

Animal Legal and Veterinary Medical Consulting
P.O. Box 262001
San Diego, CA 92196
(858) 831-1955

**Placer County Animal Services
Report: Support and Rescue Group Meetings,
May 31, 2005**

Meeting One: Friends of Placer County Animal Shelters

Attendees: Rosemary Frieborn, Linda Klinger, Dick Swenson, and Rich Ward

Meeting attendees had the following requests and comments regarding Placer County Animal Service operations/management, and the support group - A New Hope:

Department Reporting Structure

- Concern that Animal Service (A.S.) has to go through too many layers of County government to operate and request that the department report directly to the CAO.
- Requested that the A.S. Director be allowed to set departmental goals and objectives rather than the current structure where the department budget is handled by an administrative analyst in the HHS Director's office.
- Examine other government department reporting models, like Joint Powers Authority Agreements (i.e., County Mosquito Abatement program, South Eastern Area Animal Control Authority (SEAACA), San Clemente Humane Society) and determine if they would be applicable to Placer AC.
- Consider a Joint Powers Authority program with the Lake Tahoe Facility and the City of Truckee (examine this program due to the increased population growth in Tahoe).

Law Enforcement Issues

- The group commented that the Auburn community wants more law enforcement.
- The group stated that it may be necessary for ACOs out of the Tahoe shelter to carry firearms due to their response to field calls in remote areas A.S.

Shelter Operations

- Expressed interest in exploring new methods to enhance fund raising for replacing the current shelters with updated facilities.
- Requested that the ACT Supervisor/Acting ACO Supervisor remain neutral when working with the two shelter support groups (Friends and A New Hope).
- Requested that a veterinarian be hired at the Auburn Shelter, but that the person selected must remain neutral with both support groups.
- Requested that the County fund a volunteer coordinator position for the shelters.

Issues Between Friends and A New Hope

- Requested that there only be one lead support group helping the Auburn Shelter which should be Friends of Placer County Animal Shelters.
"A New Hope should not have equal footing with Friends"
- Duplication of efforts between the two groups should be avoided - namely competing for dates and animals to conduct weekend Mobile Pet Adoptions.
- The group was willing to work with a facilitator to assist with communication issues between themselves and A New Hope.

Meeting Two: A New Hope

Attendees: Lynn Howe, Kim Dewoody, and Janet Foster

Meeting attendees had the following requests and comments regarding Placer County Animal Service operations/management, and the support group - Friends of Placer County Animal Shelters:

Department Protocols and Procedures

- Requested that A.S. develop a protocol that provides staff with direction in animal and medical care for animal abuse/cruelty cases and with long term hold cases.
- Requested that A.S. develop a protocol for support groups involved with Mobile Adoptions.
- Requested that department protocols contain the individual services that support groups can and have agreed to supply to the shelters.
- Request the department more clearly define the following terms: transfers, fosters, rescue group versus support group.

Shelter Operations

- Encourage and expand the current transfer program where nearby sheltering agencies take adoptable animals from Placer County and place them at their facilities for permanent placement.
- Requested that the department review their current spay/neuter outsourcing program to expedite surgery post-adoption and decrease the waiting period for adopters to take new pets home.
- Requested that the department fill current open positions with qualified people.
- Requested that A.S. educate County administrators that publicizing the successful prosecution of animal abuse cases is not bad publicity for the County.
- Requested A.S. hire additional staff for the position of "shelter greeter."
- Requested that additional funding be expended to improve caging and available space for stray rabbits.

Issues Between A New Hope and Friends of Placer County Animal Shelters

- Request that the department allow all support groups to assist the shelter.

- The attendees commented that their organization is primarily interested in dog placement, while the Friends organization is primarily interested in cat placement and saw this as a good balance of assistance for the shelter.
- Attendees stated, "Volunteers should realize that they are guests of the shelter."
- A New Hope raises money for a medical fund that they use to assist shelter animals that require advanced medical care above and beyond emergency triage. They would like to work with the department to ensure the available funding is better utilized.

Meeting Three: Rescue Groups

Attendees: Rosemary Frieborn, Christa Wirtz, Connie Nowlin, Lucille McKevitt, Lynn Howe, Matt Green, Steve Howe, Kim DeWoody, Janet Foster, Carol Johnson, Georgiana Lohman, Cassie Reeves, Oed Shaw, Dawn Smith, Joy Smith (see attachment: Meeting sign-in sheet with name, organization and contact information)

Attendees participated in a roundtable discussion of listing requests and improvements along with some solutions that they would like to see at Placer County Animal Services.

Shelter Operations

- Create a separate holding area for small breed dogs
- Change the Animal Care staff schedule so that a female technician is not alone in the shelter on Sundays supervising trustees.
- Requested that A.S. amend the current protocol on microchip scanning to include techniques on consistent scanning, marking the impound card to indicate an animal has been scanned upon impound and initials of the employee who scanned the animal, and a final scan of animals at euthanasia.
- Requested that the County develop and implement a waiver for adoptions that could pose a public safety threat and could be a potential County liability.
- Requested that the County fund additional positions for adoption counseling or provide training for animal care staff in topics such as specific species and breed common traits.

Issues Specific to Rescue Groups

- Improve communications with rescue groups:
 - Designate a shelter telephone line to rescue group calls.
 - Dispatcher should assist in answering the designated rescue phone line. to help decrease the number of calls where voice mails are left for animal care staff.
 - Animal Care staff should consider identifying certain phone hours per week where rescue groups can talk directly to staff without leaving voice mail messages.

- A protocol should be developed for staff to follow regarding picking up and responding to rescue voice mail messages.
- Requested more detailed information on the origin and available funding associated with the Edna Robinson Trust.