

# CLARK COUNTY ANIMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Paradise Community Center  
4775 McLeod Drive, Town Board Conference Room  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89121  
February 23, 2012  
6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: AMOROSO, ROXIE (RA)  
CONNELL, MICHAEL (MC)  
GIPAYA, MARY (MG)  
LALOR, DIANA M. DVM (DL)  
LAYNE, KAREN (KL)  
GOTHARD, KAYLA (KG)  
TEJERO, JOVONIE DONOVAN (JDT)

## 1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. New members gave some background information about themselves and their respective categories as members of the AAC.

## 2. Approval of agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made and seconded.

## 3. Approval of November 17, 2011 Minutes

A motion to skip agenda item as new members were not involved with prior meetings. Motion carried.

## 4. Selection of Chair and Vice-Chair

Motion for Karen Layne as chair and for Roxie Amoroso as vice chair was made and seconded.

## 5. Receive a report from the Educational Outreach subcommittee; and take appropriate action.

KL – Subcommittee chair is no longer with AAC so GREG WALLEN (GW) was asked for comments. GW - CCAC is taking a look at redoing some of our materials. KL suggested he get with Harold Vosko who is on the subcommittee. KL – we talked about a five-year plan and hope we will continue to move forward on this with members of this Committee. We can appoint the students and RA to work on this subcommittee. We need to get some of the rescue groups together. Maybe DL can work on getting some of the rescue groups together to get some cohesiveness and see if there are any changes that may be required in the ordinance.

## 6. Discuss emerging issues and information among Advisory Committee Members; and take appropriate action.

KL spoke about statistics provided by CCAC. AFI services NLF, CLV and CCAC, both Boulder City and Henderson have their own shelters. We are in the process of putting together sheltering statistics. There are over 30,000 animals euthanized every year and part of what this Committee has done is to come up with ideas to deal with those problems. CC has been very progressive in that area. The feral cat ordinance was passed in 2008; s/n ordinance passed in 2010 and we are looking at some other areas. The Committee needs to improve upon those areas. Every animal coming into shelter is considered an impound. Dispositions are animals going out of shelter. A couple weeks ago a CLV committee recommended that CLV adopt portions of CC's feral cat ordinance. Now there will be 2 jurisdictions where there is a central sponsor. People will report their feral cats to a central sponsor as opposed to AC, making them legal if they are s/n and registered. We have been looking at what the ordinances have done. Are they reducing the number of animals going in? We are looking at CC because they have both the feral cat ordinance and the s/n ordinance. Unfortunately we have a huge economic downturn, home foreclosures and that has really impacted animals going into the shelter. You see two different

things happening here. For the first time we are starting to see more dogs being impounded than cats. In 2010 we saw 10,775 dogs versus 10,259 cats. For 2011, we had 11,103 dogs and 10,084 cats. We see a downturn in cats in the last two years that is pretty significant given all the home foreclosures we have had. If you look at dispositions, the other thing you will notice is we have a higher rate of adoptions for dogs than cats because a lot of those cats are actually considered feral cats. If you look under the impounds for stray cats, the other thing that stands out is the number of stray cats has also dropped from 2010 to 2011. Stray dogs have gone up from 6,230 to 6,410. We are making a difference. This Committee and CC are very effective. We have a long way to go but we see a downward trend particularly in cats which is where we have had our biggest issues in the past. Let's hope that trend continues. Given that we have had over 100,000 home foreclosures in the last year, it is pretty amazing we still have this downward trend. We are accomplishing something. Hopefully the next meeting we will be able to bring back the information for all the jurisdictions and we will be able to look at 50,000/55,000 impounds and about 30,000 euthanasias every year. We are trying to reduce the number of impounds and euthanasias.

