

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**A RESOLUTION TO IMPLEMENT NEW POLICIES AT LONG BEACH ANIMAL CARE SERVICES TO BETTER SERVE BOTH THE CITIZENS AND THE LOST AND HOMELESS ANIMALS OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH**

**WHEREAS**, the current vision of Long Beach Animal Care Services is to become California's safest large city for people and animals through a proactive strategy of community engagement and enforcement activities; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Long Beach and its citizens have demonstrated great interest in community planning and strategies for animal welfare programs community wide; and

**WHEREAS**, the citizens of Long Beach deserve a progressive animal shelter that succeeds at saving the lives of homeless animals at a level that is consistent with the most successful animal shelters in the country;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Manager is hereby directed to revise the mission of Long Beach Animal Care Services to make the attainment of positive outcomes for Long Beach's lost and homeless animals a prime mission of the agency. To achieve this goal, the City Manager is directed to oversee the implementation by **LONG BEACH ANIMAL CARE SERVICES** of the "City of Long Beach Lifesaving Programs Implementation Plan," attached as Exhibit A, which includes the following actions and programs:

- Revise the mission of LBACS to make obtaining positive outcomes for Long Beach's lost and homeless pets the agency's primary mission, alongside public safety;
- Implement a comprehensive LBACS adoption program to increase life-saving capacity;
- Establish a large-scale foster program to increase cage space and increase the number of animals adopted from the shelter;
- Implement a kitten fostering program with neo-natal fostering capacity;
- Increase efforts to provide high-volume low-cost spay/neuter surgeries to the residents of Long Beach;
- Implement a large-scale volunteer program to staff lifesaving programs;
- Improve outreach to and relations with private rescue organizations;
- Build the capacity of its Shelter Neuter Release (SNR) program to decrease the number of community cats euthanized at the shelter;

- Improve LBACS’s capacity for behavioral evaluation and management of animals;
- Decrease owner surrenders through pet retention programs and community outreach;
- Increase redemptions through proactive policies designed to return animals to their owners;
- End Empty-Cage Killing;
- Increase LBACS’s accountability and transparency to the public by publishing its save and euthanasia rates on its website;
- Reexamine LBACS’s relationship with SPCALA and formalize obligations to ensure LBACS adoptions are not negatively impacted;

The Director of Long Beach Animal Care Services is further directed to provide a briefing on the progress of the implementation of the plan to City Council at its October 28, 2014 meeting.

This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption by the City Council, and the City Clerk shall certify the vote adopting this resolution.

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the City Council of the City of Long Beach at its meeting of \_\_\_\_\_, 2014, by the following vote:

Ayes:            Councilmembers: \_\_\_\_\_

Noes:            Councilmembers: \_\_\_\_\_

Absent:          Councilmembers: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

## Exhibit A

### City of Long Beach Lifesaving Programs Implementation Plan

To increase the lifesaving capacity of Long Beach Animal Care Services, the City shall:

1. Revise the mission of Long Beach Animal Care Services to prioritize lifesaving of impounded animals.
  - a. Adopt the following mission statement for LBACS: The mission of Long Beach Animal Care Services is to develop, implement and enforce policies, procedures and programs that will make Long Beach a no-kill community, encourage compassionate and responsible behavior toward animals and reposition Long Beach as a recognized state and national leader in animal sheltering by saving at least 90% of the animals that enter the city-run shelter.
2. Implement a comprehensive LBACS adoption program to increase lifesaving capacity at the city shelter. The City shall require LBACS to:
  - a. Shift to public-friendly adoption hours from 10:30 am to 6:30 pm to allow people to go to the shelter to adopt after work.
  - b. Implement excellent customer service that encourages the public to adopt from the shelter. This will specifically include putting signs outside of the LBACS side of the shelter advertising LBACS animals as adoptable, placing a sign at the entrance of El Dorado Park stating that entrance to the park is free for shelter visitors and changing the outgoing LBACS voice message such that it invites people to come to LBACS to adopt animals, rather than to spcaLA.
  - c. Hold off-site adoptions using a tiered plan of implementation that allows LBACS to gradually increase the number of weekly adoption events from 2 events per week, to 4 events per week until, one year after the implementation, offsite adoption events are held every day the shelter is open to the public. These events shall take place in high-traffic areas to increase the exposure of shelter animals to potential adopters.
  - d. Hold weekly adoption promotions featuring reduced adoption fees. More frequent promotions will be held for animals that are at high-risk of being killed.
  - e. Extensively market animals in a variety of forms, including social media, as soon as legally permissible so that the public knows in a timely manner which animals are available for adoption. At least 60% of postings on LBACS's Facebook page shall feature adoptable animals.

