that the long-term contract should be the Committee's primary focus and mentioned that some current committee members have one-year terms.

Mr. Martin asked the Committee if they wanted to make a decision to continue looking at OCAC as a potential animal shelter provider or to remove OCAC as an option. The consensus of the Committee was to allow more time to evaluate the responses from OCAC, obtain additional feedback to further questions, and prepare for a potential decision at the October 17 meeting.

7. COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

No Committee comments.

8. STAFF COMMENTS:

Ms. McKenna Ewing reminded the Committee of the Pet Preparedness Day event on September 20.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Litvak at 7:50 p.m.

**The Next Meeting of the Animal Services Committee
is on Wednesday, October 17, 2018**