CLARK COUNTY ANIMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES
Paradise Community Center
4775 McLeod Drive, Town Board Conference Room
Las Vegas, Nevada 89121
April 14, 2011
6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: BRAZIL, MELANIE L, DVM (MB)
CONNELL, MICHAEL (MC)
LAYNE, KAREN (KL)
PENNEY, JANNICE (JP)
WEHRKAMP, CANDYCE (CW)
COMBS, CLAYTON (CC)

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Approval of agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made and seconded.

3. Approval of January 27, 2011 Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded

4. Appeal of Vicious Animal Declaration: Joahnna Valdez, 9744 Wickstead Street, Las Vegas, NV 89178

PAUL BORCHARDT (PB)- On March 8, my little dog Cody and I were walking, about ready to go home, at the south end of the park. I noticed a gentleman sitting down with three large dogs. We started walking and when I was across from them, the dogs sat up. We moved away from them. We hurried up and turned the corner, just about to the car and I felt something. I turned around and there was a black pitbull nose to nose with Cody and before I could do anything, he grabbed him and started chewing on him. I tried to get him away and the second pitbull came up and started chewing on Cody. I beat them, trying to get him free and I couldn’t. They were just chewing him up, chewing his ears off. A German Shepherd came up but he really didn’t do anything. The two pits were doing all the damage. It was horrifying. I was screaming for help and I believe the owner took the Shepherd away as I was still fighting with the two pits. I get up and they knocked me down and chewed on my legs. As I was screaming for help, the security guard, Dan, came up and fought them with his hands. We finally got my dog loose and I ran to my car, just across the parking lot. I opened up the trunk, as it was faster to get him into the trunk away from the dogs. When I turned around, the black dog was right there. I took out a wrench and started swinging it at him and he left. I went back and Dan was sitting down and the gentleman with the dogs lay on his back on the curb. I told Dan I had to get Cody to the hospital. He told me paramedics were coming but I couldn’t wait, as Cody would bleed to death.

Dawn saw the last bit of it. She held my dog and we took off for the hospital. She phoned from the hospital and gave Dan all my information. He also got the information about the dogs’ owner. I had to go to St. Rose hospital to get stitched up and went back to the animal hospital. They wouldn’t let me see Cody right away, as they didn’t know if he was going to make it. He was mutilated. The Shepherd didn’t do any damage. I would hate to see the pits back on the streets or in a park. They are very dangerous dogs.

MC – when you saw the three big dogs, were they on a leash? PB – I think the Shepherd had a leash on but I am not sure. On the pits, I didn’t even see collars. They were free.
ROBERTA BORCHARDT, the wife of Paul and co-owner of Cody, read a written statement that is attached.

DAWN HANSEN was at the park that day. Dan, the security guard was coming around the horseshoe pits when an elder lady screamed at Dan that there was a vicious dog attack and that Dan had to come right away. He took off on his bike. When I got there Dan had the Shepherd and one of the pits and the gentleman was putting the other pit into the back of his car. He then collapsed on the sidewalk. Dan came over and asked me to check on Paul and his dog. Paul had Cody in the trunk of the car. Cody was mangled and Paul was in shock. I went with him and held Cody who was bleeding all over the place. We left Cody and then took Paul to the hospital. When he was done, we went back to the vet. I have known Paul and Cody for a long time. Cody is as sweet as he can be and Paul walks him in the park. I have a couple of boxers and he interacts with the dogs just fine. Dan said the shepherd was calm, not fighting or attacking. Family has been devastated.

KL asked if the dogs had leashes on. DAWN said no. Dan was holding tightly on to the one pitbull and the shepherd was just sitting calmly. I didn’t see leashes on any of the dogs.

JOANNA VALDEZ (JV) is the owner of all three dogs. She was not there when the dogs attacked. She saw Aaron lying on his side. His hand was bleeding. Saw Dan holding the Brindle Pit, Bruno, and another witness holding Cujo. She asked Aaron what happened but he was in shock and having a panic attack. The dogs were on leashes but they got loose. The Shepherd had a collar but not the pitbulls. They had a lead but no collars. The woman who had Cujo took me to where they had been sitting. I found the two leads, grabbed Cujo and Bruno and loaded them into the car. Diamond was already in Aaron’s car. I stayed there until Officer Peterson arrived. He took my statement. Everyone said it was the pitbulls that were involved.

KL – the spayed female Pit was black and white? Was she current on Rabies? Was Bruno, the brindle pit, s/n? JV - the black and white pit is spayed but I didn’t have her paperwork. Bruno was not neutered. KL – the female German Shepherd, Cujo, is she spayed? JV – yes. None of the dogs is current on their rabies. The incident report from Dan explains that Aaron said they were on leads but slipped out. Bruno followed Paul when he took his dog to his car but did not attack. It was a horrible incident and of course, they will view my dogs as vicious. Family and friends with kids and small dogs interacted with them and they have been really good. It was shocking to hear what happened. They have been at the DI dog park running loose and this has never happened. They are loving dogs and have no history of attacking anybody or showing any violence. My conclusion is when he walked them they were getting hyper and antsy and he is not used to walking them by himself. I was on my way there and so was another friend. We were being responsible, were going to walk them together. I don’t bring my dogs to the park off their leads to cause havoc. I contacted him after the incident, tried to explain how sorry I was and that I would take full responsibility for the vet bills. We are working out payments right now. The three of them have been in the shelter over a month. One of them wasn’t even involved.

