



**City of Los Angeles Department of Animal Services
& Neighborhood Council Animal Services Liaison Meeting**

MINUTES

Monday, January 9, 2017
6:00 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Ramona Hall Community Center
4580 N. Figueroa St., Los Angeles, CA 90065

Welcome & Introductions

LA Animal Services and City Employees in attendance: General Manager (GM) Brenda Barnette, Assistant General Manager (AGM) Dana Brown, Assistant General Manager (AGM) Louis Dedeaux, Public Relations Specialist Sara Ebrahimi, Policy Analyst Margaret Wynn from the Mayor's Office, Neighborhood Council Advocate Octaviano Rios and Lorenzo Briceno from Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment

Neighborhood Council Animal Services Liaisons in attendance: Olivia Naturman from West Hills NC, Richard Joludow from Hollywood Hills West NC, Dana Stangel from Sunland-Tujunga NC, Sylvia Arrendondo from Wilmington NC, Jeffrey Mausner from Tarzana NC, Dan Gordon from Downtown LA NC, Boo Caban from Historic Highland Park NC, Joseph Seoane from Northridge East NC, Ursula Brown from Friends of Hermon Dog Park, Travis Longcore from Bel Air-Beverly Crest NC

About LAAS

The Los Angeles Department of Animal Services is led by the General Manager as executive, the GM and Department is under the control of a Board of Commissioners, with five members appointed by the Mayor, and by the City Council of Los Angeles.

Los Angeles Animal Services has six shelters across the City: East Valley in Van Nuys, Harbor in San Pedro, North Central near Downtown LA, South LA, West LA and West Valley in Chatsworth as well as a seventh shelter in Mission Hills currently operated by Best Friends Animal Society.

LA Animal Services promotes and protects the health, safety and welfare of animals and people.

LAAS history with Neighborhood Councils

GM Barnette spoke about working with Neighborhood Councils in the past. NCs appointed Directors of Animal Services (DAS) about five years ago. The team did not get off the ground and materialize. One of the goals of the launch meeting for the Animal Services Liaisons is to discuss ways to make the partnership work.

LAAS expectations of liaisons and how to get involved

1. Attend a volunteer orientation. Each month LAAS holds a volunteer orientation at each City shelter. It would be great for the liaison to attend to learn more about the Department. Liaisons are also welcomed to but not obligated to volunteer at their local shelter with the companion animals. You can find out more about volunteering and view the upcoming orientation schedule on our website at <http://www.laanimalservices.com/volunteer/>.

2. Liaisons are asked to keep track of their volunteer hours they spend working on anything related to LAAS and send their hours monthly to sara.ebrahimi@lacity.org. LAAS can then include them in the volunteer hour report.

3. Attend Board of Animal Services Commission Meetings or listen live online at <http://bit.ly/LAASCommissionMeeting>. Meetings are held every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month. Meetings usually happen at 10 a.m. in City Hall, Room 1060 but there are seven evening meetings held throughout the year at one of the City Shelters or near a shelter.

The next evening meeting is February 28, 7pm, at West Valley Animal Shelter, 20655 Plummer St., Chatsworth 91311.

Here is the link to the meeting schedule and agendas: <http://www.laanimalservices.com/about-us-2/commission/>.

4. Attend Personnel and Animal Welfare (PAW) Committee Meetings. Meetings are held every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. in City Hall. The schedule and agendas are posted on the City website at <https://www.lacity.org/your-government/elected-officials/city-council/city-council-committee-meetings>.

Here is the link to sign up to receive the agenda by email: <https://www.lacity.org/your-government/council-votes/subscribe-meeting-agendas/council-council-committees-ad-hoc-committees>.

By attending the Board of Animal Services Commission and PAW meetings, liaisons will have the opportunity to weigh in on issues and gather information about LAAS programs and services as well as City animal ordinances and rules.

Communication guidelines

We are working on getting a dedicated email address to send any questions/concerns, suggestions or ideas to help. In the meantime, you can email sara.ebrahimi@lacity.org. We ask that you follow email etiquette and avoid copying multiple contacts because it often confuses people and causes long email chains.

LAAS Strategic Plan

AGM Brown reported on the status of the strategic planning process and how to get involved moving forward. In the spring of last year, the Department began work with a consultant to solicit input from stakeholders and the community to be used as a guide to set priorities for a community-based strategic plan. Community meetings were held in the fifteen City Council Districts. The consultant collected the data and presented a Strategic Planning Process Report to the Board of Animal Services Commissioners. The Commission approved the Department to use the report to develop a draft Strategic Plan with timelines for the Board to review and

approve. In order to do this, the Department will form working groups to discuss and set goals for the four key priorities, which are 1. Achieve No-kill, 2. Good Customer Service, 3. Good Communication and Outreach, 4. Sustainability

Animal Services Liaisons are invited to participate in one of the working groups and will be given more details as the groups are put together.