MG – we have a lot of horse impounds and I don't see them on this. KL – there is an Other category. They are not separated out and include everything but dogs and cats. It includes ferrets, some of the exotics, just about anything but that may be worthwhile taking a look at as well. Horse rescue groups have really been impacted because people simply cannot afford to maintain their horses. I assume it is a big issue for AC as well when you take in these horses. GW – we have seen an increase in horse impounds in the last 18 to 24 months and it is probably the result of the economy, price of hay, shoeing and everything else. We have seen them in abandoned environments and also in cruelty and inhumane environments. It is not as it used to be where we would occasionally get a horse running loose. We are getting those once in a while but now we are getting a lot of owned animals that literally have to be seized. MG – it has been a big job to place the horses. When you are talking about placing a 1,000 lb animal, you have to have the right type of property and the ability to support and own them. In the two years we have been at Horseman's park we have seen an increase in the amount of horses that are coming through there and a lot of them are cruelty, neglect cases. KL – Mary, is that something you would be willing to take a look at just to try and give us some statistics on what is going on and to get some idea of how big of an issue this is? It certainly sounds like an emerging issue in terms of how we are taking care of them and what some of the issues are in terms of confiscation. Is that something we want to revisit possibly looking at what the current ordinances are for horses? I don't think that has really been reviewed. GW – the issue of welfare and humane treatment doesn't have to be specific to horses because we have a good, broad ordinance. Cruelty is cruelty whether you see it on a dog or on a horse so it is probably not worth the effort to do anything specific regarding horses. We do have an anti-tripping ordinance but in terms of trying to be more specific with horses, I wouldn't worry about it. KL still thinks it would be worthwhile to get a better handle on the number of horses in terms of looking at how many. I assume that number of horses coming in as impounds can be obtained from either Lied or AC and then what is happening to them so we can actually take a look at that issue. GW – that should not be difficult to do. Roseanne may already be able to do that. She puts it in the Other category now. Lied would not be able to extract the numbers. It is in Chameleon but the animals are offsite so it is a little bit harder. They are not part of the shelter environment. We can get you what you need. GW estimates 20; MG estimates closer to 30 or 40.

## **7. Comments by the General Public**

MC has guests here that he would like to introduce themselves. NEPHI OLIVA (NO) is with NV Pigeon Control, a very unique humane society engaged in resolving conflicts between people and pigeons. We have been working on this for almost 8 years. We think a solution has to come before the business end and the administration part of it. To give you some credentials about what we do now, we currently maintain 30 of the major casinos in town. We maintain Republic Services, 700 billboards for Clear Channel advertising, 9 college campuses, Metro Police facilities, 2 hospitals for the State of NV. These are properties that we have established our control program and have had absolute and total success with getting the problem under control. For the last 8 years we have turned down calls from the public when they call up desperate that their pigeon problems on the roof and the spikes and screens and the netting, poisons and birth control have had no effect. It just modified the problem. We have told them no because one individual does not have access to the solution. Pigeon flocks are

the problem and how they operate socially and their operational batteries never coincide with the property lines of homeowners or business owners. So if 1 business owner is out there addressing an issue on a particular property and their neighbors who share that problem are not financially involved in the remediation process, they don't stand a chance because whatever is left of that core, typically 10% can regenerate back to the original number. I am sure Mary can appreciate when your horses are euthanized, you have 30 year old mares that are all of a sudden breeding again to get their numbers back up so if you don't remove that reproductive core, what we call leaders and breeders, they will regenerate at an accelerated rate to try and get back to that number. For example Mandalay Bay had a really bad problem, about 250 pigeons in the fountains in front where all the weddings take place. You can imagine the havoc that would be on your wedding. We saw there was a water source but there wasn't much for nesting so we left the property, grabbed the birds and tagged them with a transmitter and let them go and went and found them at night about a mile down the road in a canopy at a gas station. We threw a lead rope net around 90 percent of the canopy. They adapted, climbed inside like they normally do, then we pulled the rest of it closed, climbed in with hand nets and removed about 350 birds. We went back the next day and have never stepped foot on the property as far as operating is concerned and not a single bird has shown up. That model, if it is implemented, on a county wide level with an organization like ours that can effectively go out, identify a flock, take out the leaders and the breeders and then round up all the roofians in that flock, will solve in one operation the problem for hundreds of homes and businesses all at the same time. We are not here to suggest this is the county's problem and the county needs to pay for it. We put our money where our mouth is and we put the research in and we have businesses that support it. When we say we have a solution, we don't just mean a solution to the problem and here you go bill CC to pay for it. We have been working with Republic Services for several years and we have a program that can allow Republic Services to pick up the tab on pigeon control. There is a reason that is important for them. As a company they maintain 1,200 municipalities and they want to maintain more. Offering pigeon control as a service to the cities and counties that they service for trash and waste gives them a leg up in the competition. It is an added service that we have committed to them around the country in other cities to implement this program. It is a solution that has been proven on the strip and on many other properties here in town. If it was implemented countywide, county wouldn't have to pay for it, we are here to help start discussions and see if we can work together. We have 3 more years before we can apply as a state humane officer. There are things in the ordinance for feeding and it certainly is a problem because one feeder can wreak havoc on the area but the real problem is trash. Access to unmonitored food sources that contribute to their lack of health. About 30% of the birds are underweight and we find the falcons and other predatory birds are biting the heads off, tasting their blood and then leaving them. They are that unhealthy living in the environment off the trash.

