

**Monterey County Animal Advisory Board**  
*Monterey County Animal Services Center*  
*Meeting Date: December 10, 2008 Time: 3:30 p.m.*

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**MINUTES**

**Members Present:**

District 2	Joy Rosales
District 3	Basil Smith
District 4	Darlene Drain
District 5	Susan O'Brien
Member-At-Large	Shirely Jorgenson
Member-At-Large	Barbara De Groodt

**Members Absent:**

District 1	Tom Collier
Member-At-Large	Tom Bailey
Member-At-Large	Vacant

**Ex-Officio Representatives Present:**

Gary Tiscornia, SPCA of Monterey County  
Lisa Hoefler

**Staff:**

Kathy Prew, Director of Animal Services  
Nancy Ratto, Animal Services Supervisor

**Members of Public & Guests:**

Len Foster, Director of Health  
Charlie Sammut and staff, Vision Quest Ranch & Wild Things  
Rhonda Somerton, Tyke Ordinance Committee

The meeting of the Monterey County Animal Advisory Board was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

Kathy Prew gave the Animal Services Director's report. She informed the Board that the Division had recently entered a contract with Chameleon for dog licensing data processing and on-line licensing, as well as mailing renewal and late notices. She also stated that there has been an increase in dogs and cats at the County and Salinas shelters, due in large to the troubled housing market and numerous foreclosures. The County's shelter's stray count is up over 300 from last year, and the city of Salinas' total count is higher by 600 animals over last year.

Additionally, Kathy reported on the South County Spay/Neuter Project, which was funded through FoCAS by the Harden Foundation. Surgeries were performed by Dr. Eric Davis and staff of Rural Area Veterinary Services of HSUS on September 20 and 21, 2009 in Lockwood. Surgeries, vaccinations and flea treatments were performed at no cost to pet owners.

Gary Tiscornia lead the discussion on the findings and recommendations of the subcommittee of the Advisory Board concerning a proposed exotic animal ordinance, presented to the group by Rhonda Somerton of the Tyke Ordinance Committee in September,

2009. After careful study and discussions with parties involved, the subcommittee drafted an alternative ordinance version for consideration by the full Advisory Board. The subcommittee addressed permitting and modified language that was duplicative of CA Fish & Game or US Agriculture requirements of exotic animal regulations. The subcommittee tried to address concerns of the truly dangerous animals, while limiting regulation of animals of least physical threat. Charlie Sammut commented that he believed that the alternative proposal was potentially damaging to his program at Wild Things, and thought it offered no better solution for his business than the original ordinance proposed by the Tyke Ordinance group. Mr. Sammut stated that if he was restricted from training animals to be moved or restricted from moving them, it would have the effect of shutting down his business. He stated that many provisions would have an overwhelming financial burden on his business.

Len Foster commented that there had been no problems on record with exotic animals in unincorporated Monterey County, which would warrant the addition of these provisions to the County Code, and that circuses or venues with exotic animals, excluding Wild Things, would most likely perform in one of the cities over which the County has no regulatory authority.

Darlene Drain discussed that she had researched the Tyke Ordinance as it was presented in other areas of California, and that she still has questions as to how this ordinance would give further bite to already existing law. She also addressed the fear that municipal budgetary and staffing constraints may result in difficulty making this proposal effectively enforceable. Barbara De Grootd stated that she believed that transportation of the animals should be the major focus of this Board's concern.

Rhonda Somerton stated that the ordinance proposal would allow enforcement agencies to levy fines and collect revenues for permits to pay for the costs associated with enforcement. Mr. Sammut stated that the fees and fines do not adequately predict costs associated with potential lawsuits generated by the ordinance.

Barbara De Grootd recommended that Ms. Somerton address her concerns to the cities that bring in circuses or other entertainment using exotic animals. Barbara then closed the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

Further discussion by Board members followed. Darlene Drain expressed her opinion that the existing State law and this ordinance would create a duplication, and that the pattern and practice of the group advocating this ordinance has been to use it against enforcement agencies in litigation. Gary Tiscornia stated his opinion that the best place to pass legislation is at the State level for a broader application of the law, and that the subcommittee had executed its charge to bring back recommendation to the Board within a tight timeframe. Susan O'Brien commented on the skill set that would need to be acquired by County staff to perform the functions of this ordinance.

Barbara De Grootd stated that she would entertain a recommendation from the Advisory Board to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that Monterey County not move forward with the proposed exotic animal ordinance. Darlene Drain made the recommendation, and the Board voted unanimously to recommend that the County not move forward with this proposal.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2009. The meeting was adjourned.