- f. Use traditional media (newspaper, radio, TV) to market animals by reaching out to the media and to businesses to establish advertising partnerships that will enhance the shelter's lifesaving capacity while giving local businesses the opportunity to give back to the community.
  - g. Create and implement a protocol that sets forth a streamlined adoption procedure with no more than a 24-hour gap between time of application and release of an animal to a new home. This procedure shall include establishing criteria for approving a home. LBACS shall also keep a written record of the number of applications submitted, approved for adoption and declined every month and review the efficacy of the adoption and approval process on a monthly basis.
  - h. Put in place a Call Before Killing (CBK) policy that allows an owner or person in the community who surrenders an animal and wants to be the last resort to prevent the animal from being killed to put "Call Before Killing" hold on the animal.
  - i. Create a plan by April 2015 that will allow LBACS to begin implementing mobile adoptions by October 2015.
3. Establish a foster program at LBACS, separate and distinct from that of spcaLA, to increase cage space and increase the number of animals adopted from LBACS, specifically. The City will direct LBACS to:
- a. Create a "Foster until Adoption" program for people who surrender a found pet to LBACS, cannot adopt it, but would like to help find it a home. This would also include citizens who want to foster euthanasia-list pets until adoption.
  - b. Create an "Adoption from Foster" program to allow fosters to find adopters for the pets in their care, eliminating the need for foster pets to take up cage space at the shelter when they are ready for adoption.
  - c. Increase the number of animals in foster homes to the level attained by the best animal shelters in the state (in June 2014, Sacramento Animal Care Services had 200 animals in foster homes).
4. Implement a kitten fostering program with neonatal fostering capacity. The City will direct LBACS to:
- a. Recruit rescue organizations to hold neonatal fostering workshops at the shelter and act as consultants for interested members of the community, who, in turn, foster neonatals, thereby building community capacity for volunteering at the shelter and decreasing the number of kittens killed.

Although rescue organizations will provide the training, the actual operation of the foster program will be done by LBACS.

- b. Recruit more local rescue organizations to do the fostering themselves. (See #7 for relationships with rescue organizations).
  - c. To offset the spay/neuter costs associated with not killing these kittens, LBACS shall develop a Veterinarian Outreach Program that will ask local veterinarians to donate surgeries to the shelter to cover the increase in required spay/neuters.
5. Increase the number of low-cost spay/neuter surgeries. The City shall:
- a. Direct LBACS to increase the funding for the spay/neuter voucher program to restore the program to 2010 levels (\$110,473 was spent on this program in 2010). LBACS will do this by soliciting financial donations from the public and applying for grants that are available to shelters that declare lifesaving as their primary mission.
  - b. Expedite the approval and operation of the onsite spay/neuter clinic that LBACS is opening in conjunction with Friends of Long Beach Animals (FOLBA) such that it opens and is fully operational no later than January 31, 2015. LBACS shall provide to the City a report on the status of this project and a projected timeline for completion no later than October 31, 2014.
  - c. Increase funding allocated to Fix Long Beach by 50% under a contract that states that the increased funding shall be used to increase the number of cats that are spayed/neutered in Long Beach.
  - d. Adoptions as a preventive mechanism. LBACS shall acknowledge that increasing the number of adoptions also serves to reduce future shelter intake by providing altered animals (rather than unaltered animals from alternative sources) to meet the community demand for companion animals.
6. Implement a large-scale volunteer program at LBACS to staff lifesaving programs. This includes:
- a. Revise the current job description of the volunteer coordinator to redefine the responsibilities required of the position as the “organization, development and expansion of the volunteer program at LBACS.”
  - b. Create a strategic plan to ensure that the bureau recruits enough volunteers to staff programs related to lifesaving.
  - c. Extensively promote the volunteer program to recruit people to run programs related specifically to lifesaving.

- d. Schedule monthly volunteer orientation programs to ensure ongoing recruitment and to maintain volunteer pool.
7. Improve outreach to and relations with private rescue organizations. Recognizing that rescue organizations are a valuable resource to the City and that rescue organizations reduce the burden on the City to save the lives of Long Beach's lost and homeless pets, the City shall:
    - a. Direct LBACS to streamline the process that 501(c)(3) rescue organizations must go through to take an animal in from LBACS. This will include creating a protocol that 1) permits any 501(c)(3) that is willing to take an animal from the shelter to do so (in compliance with current state law) within 24 hours of the rescue organization's having made that request and 2) institutes a first-come, first-served policy for any rescue organization that agrees to take an animal.
    - b. Decrease the fees that rescue organizations have to pay to "pull" an animal from the shelter to \$25 or less.
    - c. Waive the 4 animal-per-household pet limit for 501(c)(3) rescue organizations that hold a transfer permit with the City, with the clear understanding that such an exemption would not exempt those organizations from noise and sanitation abatement laws, as well as cruelty, neglect and other health and safety codes.
    - d. Increase outreach and improve communications with rescue organizations by sending out a 24-hour euthanasia list to all rescue organizations in the community who sign up to receive such a list. Further, rescue organizations that agree to take an animal in response to the list shall have the animal released to them as soon as a representative of the rescue arrives at the shelter.
  8. Expand the Shelter-Neuter Release (SNR) program to increase feral (community) cat live outcomes. The City shall direct LBACS to:
    - a. Increase the number of community cats released under the SNR program so that all healthy and treatable community cats are returned to the community. This is assumed to be 90% of community cats admitted, though this number may fluctuate from month to month.
    - b. Add to the number of volunteers who participate in this public to ensure that the goal established in 8a, above, is met.
  9. Improve behavioral evaluation and management of animals in LBACS custody. The City shall direct LBACS to:

