



LODI CITY COUNCIL

Carnegie Forum
305 West Pine Street, Lodi

"SHIRTSLEEVE" SESSION

Date: August 9, 2011

Time: 7:00 a.m.

For information regarding this Agenda please contact:

Randi Johl

City Clerk

Telephone: (209) 333-6702

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Informal Informational Meeting

A. Roll Call by City Clerk

B. Topic(s)

B-1 Receive Annual Report from the Lodi Animal Advisory Commission (PD)

C. Comments by Public on Non-Agenda Items

D. Adjournment

Pursuant to Section 54954.2(a) of the Government Code of the State of California, this agenda was posted at least 72 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting at a public place freely accessible to the public 24 hours a day.

Randi Johl
City Clerk



CITY OF LODI COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

AGENDA TITLE: Receive Annual Report from the Lodi Animal Advisory Commission

MEETING DATE: August 9, 2011

PREPARED BY: Mark Helms, Chief of Police

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Receive Annual Report from the Lodi Animal Advisory Commission.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: In February 2008, the City Council established the Lodi Animal Shelter Advisory Commission. The Commission was, in part, established to serve the Council in an advisory capacity regarding matters concerning animal planning and programming. Additionally, the Commission was asked to explore the long- and short-term needs of the Lodi Animal Shelter and to provide recommendations to Council to address those needs. The annual report summarizes the Commission's activities during 2010 and provides those recommendations.

Over the last year the shelter staff has been able to accomplish many improvements with the Capital Improvement Funds that became available in August 2009. The following are a list of completed improvements:

- Indoor lighting has been updated
- New kennel latches have been installed
- Covers for the outdoor kennels were procured
- 40 dog beds were donated

Other improvements planned include modifying the gates on each of the kennels and installing an additional storage shed in the sally port area of the shelter. These two projects are in the planning stages.

Previously the Council approved an agreement whereby Lodi Shelter PALS assumed the office management functions of the Animal Shelter. This has allowed the shelter to be open on a regular basis during normal business hours. The shelter office is now staffed Monday through Saturday, affording greater opportunity for more adoptions. This also allows Animal Services Officers to focus on field activities and the caring of animals. PALS also continues to issue and track CDBG vouchers for low-cost spay and neutering.

Lodi Shelter PALS issues license renewals as a part of its responsibility for pet licensing. Pet licensing has increased from 626 in 2008/09 to 1,249 in 2009/10 to 1,933 in 2010/11.

APPROVED: _____
Konradt Bartlam , City Manager

FISCAL IMPACT:

None related to receiving the report; however, specific recommendations have a variety of fiscal impacts.

Mark Helms
Chief of Police

Cc: City Attorney

LODI ANIMAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2010

BACKGROUND

Resolution 2007-161 established guidelines for the Lodi Animal Advisory Commission, including the following powers and duties:

- 1. Act in advisory capacity to the City Council in all matters pertaining to animals and to cooperate and coordinate with other governmental agencies and civic groups in the advancement of sound animal planning and programming;*
- 2. Explore both the short-term and long-term needs of the Lodi Animal Shelter and investigate and make recommendations on possible funding sources to meet identified needs;*
- 3. Make periodic inventories of animal services that exist and/or may be needed and present the same to the City Council;*
- 4. Aid in coordinating and promoting pet population control measures through education and development of spay/neuter programs and explore funding opportunities for programs and education regarding the same; and*
- 5. Serve as an information and referral source on animals in the community.*

It is recommended that the City Council revisit Resolution 2007-161 considering and integrating changes that have occurred since contracting with Lodi Shelter PALS. Duties described under items 4 and 5 are now provided all or in part by Lodi Shelter PALS or Animal Shelter staff. Additionally, it is suggested that the word “inventories” in item 3 be amended to “observations of conditions”.

REPORT ON PREVIOUS GOALS (as outlined in 2009 Annual Report)

A. The \$24,000 Council allocated for Shelter improvements still has not been fully expended, though the sally port cover and kennel upgrades are in dire need of being completed.

