



Coachella Valley Animal Campus

MINUTES

Thursday – February 2, 2021
9:30 a.m.
Commission Meeting
Coachella Valley Animal Campus
72050 Pet Land Place
Thousand Palms, CA 92276

Animal Campus Commission

City of Indian Wells

Councilmember Ty Peabody

Chairman

Councilmember Kimberly Muzik
(Alternate)

City of Desert Hot Springs

City of Cathedral City

Councilmember Mark Carnevale

Vice-Chairman

Mayor Pro Tem
Raymond Gregory
(Alternate)

City of Coachella

Mayor Pro Tem Emmanuel
Martinez

Vacant (Alternate)

City of Indio

Mayor Lupe Ramos Amith
Councilmember Elaine Holmes
(Alternate)

Scott Trujillo
(City Representative)

City of La Quinta

Councilmember Steve Sanchez
Councilmember Kathleen
Fitzpatrick (Alternate)

City of Palm Desert

Councilmember Kathleen Kelly
Councilmember Susan Marie
Weber (Alternate)

Palm Springs

Animal Shelter

Gabrielle Amster –
Executive Director

Friends of Palm Springs

Animal Shelter

Tamara Hedges- President
Ex- Officio

City of Rancho Mirage

Mayor G. Dana Hobart
Mayor Pro Tem Ted Weill
(Alternate)

County of Riverside

V. Manuel Perez, 4th District
Amy Cuen, Board Assistant
Jeff Hewitt, 5th District

Animal Samaritans

Len D. Betz, President
Ex-Officio
Tom Snyder, CEO

County Staff

Laurie Dozier
Executive Assistant I

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Animal Campus Commission Meeting was called to order on Thursday, February 4, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. via ZOOM by Mayor Dana Hobart, City of Rancho Mirage.

A roll call was conducted by the County Staff, Laurie Dozier, and it was determined that there was **not** a quorum. The following were present:

Members in Attendance:

Councilmember G. Dana Hobart, City of Rancho Mirage
Amy Cuen, Board Assistant, Riverside County
Councilmember Steve Sanchez, City of La Quinta
Assistant City manager Scott Trujillo, City of Indio

Others in attendance:

Julie Bank, Director, County of Animal Services
Dr. Sara Strongin, Chief Veterinarian, County of Animal Services
Chris Mayer, Commander of Field Service, County of Animal Services
Kim McWhorter, Program Chief, County of Animal Services
Jackie Schart, Operations Chief, County of Riverside
Ryan Long, Operations Chief, County of Riverside County
Gabrielle Amster, Executive Director, Palm Springs Animal Shelter
Tamara Hedges, President, Friends of Palm Springs Animal Shelter
Michelle Bergeron, Animal Samaritans
Tom Snyder, Animal Samaritans
Laurie Dozier, Executive Assistant, County Animal Services

3. FINALIZATION OF AGENDA:

The agenda was not approved due to no quorum.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Due to no quorum, the minutes were not approved.

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2020:

Due to no quorum, the election of officers did not take place.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No public in attendance.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Received a letter appointing Council Member Karina Quintanilla as the City Council representative for the City of Palm Desert serving as the liaison to the Coachella Valley Animal Campus. Mayor Kathleen Kelly is the designated alternate.

6. ANIMAL CAMPUS COMMISSION MEMBERS AND DIRECTOR COMMENTS:

Mayor Dana Hobart thanked everyone in attendance for attending today's meeting.

Councilmember Steve Sanchez inquired if tethering was illegal and if kennels were considered the same due to the fact that the dog has to stay in the same space. Julie Bank, Director of Animal Services stated that a kennel must be clean, have food and water, and have a way to get out of the elements, such as a doghouse. Chris Mayer, Commander of Riverside County Field Services stated that a welfare check would be the correct call for this kind of activity.

7. RIVERSIDE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES:

• **Julie Bank, Director:**

Julie Bank introduced herself to the commission members. She stated that this year has been a wild ride for all of us since March of 2020 due to the pandemic. Riverside County has three divisions, Field, Shelter, and Programs/Administration. Julie Bank stated she started with the department in March of 2020, and that since the pandemic the department has had to make many changes overnight. The department now has iPads for virtual adoptions, virtual programs, on-line reporting system for lost and found, spay and neutering appointments, on-line licensing portal, updated phone script, updated website, curbside services, and impounding animals if necessary. We are regularly enforcing and educating the public. We have decreased field calls, decreased service request by 28%, and there has been a 12% decrease in dog bites. The San Jacinto Valley Animal Campus is now closed with future plans in the works. The Coachella Valley Animal Campus is down by half compared to their usual impounds. Adoptions are up by 8% and fosters are up by 25%. There has also been an increase in donations by 30% from people wanting to support the department. The department has over 300 transfer partner groups who pull animals for transport regularly. Our biggest challenge is underaged kittens and large dogs. They do not move very quick. Our goal is to keep pets with their families with an emphasis towards prevention through our Healthy Pet Zone Program that is funded by donations and Cares Act funding. The Healthy Pet Zone program includes a food bank, low cost or no cost spay and neuter, medical assistance, vaccines, microchips and guidance with behavior challenges. We also have over 1,000 foster parents in our database. In 2020 our final numbers are 94% live release rate for dogs and 69% live release rate for cats, and we are very proud of these numbers. A coalition group has been formed in Riverside County consisting of brick and mortar animal care groups located within the County of Riverside. The Animal Welfare Coalition of Riverside County is a partnership of

local animal agencies committed to creating a safe haven for animals in our region, using our collective voices as a catalyst for progressive change, and our combined resources and programs for maximum community impact.

8. ANIMAL SAMARITANS (Tom Snyder, CEO):

Tom Snyder has added new board members since Covid-19 hit. The facility they are building adjacent to CVAC is temporarily on hold. If you would like to see the floor plans, see Tom. Michelle Bergeron stated that their transports have stepped up and their main focus is helping big dogs.

9. PALM SPRINGS ANIMAL SHELTER (Gabrielle Amster, Executive Director):

Gabrielle Amster stated that they have had to make a lot of adjustments over the past year. They have limited their meet n' greets and are doing business by appointment only. Gabrielle stated vaccines have increased, holding once a week spay and neuter clinics that are booked out for 2 months and doing more pet food banks.

10. Friends of Palm Springs Animal Shelter (Tamara Hedges, President):

Tamara thanked Julie Bank for her leadership. She stated she is very happy about the Coalition group that has been constructed through Julie's leadership.

Councilmember Dana Hobart stated that Julie Bank's dedication is magnificent and very enthusiastic, and he is extremely happy with the department updates from today's meeting. He asked that all cities donate to their shelters and asked each member to go back to their cities and ask them to donate as well!

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting of the Animal Campus Commission is scheduled for May 6, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. via ZOOM or at the Coachella Valley Animal Campus, 72-050 Pet Land Place, Thousand Palms, CA 92276.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.