No-kill

GM Brenda Barnette gave an update on the City's status to reaching no-kill. Since 2011, Los Angeles City animal shelters have been making great strides toward achieving no-kill. A live save rate of 90 percent of every dog and cat entering the city shelter system is the nationally recognized benchmark for no-kill status. LAAS is on track to be at a 90% live save rate by the end of 2017.

Underage kittens who come in to the shelters that aren't sustainable have been a hurdle to achieving no-kill. Public-private partnerships with animal welfare organizations are helping us save more kittens' lives. These organizations have set up nurseries and found fosters to care for young kittens until they are old enough to be adopted.

Today our City shelters are at an 84% live save rate based on the equation of "noses in, noses out," which means the amount of dogs and cats entering the shelter and the amount of dogs and cats leaving the shelter alive. The success is due in part to the help of our over 250 New Hope Partners whose partnership entitles them to reduced or no fees to pull abandoned pets at the City shelters who are at risk of being put to death due to space or who need longer-term medical care to thrive.

The Department's monthly Woofstaff report that includes the live save rate data along with other data for the shelters is available on our website at <http://www.laanimalservices.com/about-us-2/statistics/>.

Coyote Issues

GM Brenda Barnette spoke about the City's policy on coyotes. The City of Los Angeles supports the LAAS policy that lethal means is not the solution for coyotes in our neighborhoods. The Department is working with the Bureau of Sanitation to provide wildlife proof trash cans. Leaving food out and overflowing trash cans are an attraction for the coyotes and they will continue to return to the area for their new source of food.

LAAS has a dedicated officer, Officer Dinh, assigned to the Wildlife Division who can present information at community meetings. Additionally, all officers are trained to handle wildlife.

Status of EIR for a Community Cat program

GM Brenda Barnette shared an update on the EIR, Environmental Impact Report. City Council has approved the budget to perform an EIR to overturn the injunction on a Community Cat program. LAAS has been working with a group of attorneys, the Bureau of Engineering and a consulting firm for the EIR. A questionnaire is being developed and will be distributed to collect data from stakeholders who support a Community Cat program and those who do not.

How liaisons can help/General Comments

- Suggestions on future meetings:
 - Monthly or quarterly in person meetings in the evening or possible teleconference meetings.
 - Roundtable opportunities to discuss concerns, share ideas and help other Neighborhood Councils that may have similar issues
- Liaisons feel that many people do not understand what LAAS is, what we do and how to contact us for services. They believe the Department could benefit from public and brand awareness and that educating people on the services are needed. Some suggestions were outdoor advertising (billboards, bus stops) and publication materials in multiple languages such as Spanish, Armenian and Korean.
- The City's 311 website and App is a great resource for City services. LAAS is currently working with the City to be added to the App.
- Liaisons feel partnerships with organizations and business could benefit LAAS such as a retail location like Petco who could donate blankets to the shelter or poop bags to advocate for picking up your dog's waste. LAAS is currently working with the organization, Operation Blankets of Love, which provides warm blankets for the pets at the shelter.
- Liaisons will pass along LAAS information to their Neighborhood Councils and bring to LAAS any animal ideas or concerns in their community. Liaisons have asked a LAAS representative to attend a NC meeting.
- Liaisons asked about providing pet services to the homeless community with pets. AGM Brown reported back on the projects LAAS is working on to help homeless pet owners, as part of the Mayor's Citywide Homeless Strategy. LAAS currently has two strategies:
 1. The Department is working to purchase tents and kennels to provide housing for pets of the homeless during emergencies. If homeless residents need to be housed and they can't take their pets with them, the kennels will allow homeless people to keep their pets during an emergency.
 2. Providing assistance to homeless residents with pets. LAAS is currently working with the Inner City Law Center and Downtown Dog Rescue to provide care to low-income residents with pets. The services are available at the Inner City Law Center building on Skid Row every Wednesday.

Other Council Districts (North Hollywood, Venice, South LA, Hollywood/Eagle Rock) have expressed interest in these services. In order to launch a similar program a facility in the area is need and an outreach organization is needed, which is the bigger challenge to identify.

LAAS and our mobile spay/neuter clinic partners are able to offer services to low-income residents on a case by case basis for neighborhoods interested in hosting a one-time event.

Additional updates/projects LAAS is working on to service low-income residents are:

1. The spay/neuter voucher policy has changed in 2016 to make it more accessible to low-income residents. They are now able to self-identify their income status by signing

an affidavit if they do not have one of the regularly required forms of verification.

2. The Department is working on a solution to help get homeless residents' dogs licensed for the safety and wellness of the animal without an address.

3. The Department tried to mirror the tethering law after the State law, which would allow reasonable tethering for the homeless to keep their pets nearby and out of danger.

- Liaisons are concerned with breed-specific legislation for Pit Bull Terrier type dogs. Less than 18% of the dogs coming in to the City shelters are Pit Bull Terrier type dogs but it looks like the shelters have about 80% because these dogs do not get adopted as quickly and stay at the shelter longer. People need more education on these great dogs and if they are interested in adopting they need to know how to care for them.