During 2010 the following improvements were made: New washer/dryer, storage shed, and cover for outdoor dog runs were procured; Plexiglas was placed behind cat cages, new kennel latches and indoor lighting have been installed, and 40 dog beds were donated. By June 2011 staff anticipates expending the remaining funds (approximately \$5,300) on another storage shed, outdoor lighting, and additional feral cat boxes. *Note: It was determined that the sally port cover could not be obtained, due to difficulties in obtaining a permit.*

B. The Shelter continues to report receiving many feral cats. It is recommended that the City embrace and encourage private non-profit community groups willing to manage and fund Trap-Neuter-Return programs.

Animal Shelter staff are now assisting feral cat colony caregivers by not euthanizing tipped ear (i.e. surgically altered) cats that enter the Shelter. Tipped ear feral cats are housed for three days, after which they are released to a caregiver who returns them to the colony site. (See “Accomplishments” for more information on this topic.)

C. Revenue is not being fully realized because pet license billing/renewal notices have not been regularly and systematically mailed to pet owners in the City.

Lodi Shelter PALS utilizes data from 2008 to present for pet license renewal notices. (See “Recommendations” for more information on this topic.)

D. Recommendations made by the Commission throughout the past year include:

1) post fliers in the downtown kiosks, -- **DONE**

2) insert spay/neuter program information in the monthly utility bills, -- **DONE**

3) provide realistic information to people regarding the euthanasia rate, **Statistical information is now available on the City’s website. (See “Recommendations” for more information on this topic.)**

4) informational handouts on basic care of animals, answers to frequently asked questions, and services offered by various local non-profit organizations should be available in hard copy in the office of the Animal Shelter, the library, posted on the City’s website, and included in license renewal mailers; --

Shelter staff have developed various informational handout materials. (See “Recommendations” for more information on this topic.)

5) implement and advertise a barn cat program; -- **DONE**

6) the Shelter should remain open until 7:00 p.m. certain days of the week as a convenience to working persons.

The Animal Shelter is open Monday through Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with Animal Services Officers available from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for services as needed.

E. Provide veterinarians with animal license forms and encourage them to provide to all customers obtaining rabies vaccinations for their pets.

Pending. (See “Recommendations” for more information on this topic.)

F. Create a new marketing program to encourage pet owners to license their pets with a theme that licenses are “tickets home” for lost pets.

A flier was inserted in January 2011 utility bills reminding the public to spay/neuter and license their pets.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (calendar year 2010)

- Lodi Animal Services Disaster Plan – solicited volunteers, moved extra kennels to two locations at higher elevation and developed a timeline to complete the plan;
- Chair Castelanelli is facilitating monthly meetings of interested parties and combined the efforts of three non-profit groups to develop, manage, and fund a citywide Trap-Neuter-Return program;
- Animal Shelter webpage is continuously being improved and updated; and

- Lodi Shelter PALS agreement was amended by the City Council on October 6, 2010, which guarantees \$50,000 a year plus fees collected for redemption, relinquishing, and boarding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Place additional effort in soliciting for vacancies on the LAAC by including one line item in every advertisement the City Clerk publishes in the Lodi News Sentinel until all positions are fully filled (e.g. "One (1) vacancy exists on the Lodi Animal Advisory Commission; contact the City Clerk for more information.") NOTE: The LAAC functioned with only four members during all of 2010 through April 2011.
- Consider contracting with eCivis Grants Network -- a grants management software which provides accurate grants information, reporting, and management; make this software available to City of Lodi nonprofit partners.
- Ensure pet license (and spay/neuter) reminder notices are included as inserts in January utility bills each year.
- Institute "Pet of the Week" under "What's New" on the City's website homepage (e.g. link to the Animal Services webpage with a photo and brief description of one adoptable cat or dog. To be updated weekly.)
- Automate the pet license renewal process and make it available online. Notices should be sent to ALL residences at least once per year, as pet ownership changes frequently.
- Add exterior signage at the Shelter displaying euthanasia statistics in an effort to educate the public regarding the realities of pet overpopulation.
- In public education materials, emphasize the importance of not bringing nursing puppies and kittens to the Shelter, as they cannot be cared for. If no alternative exists, it is preferable to have the mother taken to the shelter with her puppies/kittens.
- Supply all local veterinarian offices with informational cards to provide to all customers who have their pets vaccinated reminding them of licensing requirements.