- a. Engage a certified animal behaviorist to conduct assessments of animals identified as potentially aggressive or posing a public health risk.
  - b. Create protocols for the behavioral assessment of any animal that is identified as potentially aggressive or posing a public health risk. This shall be done in consultation with a certified animal behaviorist.
  - c. Document all steps taken to evaluate, rehabilitate and/or place in a sanctuary any animal that is euthanized after being deemed seriously aggressive or posing a public health.
  - d. Establish “play groups” for dogs to help socialize them and make them ready for adoption.
10. Implement a plan to reduce the number of owned animals surrendered to LBACS. The City shall direct LBACS to:
- a. Implement an appointment system similar to that advocated by ASPCA for owner surrenders so that personal, behavioral, health and other challenges can be analyzed, addressed and potentially solved, thereby managing intake and reducing the number of animals LBACS euthanizes. This shall be done with the understanding that any animal that is believed by LBACS staff to be in danger if not admitted immediately upon request by the owner shall be admitted with no delay.
  - b. Establish and staff a telephone help line with volunteers providing advice on behavioral and other issues which could result in the animal being surrendered.
  - c. Create a comprehensive library of online and print resources in multiple languages to assist pet owners with behavioral and other challenges that lead to relinquishment.
  - d. Provide counseling for owners who surrender and educate them regarding the likelihood of euthanasia, options regarding re-homing, fostering and/or rescue and the availability of community based assistance in the form of food banks, low-cost veterinary clinics and pet-friendly housing.
  - e. LBACS shall provide an owner-surrender disclaimer to ensure that an owner surrendering an animal to LBACS fully understands the chances of the animal being adopted vs. killed. The disclaimer shall clearly indicate the number of animals killed, including chances of live outcome vs. killing by breed, age and health status in the prior year, and shelter staff shall read the disclaimer to persons contemplating surrender of their pet. City staff and the person

surrendering their pet shall sign an Agreement of Acknowledgement of Possible Outcomes.

11. Decrease redemption fees for people who wish to redeem a lost pet that has been turned in to LBACS. This shall include a establishing a sliding-fee scale for low-income owners, a program that allows people to work off their fees by volunteering at the shelter, and establishing a Redemption Fee Fund specifically established and maintained by monies received in donations to provide funds to pay fees for low-income owners.
12. End Empty-Cage-Killing. LBACS will impose an immediate and permanent moratorium on the killing of any animal (unless it meets the conditions in 15(a)(1) or 15(a)(2) below) when there are empty cages and kennels. There is no legitimate reason to kill a healthy or medically or behaviorally treatable animal when there is cage space available to give him or her a chance at adoption, and such killing is inconsistent with the wishes of the animal-loving public of the City of Long Beach.
13. Increase LBACS's accountability and transparency to the public. The City shall direct LBACS to:
  - a. Establish yearly performance goals and strategic plans and make them publicly available on LBACS' website.
  - b. Publish raw monthly euthanasia and other statistics detailing intake and outcomes on the LBACS website. In addition to intake and outcome categories, this will specifically include the number of adoptions accomplished through offsite adoption events, the number of animals in foster homes and the number of empty cages at the shelter.
  - c. Publish an annual report detailing LBACS' euthanasia numbers and make it publicly available on the LBACS website.
  - d. Track and publish performance markers relative to their progress in implementing the No-Kill Implementation Plan and post them on the LBACS website on a monthly basis.
14. Review, revise and formalize the City's operational relationship with spcaLA such that the relationship has no adverse impact on animals at LBACS. It will do so by requiring LBACS to:
  - a. Establish the "Open Stray" program. LBACS shall post as adoptable through LBACS any animal upon intake, with a disclaimer for potential adopters that the animal may be reclaimed by its owner before the adoption process is finalized. In addition, LBACS will no longer wait for spcaLA to accept or

pass on any animal before LBACS begins advertising an animal as adoptable or before actually adopting out an animal.

- b. Adopt out an animal to any willing member of the public who applies and is approved to adopt a given animal regardless of whether or not spcaLA has reviewed that animal for intake.
  - c. Monitor the number, percentage and outcomes of animals that spcaLA takes from LBACS on a monthly basis and report those figures to City Council.
15. LBACS animals shall be introduced at City Council meetings in addition to spcaLA animals.
16. Terminology. Commonly used terms are defined as follows:
- a. Euthanasia is permitted when there exists either:
    - 1. Terminal medical conditions which cause great suffering with little hope of respite. This will apply to animals identified by a veterinarian who, if not euthanized, will die an agonizing death regardless of where or under whose care it is housed (i.e., a veterinary hospital or foster home with access to hospice).
    - 2. Serious aggression issues that pose a health and safety risk. This applies to animals who have been identified and agreed upon by a certified animal behaviorist to pose a safety risk to the community, regardless of whether or under whose care it is housed (i.e., a behaviorally-trained foster home or feral cat colony.)
  - b. Kill
    - 1. Taking of life for any reason other than the above.