

Date: March 7, 2006

To: Members of the Long Beach City Council

From: Norma Anders
 3424 E. Wilton St.
 Long Beach, CA 90804
 (562) 498-2840

Reg. Ordinance No. C, Ord. 24

Dear Members of the Long Beach City Council:

Please remember that this ordinance is inadequate in two ways. It does not address the issue of Feral Cat colonies and their caretakers plus the over population of mixed and or pure breed dogs.

Feral Cats are not household pets. Feral Cats are abandoned, lost, stray or abused cats. They live in a colony, are terrified of people and are prolific breeders. It is the goal of Feral Cat Caretakers to stop the breeding of kittens. We need an ordinance that protects the caretakers. We need to be able to legally Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, Return and take care of a feral cat colony. Know as simply as (TNR). TNR is the only humane way to effectively bring down the numbers of feral cats in our community in the short-and long-term. Currently, it is estimated that 3 million feral cats reside in Los Angeles County. How many are living in Long Beach?

We need an ordinance or a policy statement. Los Angeles City has adopted a policy regarding Feral Cats while they work on an ordinance. I have attached to this statement minutes from the Board of Animal Services Commission meeting for June 27, 2005. It was adopted at that meeting. I have previously submit the Ordinance enacted by The City of Glendale CA.

Homeless, lost, and abandoned Dogs also need to be address. We need an on going commitment to take the necessary measures to effectively bring down the euthanasia rate of unwanted dogs. The city, the dog breeders, as well as the animal rescue groups need to take ownership of the problem of homeless dogs. I am asking the council consider a no kill policy at the city shelter.

Thank You,
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Pam Holt: I'm a volunteer with the shelters and I thought it would be great to have the website set up for online donations. If it were set up as pay pal account it could bring in a lot of donations.

3. GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOARD ACTION

A. Board Report: Trap, Neuter and Return Procedures DRAFT

David Diliberto: I would like to say that I'm very excited about this. Feral and adult cats are the number one animals that we euthanize. If we can keep them from coming in and Spay/Neuter, make them healthy, and have them live out doors that is much better for them. TNR is working in a lot of other jurisdictions. I have to thank all my collaborators for this that are here today. They are willing to donate so much that will help make this successful. What you have is the first draft of ideas.

Commissioner Rubalcava: For the matter of record I would like for you to spend 2 minutes on the highlights of the report.

David Diliberto: That the Board of Animal Services Commission (Commission) accepts the Department of Animal Services' (Department) proposal to implement a Trap, Neuter, and Return (TNR) policy. The Department finds that (i) a large population of homeless and stray (feral) cats resides in the City of Los Angeles, (ii) that the interests of humane treatment of animals, public safety and preservation of natural habitats dictates that no cat should live outside of a domestic home, (iii) that it is impractical, inhumane and not cost-effective to attempt to exterminate such populations, (iv) that there exists in the city a large number of individuals and organizations implementing the practice known as Trap-Neuter-Return, where feral cats are humanely trapped, then sterilized and vaccinated, then returned to their colony and cared for until the end of their natural life, and (v) that such practice is the most effective way to address this problem and to achieve, in time, the goal of No More Homeless Cats and Saving Animals' Lives. Based upon these findings, the Commission does hereby declare that TNR is deemed to be the preferred method of dealing with feral cat populations as its official policy. The following are areas David will work with: collaborations, staff, animal service centers, outreach, trapping permits, feral cat voucher, citizen complaints, veterinary procedures, change in laws.

Commissioner Riordan: Do we need to do a code for TNR? I want to make sure that feral caretakers are safe and covered. Mr. Ferber, can you meet with the collaborators?

Commissioner Knaan: This is an excellent report. When will phase one start? Do we have a time frame of when the policy will be completed? Also please tell me what is phase one and what is phase 2? So we can start everything after Aug 15th? I like the ideas you had about advertising like the press conference, attaching notices to city employee paychecks and the DWP bill. Also I want to add the licensing issue to the agenda for July 25th. We need to make sure to advertise the program.

David Diliberto: Phase two will begin in 2006 when we get more staff and can assign one person to be the expert on this. The reason people call to complain is not for one cat; it is when that feral has kittens and they can't deal with the litter. If we explain to them that we will TRN just the one cat, I think they will be ok with that.