This Annual Report was approved on April 11, 2011 for submission to the Lodi City Council by the Lodi Animal Advisory Commission:

Chair, Linda Castelanelli
Vice Chair, Phil Laughlin
Secretary, Susan Blackston
Commissioner Daniel Crownover

LODI ANIMAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
ANNUAL REPORT MID-YEAR AMENDMENT
(Covering period through June 2011)

REPORT ON PREVIOUS GOALS (as outlined in 2009 Annual Report)

A. *The \$24,000 Council allocated for Shelter improvements still has not been fully expended, though the sally port cover and kennel upgrades are in dire need of being completed.*

During 2010 the following improvements were made: New washer/dryer, storage shed, and cover for outdoor dog runs were procured; Plexiglas was placed behind cat cages, new kennel latches and indoor lighting have been installed, and 40 dog beds were donated. *By June 2011 staff anticipates expending the remaining funds (approximately \$5,300) on another storage shed, outdoor lighting, and additional feral cat boxes. *Note: It was determined that the sally port cover could not be obtained, due to difficulties in obtaining a permit.*

***→MID-YEAR AMENDMENT: Kennel repairs and sunshade installation have not been done as of July 11, 2011.**

D. *Recommendations made by the Commission throughout the past year include:*

3) *provide realistic information to people regarding the euthanasia rate,*
*Statistical information is now available on the City's website. (Also see "Recommendations" for more information on this topic.)

***→MID-YEAR AMENDMENT: The statistical information on the Animal Services webpage has not been updated since February 2011.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The stipulation in Resolution 2007-161 that "*The Commission shall prepare and submit an annual report to the City Council no later than sixty (60) days after the end of each calendar year*" should be adhered to so that it occurs prior to Council's adoption of the City's fiscal year budget. This Annual Report was scheduled for a City Council Shirtsleeve agenda four months after its original approval by the Commission, which necessitated a mid-year amendment in order to reflect current conditions.
- The Animal Services website is no longer being updated. A current, functional, municipal website is critical considering that nearly 80% of people today are accessing information online. When citizenry can rely on current website information, they will seek answers to inquiries online rather than making phone calls, which further burdens the ever decreasing number of staff.
- A Trap-Neuter-Return program should be developed and ultimately adopted as an official policy in the City for managing the feral cat population.

- There should be standardized responses provided by all Shelter representatives regarding the differences in policies, procedures, and fees applied to animals at the PALS facility versus those housed at the Animal Shelter itself. Additionally, all people relinquishing animals should be advised candidly about the realities of euthanasia at the Lodi Animal Shelter.

SUMMARY:

Spaying/neutering lies at the foundation of any effective animal control program. Reducing pet overpopulation not only prevents surplus births, but will lower the cost of City Animal Services, i.e. less animals entering the shelter equates to less staff and operational costs needed to care for them. Currently, a small group of devoted caregivers are trapping and using vouchers to spay/neuter cats in an effort to ultimately reduce the number of feral cats in the city. It is hoped that a Trap-Neuter-Return program could be adopted as an official citywide policy once an organization can be established to manage and fund such a program. It has been estimated that only 25% of pet cats and dogs residing with families have come from animal shelters or rescue groups. In addition to a goal of decreasing the number of animals being impounded, the Animal Shelter should focus on increasing the number of adoptions by making it a convenient and desirable choice for people. This could be achieved through improving shelter conditions and removing any obstacles that may be preventing or discouraging Shelter animal adoptions. Ideally, no adoptable or treatable animals would be euthanized at the Lodi Animal Shelter. With the approval and implementation of the recommendations outlined in the 2010 Annual Report and Mid-Year Amendment, the essential mission of the Lodi Animal Advisory Commission would be achieved and result in more humane treatment of animals, responsible care of pets by their owners, and a better informed citizenry regarding the issues faced by municipal shelters.

This Mid-Year Amendment to the Annual Report was approved on July 11, 2011 for submission to the Lodi City Council by the Lodi Animal Advisory Commission:

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners – Blackston, Castelanelli, Cohen, Laughlin, and Martin
Noes: Commissioners – None
Abstain: Commissioners – Primasing
Absent: Commissioners – None