KL – at the last AAC meeting, we did draft a pigeon ordinance that Commissioner G had proposed, so we have spent some time on this issue already but as you probably know that ordinance was turned down by the full BCC. Since we have been down this road and the BCC has not been willing to address the issue I want to understand. My question is what would you see this Committee doing? NO - MC asked us to come. We were at the meeting and believe it was our testimony at that meeting that discouraged the ordinance from passing. Nobody wanted to see anyone go to jail for feeding pigeons. That was the crux of the issue and so that being the case, MC asked us to explain what we do because this is a real solution. Fining people and feeding pigeons are contributing to the delinquency of a pigeon, not the solution. In the Commission meeting, we asked why they were not asking the experts instead of dealing with it from a lawless perspective, let's create a solution and then generate the law that controls that solution in the community. It is our position that it is the State's responsibility. Wildlife is defined in such a manner that it doesn't preclude pretty much any wildlife, wild birds, whether indigenous to the State or not and the Commission does have statutory authority over pigeons, but if you call NDOW, Department of Agriculture, they all point the finger and say they don't have statutory authority. The Commission has the statutory authority. It is their responsibility. We have been working on this a long time. If MC hadn't come to me, our plan was simply to go the legal route, work with Senator Lee and an attorney about creating a pigeon authority that would allow us to operate in a way we need to solve these problems for the community. They are out there with BB guns, with poisons and everything you can think of. The cruelty that is occurring because these animals are regarded as pests is absolutely out of control but when we take over in a neighborhood, notices go out to everybody and all that stuff stops, the problem gets solved with minimum suffering on the part of the birds. If we are not able to get something going with this program,

we are not going away. We will file a class action suit if we need to for dereliction of duty. Regardless of that, we want to give everyone an equal opportunity to embrace a solution. Let us move forward with something, work together in a public/private partnership. If that doesn't work, the community's problem is not going to go away. The people that have the issues and the people in the community and the businesses that support this community are not just going to stop complaining about it and eventually they will figure out that the buck or the responsibility does truly lie with the government. But we do have the solution and we need to put that solution in place. It is not going to cost the County anything. That is the best part of this discussion because nobody wants to pass a tax, especially right now. We have a way to do that where it is not going to cost the County but gives us the tool we need to do our jobs. If you are looking to have those discussions, we will provide the county with a real solution for the problem that will not be a burden to the taxpayer.

MC – it was my intention for you to understand there is a solution. They know what it is so I am hoping we can get more support down the road and they can continue the work. NO – the easiest way to get in touch with us is NevadaPigeonControl.com. We are a humane society but are set up for profit. I don't want to spend all our time crying for money instead of going out there and doing what we do and then letting the people who have the problems pay for it.

STACIA NEUMAN (SN) has had meetings with several of the Commissioners and we have asked them to follow the success of other cities using birth control. I did give that copy to Commissioner Sisolak and also Larry Brown. I would like to ask the staff review the model used by other cities.

JANA WRIGHT (JW) is part of Commissioner G's staff. On Tuesday, March 6, 2012, there will be a public hearing in the government center for the BCC to consider an ordinance to ban pets on the Las Vegas Boulevard. This ordinance has been tweaked by a special committee that the County Manager, Don Burnette, appointed to talk about different strip issues. The ordinance would prohibit animals on the strip. They would be allowed from 5 am to noon in the restricted area. The restricted area would be the pedestrian walkways and the boulevard and it is a 200 ft corridor on either side of Las Vegas Boulevard from Sahara to Sunset Road. I have your e-mails. If you would like I can send you a copy of that ordinance. The public hearing would start at 10 am. All parties are welcome to comment on the proposal. MC – we have a lot of homeless people that will go down there and sit on the overpass walkway with an animal and a sign "We are homeless, need food. Please help." They have no consideration of time of day or what is going on. They may be down there 2 or 3 o'clock in the afternoon, June, July and August when the temperatures are 110 or 115 degrees. This is looking out for the health, safety and security of these animals. As a pure bred dog person, we do take our pure bred dogs for walks on the strip to socialize them with people so they would be exempt from this but the main thing is to stop this cruelty to animals by the homeless people on the strip.

