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## Supe, Friends leader spar over bony horse ad

### Uhler criticizes Frieborn for mixing 'fact,' 'fantasy'

**By: Gus Thomson, Journal Staff Writer**

Placer County Animal Services was praised and panned Tuesday in the latest skirmish at a Board of Services meeting over the service.

Rosemary Frieborn, president and founder of the Friends of Placer County Animal Shelter, and Supervisor Kirk Uhler were the main combatants in a war of words surrounding an ad that recently appeared in area publications.

The ad shows a bone-racked horse and links it to problems the friends group says revolve around lack of funding and lack of understanding by the county Health and Human Services Department over the job animal services does at the North Auburn shelter.

Frieborn described a "maxed out" field staff and the need to fix problems at the Auburn facility rather than build a new facility in Roseville as examples of what she characterized as a "runaway train."

"We'll ride it through until someone here sorts out fact from fantasy," Frieborn said.

Her comments drew criticism from Uhler, who pointed out that readers seeing the photo of the horse in the friends ad would be led to believe it was its current condition. Earlier in the meeting, Grace Foundation of Northern California Executive Director Beth DeCaprio had praised Animal Services for the work it had done to help restore the pictured horse's health. The Folsom animal rescue executive said the weight of the horse had increased from 650 pounds to 1,100 after being rescued.

"It doesn't portray the horse as it is today," DeCaprio said.

Uhler said he took "a bit of umbrage" over Frieborn's "fact or fantasy" comment, given what he considered the "fantasy" created by the starving horse photo.

"That's disturbing," Uhler said, adding that county officials believe they have the funding and support to fulfill their mission. The board could provide a higher level of funding for animal services but it would be at the expense of other services provided by Health and Human Services and the county, he said.

Supervisors also heard from Robert and Deborah Todd of Ophir, who praised animal services for their assistance in the rescue of several afghan hound pups that had suffered abuse.

But Loomis resident Anita Wright said that while Sacramento County regularly prosecutes animal abuse cases, Placer County is known not to.

While supervisors have heard several reports on the animal services function and recently approved a funding program for North Auburn site improvements and a new facility in Roseville, they have continued to praise the work being done at the shelter. That continued Tuesday after a report from staff members outlining several recent improvements, including construction of a new horse barn in Auburn, updating its policy and procedures manual, and granting \$30,000 in spay and neuter funds to four local nonprofit animal welfare groups.

"I'd like to thank staff," said Supervisor Jim Holmes. "I'm pleased with the service you're providing."

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