

Monterey County Animal Advisory Board
Monterey County Animal Services Center
Meeting Date: April 14, 2004 Time: 3:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Members Present:

District 2	Joy Rosales
District 4	Kathy Williams
District 5	Sue Servies
Member-At-Large	Shirely Jorgenson
Member-At-Large	Barbara DeGrootd, Chair
Member-At-Large	Tom Bailey

Members Absent:

District 1	Tom Collier
District 3	Cookie Johnson
Member-At-Large	Patricia Wirries

Ex-Officio Representatives Present:

Gary Tiscornia, SPCA of Monterey County

Staff:

Kathy Prew, Director of Animal Services

Nancy Ratto, Supervising Animal Control Officer

The meeting of the Monterey County Animal Advisory Board was called to order at 3:30 p.m. The minutes of the meeting of January 14, 2003 were reviewed. It was noted that Kathy Williams name had been omitted from the Members list. She had been absent for the January meeting. Barbara DeGrootd's name had been misspelled in another area. The minutes were approved with those changes.

Three members of the public, Gary and Anita Kelly and Allen Segal, were present to discuss wolf hybrids during the Public Comment portion of the meeting. Gary stated that you cannot own a wolf in captivity in California unless you are licensed to do so. Multi-generational hybrids are being brought in from other states. The USDA has vacillated on their position of efficacy of rabies vaccination for wolf hybrids. Many believe that wolves will soon be covered by the vaccine. Some states advise owners of hybrid dogs or cats to vaccinate for rabies, with the understanding that the animal will be euthanized if it has a positive rabies exposure. Gary estimated that 1/3 of the hybrids he has encountered must live in wolf hybrid reserves. Approximately 1/3 may be mixed with other breeds and have temperament that would successfully adjust to domestic setting. And 1/3 need work and evaluation, and may need to be referred to wolf hybrid rescue.

Alan Segal and Gary Kelly both spoke to the concern regarding identification of wolf hybrids. Alan recommended that each dog be evaluated on its own merit. He read from CA Food and Ag Code 31683, which directs that cities or counties may devise a vicious or potentially dangerous dog program providing it does not regulate dogs in a manner that is specific to breed. Alan expressed concern that he did not want to see any breeds be profiled negatively in Monterey County. He stated that, although he could support shelters having a "no adopt" to the public policy for wolf hybrids, he does not believe that they should be euthanized based solely on their hybrid status, and that rescue agencies should be considered for placement.

Barbara DeGrootd clarified that the Advisory Board is looking only at the issues of licensing, vaccination, secure enclosure and self-declaration identification, particularly for problematic, aggressive dogs.

Gary Tiscornia discussed the predator/prey response as being particularly risky for children, and that unpredictability of hybrids is an area of concern. Kathy Williams, golden retriever rescue, stated that ½ of the younger males who come through her rescue have behavior issues of concern for predictability and placement in a home environment.

General discussion followed regarding behavior and breeds and public response.

Kathy Prew reported that Len Foster's presented a counter proposal to the Board of Supervisors regarding the Animal Services proposed budget cuts for fiscal year 2004-05. Gary Tiscornia, Tom Bailey, and representatives from AFRP came to speak on our behalf. Many letters were received in opposition to the cuts, and it appears that the net effect will be far less damaging than initially predicted to the Animal Services budget. It is projected that we may lose several positions, but not nearly 60%, as first proposed.

Also, Animal Services has begun offering Home Again microchips to adoption and RTO animals. The chips will be offered to the general public only at Rabies Vaccination/Microchip Clinics, which Monterey County Animal Services will begin offering quarterly this coming fiscal year.

Gary Tiscornia reported that a company named Banfield has begun producing and selling an inexpensive ISO standard microchip, which cannot be read by the universal scanners currently on the market. Only an ISO scanner will read the chip, and very few shelters have that available. Therefore, an unsuspecting owner who chips their animal with the Banfield chip is under the false impression that, if the animal becomes lost, the chip will be able to be read at a shelter. In fact, the shelter may scan for a chip and find no evidence of one, and have no way to track the owner. Animal welfare agencies are expressing dismay to Banfield about this dilemma for shelters and consumers.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for July 14, 2004.