Bob Ferber: Wanted to apologize for not returning phone calls. As I'm a prosecutor, my office would rather have me not communicate with the board. As a citizen, and rescuer I'm for TNR. As a prosecutor I want to make you aware of some problems that we may have. We have many people in the community who do not support this. We need to educate the community who is opposed to this how a colony is maintained. We need to work out the laws

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and rules. We will have to wait for Dov to see what he says. Commercial properties are for this as they know that the feral's help keep the rodent population down, the example with the police dept down town, I think the homeowners are the ones who will have a harder time excepting this. Used the example of the fruit fly, which is a proven technique.

Commissioner Riordan: Has requested to be involved in future meetings regarding TNR. It is hard to sell a politician on a humane approach on not killing. The goal of this program is to control the population and not kill them.

Commissioner Khero: It is counter intuitive if someone calls and complains about a cat and then we say trap, neuter and release. We need to explain to them why this makes sense. The training is so important.

Commissioner Rubalcava: Since we have a lot of public speakers may I suggest we will hold all questions till the end of the speakers.

Public Comments:

Phyllis Daugherty: There are some legal issues under the civil and penal code the homeowner and resident has a right to remove a nuisance from their property, and they have the right to destroy it if they want as long as it is in a humane way. This discriminates that you are giving special privilege to the TRN collaborators who are nothing but private citizens, against the private citizen who owns the home pays for the traps and pays their taxes for animal control.

Lisa Edmonson: I'm thrilled to see this draft.

David Diliberto: I appreciate the collaborators, as they help when we have asked for help. A lot of people say they will help and when we ask for it we have never received it. A lot of people are so quick to come in and criticize the Department and when we ask them for help the help never comes. This group responds to every email and gives feedback; I want to point out Mark and Karn for all of their assistance- thank you.

Mark Dodge: If a case needs to be made we will make it. There are many issues in TNR. There are strong feelings on all sides. The details will be worked out. We need to act now and let the world know that we have a basic policy.

Sue Taylor: We need to work out all the details for the public not those of us in the community.

Liz Cava: I would like to thank the Department for embracing this.

Commissioner Riordan: I have heard rumors that rabies may be required for cats. The public safety is for the cats and the trappers. Who wants to make a motion?

Commissioner Knaan: I motion to carry this on till August 15th, I think this is great.

Commissioner Khero: The commission directs staff to continue to formulate the policy and collaborate with the TRN experts who have come forward. The commission requests that a formal presentation on implementation be made for a vote on the date of their choice on August 15th.

Commissioner Knaan: Motioned to accept the recommendation.

Commissioner Khero: Seconded the motion

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Commissioner Knaan: Motioned to accept the recommendation.

Commissioner Khero: Seconded the motion

All in favor 5-0 motioned passed

3. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

A. Update: E-Mail Euthanasia Blast

Bob Perino: Reported on how the email blast is done for the pre-euthanasia list. The blast seems to be doing really well. We run the report each morning and send it out to all the members on the list. There are currently over 100 people and groups on the list in the month and a half we have started this.

Commissioner Knaan: Thanks for doing this. I have heard a lot of positive things. I want to ask Mr. Stuckey that I have heard a few times an animal is on the list more than once. If they are on the list more than once I feel they need to be honored for the 24 hours. I would like to see the animals not labeled as fractious on the list.

Commissioner Riordan: I do not think a rescuer will be mad if they come down to the shelter and say why didn't you tell me this was a feral cat. Maybe we can label it as stray, I don't want to say feral.

Commissioner Rubalcava: Won't this be wasting people's time if they come down intending to adopt a cat that can be placed and they come down and find out it is feral. I think we can state the animal is feral.

Mr. Stuckey: We need to take in to account at the shelter it is a time issue. How do we help the new owner to understand that there is something that we saw? We have that responsibility to do that. Is there any concern with the commission that we identify a behavior that we see, like food aggressive?

Commissioner Khero: Maybe it is better to define this category in medical conditions. The most troubling label is normal.

Commissioner Rubalcava: It sounds like given the disagreements of the board as the how to disclose information that Commissioner Khero recommendation to be only used for medical or physical conditions. Do you agree? So we have an agreement on this column to label as medical and physical conditions is the appropriate level of disclosure.

Commissioner Brunson: Can we put this list on the website?

All agreed

Bob Perino: The soft wear company is coming up with a new version.

Public Comments:

Sue Taylor: I think the blast is a great idea. Can we send this out once a month to the newspapers? This is a way to educate the public on how many animals are put down.

Commissioner Brunson: This was a very good idea from Sue Taylor. Can we have our PR person do this?

All agreed great idea.

Mr. Stuckey: We can have the newspapers added to the list.

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