GINA GREISON (GG) spoke about fur trapping in CC, including Mt. Charleston, Lee Canyon and the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation area. Typically this would be a state issue, handled by NDOW and I know we had a person from NDOW address this issue at the last meeting. This issue has been in the news recently and we have been dealing with it for some time at the state level with Senator Mark Menendo with SB 226 within Washoe and Clark County, the two largest counties and in the process of researching and gathering information, we had to go to the Clark County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife. It was very disheartening to find out that out of 7 board members, 4 of them, according to NDOW, were avid trappers so we don't feel as if we have gotten as far as we need to on those issues. We are deeply concerned and I believe the AAC can address issues about the welfare, protection and safety of people and their companion animals. That is the issue, safety. We have folks recreating in these areas all over CC. It can become a very congested area. You have many incidents of dogs getting caught in traps up north, down here. I was just at the Mt. Springs meeting last week and one of the board members there, her dog was caught in a trap and she gave me permission to share her story. GG read Tanya Harrah's story into the record and gave a copy to the Committee. Also, the LVRJ Columnist John L. Smith on December 17, 2008, wrote an article addressing the trapping issue and the title is "Trapping, a frontier tradition, no longer makes sense in Southern Nevada." It talks about Luna, a dog that was caught in a trap up in Mt. Charleston. I realize this Committee probably can't take the action that I was hoping for but I would like to request a future agenda item for consideration. There are some people here who live in

Mt. Charleston who wanted to get this information on the record tonight. While I was at the Mt. Springs meeting, all the members signed my petition to ban fur trapping in all of CC in the interest of protecting companion animals and people. It is a public safety issue. People should be able to go out and recreate and certainly nobody ever imagined the growth that took place in Southern Nevada over the past 10/15 years. The County currently was asked to issue a legal opinion on whether or not they have the authority to do this. I would respectfully urge the AAC to recommend to the BCC that they institute a ban across CC which would include the Spring Mountain Recreation area, Mt. Charleston, Lee Canyon and Red Rock National Recreation area. We would also like this Committee to know that currently one of the biggest issues is no trap ID is required. It used to be required. It was changed in the legislature about 10 years ago so if your dog gets caught and it is severely injured, you don't even know who to call. Recently in the news we saw some traps illegally set in Red Rock. No one claimed them and no one knows who they belong to. Trappers are not required to check the traps for 96 hours and according to the NDOW website, it is a common violation not to check the traps in 96 hours. Just yesterday there was a controversy and one of the Board members stepped down after he videotaped himself with a trapped bobcat going back and forth with a dog, encouraging the dog to get the bobcat. I do want to show you a report provided by NDOW at the Mt. Springs committee. It is just the trapping data for hunt area 262 basically giving the boundaries at Indian Springs all the way to Pahrump to the California/NV border to Goodsprings and then to 95 back to Indian Springs. That is prime area 262. The bobcat pelts are the most valuable pelts. They go for anywhere from \$400 to \$1,500 and according to this there are 5 trappers. How many millions of people visit Red Rock Canyon, Mt. Charleston, Lee Canyon recreating in all these areas. I would ask this Committee to do something. I do have a DVD of Stephanie Myers' dog that I would like played. GG also submitted a copy of the DVD for the record.

