

**ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL-CALLED SESSION**

**March 29, 2007**

**6:30 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Pat Jackson, Chairperson, Animal Shelter Representative  
Gene Carey, Mayor, Council Representative  
Colleen Ament, Vice-Chairperson, Humane Society Representative  
Martin Newcomb, DVM, Veterinarian Representative  
Cynthia Lombardo, Citizen at Large  
Judy Cromwell, Citizen at Large  
Pam Henricks, DVM, Veterinarian Representative

**City Staff Present:** Sherry Harper, Health & Code Manager  
Robin Mangum, Animal Services Field Supervisor  
Deborah Dierks, Secretary

**Citizen in Attendance:** Ms. Shannon Morgan

**Item #1:** Mr. Jackson called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. All seven (7) Committee members were present, constituting a quorum.

**Item #2:** Minutes from the December 6, 2006 meeting were approved by a vote of 7-0.

**Item #3:** Mr. Jackson summarized Ms. Morgan's concerns relating to tethering animals in the city and her proposed changes to the City of Lewisville animal ordinances.

He stated that it has been 10-12 years since the current ordinances have been thoroughly reviewed for needed revisions and updates and that staff had begun evaluating the City of Lewisville Code of Ordinances. It is staff's intention to identify revisions and updates to submit to City Council for consideration in early to mid – 2008; he commented that Ms. Morgan's recommendations relating to tethering animals would be considered for use in the future ordinance revisions.

Mr. Jackson then informed the Committee that the proposed ordinance changes relating to animal cruelty submitted by Ms. Morgan could not be enacted as city codes. He explained that Section 1.08 of the Texas Penal Code does not allow cities to criminalize actions that are already covered by the penal code.

Mayor Carey then asked if Animal Services was planning to “beef up” the existing ordinances regarding leash laws and animal attacks. Mr. Jackson responded that Animal Services would be researching and developing ordinance revisions relating to those issues for City Council consideration.

Then Ms. Morgan played a brief video featuring a Great Dane which she believed was emaciated. Mr. Jackson distributed a hand out containing the Tufts Animal Care and Condition (TACC) scales for assessing the body condition of an animal. The TACC scale is a standard used by most animal control and humane agencies to assess an animal’s condition. There was some brief discussion among the committee members regarding the condition of the Great Dane; they concluded that the dog would not be considered to be emaciated.

Ms. Morgan stated that she would like to see chaining of animals banned, but if not, would like to have a law that limited the amount of time an animal could be chained. The mayor asked if Animal Services had any type of ordinances addressing this issue. Mr. Jackson replied that the current ordinance does not address issues such as this specifically; the ordinances do not allow people to chain animals in any manner that endangers the health of the animal or the safety of pedestrians, motorists, etc.

Ms Morgan then described how tethered dogs in small areas or behind chain link fences can become depressed or aggressive. She strongly suggested that Animal Services should move to update the city ordinances now and not wait too long to make changes.

Ms. Ament suggested that the City Council review Ms. Morgan’s chaining and tethering proposal in their current form. Mr. Jackson responded that the Animal Services Advisory Committee needed to develop specific recommendations for the Council to consider.

Mayor Carey asked how the Animal Services department handles animal abuse cases. Mr. Jackson explained that it depends on the circumstances. In less serious cases, officers would gather evidence and attempt to persuade the animal owner to make appropriate changes to correct the condition; follow inspections would be made by the officers. If the situation does not improve, officers may seek a warrant to seize the animal and request a hearing to determine if the animals are being treated cruelly. More serious cases of animal abuse or cruelty would be referred to the police department for prosecution under the state penal code, and the animal could be removed from the environment with a seize warrant.

Ms. Morgan then inquired about procedures relating to complaints about animals having adequate water. Mr. Jackson explained that officers would investigate the complaint and document the conditions. If the complaint is valid, they would attempt to persuade the owner to be more conscientious about the animal's needs.

Mayor Carey stated that Animal Services should consider proposing more stringent standards for dangerous dogs in their ordinance updates. He stated that the staff should research other city ordinances and present some suggestions to the Committee at a future meeting for consideration. The Mayor also suggested that the Committee should meet more frequently to discuss updates to the ordinances.

Mr. Jackson and Mayor Carey both stated that there were many good points to Ms. Morgan's proposed ordinance revisions that should be considered in the final recommendations to the City Council.

Mr. Jackson thanked Ms. Morgan for bringing her suggestions to the committee and for attending the meeting.

**Item #4:** Mr. Jackson stated that members will be notified of the next meeting date and time.

**Item #5:** Ms. Lombardo made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Newcomb seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned by a unanimous vote at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**THESE MINUTES ARE APPROVED BY  
THE CITY OF LEWISVILLE ANIMAL SERVICES  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Deborah Dierks  
Secretary**

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**PAT JACKSON, CHAIRPERSON**

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**COLLEEN AMENT, VICE-CHAIRPERSON**