

**CITY OF COSTA MESA
ANIMAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 27, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER: The Animal Services Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Walls at 5:30 p.m. on September 27, 2023.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Becca Walls, Vice Chair Angela Minjares, Committee Members Lisa A. Harker, Christina Poulos, and Jennifer Tanaka

Absent: Alternate Committee Members Emily Cummings-Nelson and Elise Gates.

Staff Present: Jessica Torrejon, Recreation Coordinator; Sergeant J. Barnes, Animal Services Supervisor; Lieutenant S. Selinske, Animal Services Manager; Captain B. Wadkins; J. LaPointe, Deputy Chief of Police; Chief R. Lawrence

Liaisons Present: Mayor John Stephens

Let the record show that Committee Member Lisa A. Harker arrived to the Committee meeting at 5:45 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Walls opened Public Comments.

Seeing no hands raised, Public Comments was closed.

COMMITTEE MEMBER AND LIAISON COMMENTS

Chief Lawrence thanked the Committee. Spoke on the transition of Animal Services to the Police Department and spoke about the departments common goal with the committee in regards to animal services with the purpose of protecting the animals.

Deputy Chief LaPointe introduced herself and spoke briefly about the transition on Animal Services.

Capt. Wadkins introduced himself and spoke briefly about the expansion of animal services through new hires and recruitment.

Lt. Selinske introduced herself to the committee.

Sgt. Barnes introduced himself to the committee and gave a brief update on Animal Care expansions.

Chair Walls asked if the committee could meet the current Animal Control Officers.

Lt. Selinske responded and said the committee could meet the Animal Control Officers.

Ms. Walls spoke briefly on the transition of animal Services from the Parks Dept. to the Police Dept.

1. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 24, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION/SECOND: Vice Chair Minjares motioned to approve the May 24, 2023 meeting minutes. / Second by Committee Member Tanaka. The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Chair Walls, Vice Chair Minjares, Committee Members Gardiner, Poulos, and Tanaka.

Nays: None

Absent: Committee Member Harker

Motion Carries: 5-0

2. OLD BUSINESS

a. Beekeeping Ordinance

Committee Member Tanaka presented final report on Beekeeping to the committee. Ms. Tanaka spoke about the research conducted and put together by herself and Committee member Poulos.

Ms. Tanaka provided their recommendations to provide the research to City Council to receive and file, this includes the drafted beekeeping ordinance based on the City of Fullerton's beekeeping ordinance that includes a one-time permit fee and a handbook for best practice for beekeeping within the City.

Ms. Tanaka informed the committee a letter was drafted for City Council with the recommendation to receive and file the beekeeping findings and recommend returning to the findings if an increase of interest from the public is seen.

Public comments were opened by Committee Member Gardiner.

Committee member Gardiner thanked Ms. Tanaka and Ms. Poulos for their work and said many people would keep bees if it was allowed. Ms. Gardiner spoke about monthly beekeeping meetings the OC Fair Grounds. Ms. Gardiner mentioned the only reason she didn't keep bees was because of the legality.

Ms. Walls explained the OC Fair is state owned and not City property. Ms. Walls explained to Ms. Gardiner, the Committee is not disagreeing with her but the committee is moving away from work as it has been completed to be received and filed and Ad Hoc committee will be closed.

Ms. Gardiner requested to send the beekeeping information to City Council for them to decide if beekeeping should be allowed.

Mayor Stephens asked is the Police Department know how many beekeepers are in the City.

Sgt. Barnes informed the committee; the City has received 24 calls for swarming bees since January 2022.

Mayor Stephens gave example of how Council gets involved and how council can vote yay or nay to pursue beekeeping in the City of Costa Mesa. Mayor Stephens also spoke about staff time.

Ms. Torrejon asked if the committee had a motion.

Ms. Poulos motioned to receive and file the Beekeeping Ordinance information, conclude the Ad Hoc Committee, and provide City Council with the Committees findings and recommendations.

MOTION/SECOND: Ms. Poulos motioned to receive and file the Beekeeping Ordinance information, conclude the Ad Hoc Committee, and provide City Council with the Committees findings and recommendations. / Seconded by Chair Walls. The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Chair Walls, Vice Chair Minjares, Committee Members Harker, Poulos, Gardiner and Tanaka.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carries: 6-0

Ms. Tanaka motioned to disband the Beekeeping Ad Hoc Committee. Seconded by Chair Walls.

Ayes: Chair Walls, Vice Chair Minjares, Committee Members Harker, Poulos, Gardiner and Tanaka.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carries: 6-0

b. Discussion of the Scopes, purpose, and Operations of the Animal Services Committee

Ms. Torrejon introduced Mayor Stephens to Provide updates to the committee.

Mayor Stephens read Animal Services Committee objectives passed by City Council and informed the committee Alternate positions have been eliminated.

Chair Walls opened public comments.

Seeing no hands raised, public comments was closed.

3. NEW BUSINESS

- a. None

4. MONTHLY REPORTS

- a. Animal Care Services Staff Report

Ms. Torrejon presented the Animal Care Services Staff Report.

Chief Lawrence spoke briefly about previously working with the Wetlands and Wildlife Care Center but that there is now a Contract in place to do so.

Chair Walls asked if there will be a process in place for animals going to the care center. Ms. Walls asked if the Committee would have oversight of that contract.

Ms. Torrejon informed the committee would not have oversight since it falls outside the Committee's purview. Updates will be provide as needed.

Ms. Walls asked about providing information to the public about the Wetlands and Wildlife Care Center.

Ms. Walls asked for an update on the RFP for Animal Services.

Captain Wadkins gave brief update and informed the committee, services are on a month to month contracts at this time.

Ms. Walls asked if the Committee can be notified once the FRP process is completed before going to Council.

Ms. Walls asked about the Impounded Animals page on the City's website. Asked about specific impounds that show a long stay.

Ms. Torrejon informed Ms. Walls that animals that have been impounded for a longer than usual stay is due to medical needs.

Ms. Walls asked for updates to be provided to the Committee for any animal that has stayed at the shelter for longer than 1-month. Ms. Walls expressed concern for animals going kennel crazy since she was not sure how much interaction the impounded animals had with people.

Captain Wadkins spoke on the City wanting to make sure goals are mutual between the City and whoever provides shelter services to the City.

Ms. Tanaka asked about jump in increase of impounded cats.

Ms. Torrejon informed Ms. Tanaka that there is an increase during sometimes known as kitten season where an increase of cats is observed.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Walls adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.