STEPHANIE MYERS (SM) lives in Lee Canyon and the video you just saw is a decade old but I am still outraged about what happened to my dog and what I have to talk to you is not only my story about Sunshine but also at least 3 other stories of residents on Mt. Charleston who have had their animals trapped in Mt. Charleston. In one case, a woman was in Kyle Canyon running and her dog was trapped right next to a fox that was also trapped. When she tried to get her dog, her dog bit her because it was hurt and scared. She couldn't get the trap open so she had to pick up the dog and the trap and go down to an emergency vet in order to get the trap removed. Another gentleman works for the NV Division of Forestry, Steve Brittingham, and his dog Luna had limped away with blood from the trap getting his leg. He and his wife were just out for a walk, the dog wandered a few feet away and bam that dog was trapped. The same with my dog. Mine unfortunately ended up being in the trap for 6 hours because she didn't bark. So I started searching for her, got some neighbors to help me and we were able to get the trap off her but she did have surgery and lose teeth. All of this cost a lot in vet bills, without any identification on traps, there is no way to recover the amount of money we have to spend to have our dogs treated with surgery and recuperation. That is only a part of it. There is much more trauma when our animals are trapped. Steve Brittingham, in his position with NV Division of Forestry, has come across other animals that have been trapped and staked out for 96 hours. The trapper had not come back and it had been at least 4 days of suffering for an animal caught in one of these. One of the letters from Mr. Brittingham is addressed to Senator Manendo. Mt. Charleston is growing. The ski area is ready to start an expansion to at least 3 times as big as it is now. Campgrounds are expanding on Mt. Charleston. People from the valley, especially during the summer, come up to where it is a little bit cooler. Even right now it is trapping season. There are traps up there. They want to have their dogs walking around up there with them. With Mt. Charleston growing, the campgrounds, the commercial entities that are there, people wanting to come up and recreate, go out into nature with or without their pets, they can't do it safely. They don't know the traps are there. There are no signs that say "oh, by the way, there is trapping going on up here." People just don't know, especially our visitors from CA where trapping is completely banned. They come up to Mt. Charleston; they don't expect to see traps. There is no way they would know the trapping is going on so they are caught. We have so many visitors. We had 2 million visitors just at Mt. Charleston last year and with those 2 million visitors, there was still trapping going on. I have lived up on the mountain since 1975. I didn't know trapping was going on so how could anybody else know. With the expansion of Mt. Charleston and the number of people that are coming to visit, we really need to do something about the trapping situation because people don't know about it. Also, I just want to point out the indiscriminate nature of trapping. At least with hunting, you have a hunter, a gun and one bullet that you can put that animal out of its misery. These traps are hidden so you

can't see them; they are scented so they will attract animals. All you need and I pray that this doesn't happen but sometimes people are going to be up there camping and they are going to say little Johnny, little Susie why don't you get some kindling for us and bring it back. Who knows, I wouldn't think anybody could lose a few fingers in these traps but it is possible. It is indiscriminate. It is going to catch the bobcat that they want but it's also going to catch my dog and your children's fingers so I hope that you would consider doing something about making the regulations for trapping more stringent especially the Mt. Charleston area which just cries out for it.

ANNOULA WYLDERICH (AW) wants to bring attention to a situation that has been ongoing for some time now. It concerns the Supper 99 Cent store on Tropicana and Eastern. This is a discount store that has been selling beta fish in individual little plastic cups. A lot of the cups have less than ½ inch of water in them and with 25 to 30 cups at a time on a shelf, it doesn't appear the employees are taking care of the fish, probably because they are cheap and disposable. She submitted pictures. I know that GG can attest to this too because she has seen it. I spoke to the manager about this as well and I realize there are no laws or ordinances that preclude the sale of these fish by retailers but I would hope that fish fall under the protection of the anti animal cruelty statutes. I am wondering if anybody has any suggestions on how we can handle this. At this point it has fallen under the radar of an animal rights organization, a national organization because people are contacting them and they in turn called me because I have conducted investigations for them in Las Vegas so if anybody has any suggestions as to how we can approach the store and maybe have them cease selling the fish or take care of them, I would love suggestions.

GG – I was surprised that the length of the beta was not even fully covered by water. The lady dismissed me; they didn't care and I haven't been back to that store; it was so upsetting to see them. They were near the cash register and I did tell her I felt it was cruelty. AW – they do have one other store on the west side of town. I did go to that store. I think somebody tipped them off because there were no fish when I went to the store but I did talk to the manager. I just asked him if they sold the fish and if they take care of them. He got nervous when I approached him and told me that they had a permit to sell the fish from pet control.

#### **8. Set date, time and agenda of next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 19, 2012 at 6:30 pm. KL would like education subcommittee to meet at least once and see students make some suggestions and have Roseanne put together the information regarding the horses. Would like to set up something with Dr. Lalor and some of the rescue groups and see how our ordinances apply to these and see how they are helping us in this area. Would like to get numbers in terms of how many adoptions are being done by rescue groups. AFI has a downward trend on adoptions. Is that because there are more groups out there doing adoptions?

#### **9. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.