JP asked what made her pick out the type of dogs when she rescued them. JV said they picked her. I raised them to be around people and around little dogs. They were cute; they were adorable. I wanted to save their lives. JP - If you are such a good owner, maybe they shouldn’t be in the park in the first place or should not have been walked by someone who was not used to them. JV - it was a matter of minutes before our friend got there. This has never happened. It wasn’t something we expected. JP- the dogs are not current on their rabies shots and you have a male dog that is not neutered. How old is the dog? JV – four years old. I haven’t gotten around to having him neutered.

AARON DOUGHTY wanted to apologize as the situation got out of hand quickly. I don’t think I was as qualified to walk the dogs as I thought I was. I didn’t know what I was in for when I brought all three of them there. I really don’t know how to control them. When they hear her voice, they listen to her. They don’t listen to me as much. I feel horrible for what happened. It was about 1 pm and I was on my way to Exploration Park to walk the dogs. I brought two leads and a leash. I walked to the middle of the grass, far away from everything cause I thought it would be easier. I called my friends because I thought it would be easier if each one of us had one dog and we would have nothing to worry about as far as control. She was on
her way, got there toward the end of the situation about 1:08 pm. It happened fast but I don’t know the exact
timing. I got out of the car with all three dogs. They have a lot of energy. I went to the middle of the grass
and was sitting down with them. They were looking around, building up anticipation and started walking
around me. I got tangled up in one of the leads and went to grab one of them, I ended up dropping one and
grabbed the wrong one and one of the dogs bolted. When the dog started running, I ran after it cause I didn’t
know what was going to happen. As I got closer, Diamond was on top of Cody. I tried to get the dogs off.
We were hitting them, pushing them away. That may have escalated them to be angrier at the attempt to get
them under control. In the process of trying to open the mouth of one of the dogs, I ended up cutting my
hand. I put Diamond in my car. When I let go of the other dogs, they followed me. Cujo wasn’t involved.
She just stayed further back. We separated the other dogs. I have lived with the dogs for about a year and I
would never have thought something like this would occur. I don’t think this would have happened if the
owner were there. We have the bill and are taking complete responsibility and ownership of it. I don’t think
any of the dogs should be put to sleep. They don’t deserve to die over this. I never saw it happen before.

KATHERINE from Anchorage, Alaska, has known Joahnna and the dogs for about nine years. After
meeting her dogs and living with her and the dogs for over a year, I have learned these dogs become your
best friends. They deserve a second chance.

MARABEL GOMEZ when I met the dogs, they were playful and friendly, they cuddled with me. There was
never any fear.

JILL ANTONIO lived with Joahnna for three years and is the owner of a Pomeranian. The dogs never
fought and got along well. It is shocking to hear this happened. They were fine at the dog park, always got
along with other dogs.

MC after looking at pictures and hearing testimony, Declaration of Vicious should prevail on the two pitbulls
and should be lifted for the German Shepherd, Cujo. JP doesn’t think Cujo was the culprit. There are people
sitting here whose little dog was attacked. They trusted you to have control of your dogs. I agree with MC.
CW agrees with keeping Vicious Declaration on the two pits. As a responsible owner of a dog that doesn’t
have a good reputation as it is, every precaution should be taken because you don’t know what will happen
in the public. KL supports Vicious for two pitbulls. You have to be a responsible pet owner and the fact that
the male dog was four years old and intact and that none of those dogs was current on their rabies, you loved
those dogs, but you need to be responsible. I am sure these dogs were more than 50lbs. and they are much
stronger than we are. To take the dogs out on leads as opposed to collars, leashes or even harnesses concerns
me. Responsible pet owners have their dogs s/n and vaccinated and are able to maintain control of the
animals in public. There was no evidence indicating the German Shepherd was involved. MB agrees with
everyone else. MC motions to uphold the Vicious Declaration for the two pitbulls, Bruno and Diamond,
and Cujo, the German Shepherd, be released from all charges and returned to her owner. JP seconded motion
and all members were in agreement. KL informed JV she could get a lawyer within ten days to file an
injunction to stop the dogs from being euthanized and a show cause hearing would be held by the Court.

5. **Receive a Report from Animal Foundation on Waived Fees in CLV**

KL – i understand there is no report. JASON SMITH (JS) cannot provide a report on fees waived because of
the structure of the contract. I can do it internally but not historically. Looked for word afford in County
animals and found 13 instances. Would like to see a pilot program. KL – I don’t understand if we are
talking 13 to 25 cases, considering the fact that we take in 55,000 animals and the return rate for dogs is
twenty percent that is still a lot of numbers versus the 13. I think it would help to do a pilot program, as I am
not convinced. I suggest a six-month pilot project to get a handle on it, see how big the issue is. We would
also like to know why they are in there in the first place. Was the dog RAL? Are we returning the animal
back to an abuse situation? JS would suggest a 30-day pilot program. We would like the criteria ahead of
time so we know what you want to see, what we need to report so we can make the decision quickly. I
would like all the criteria ahead of time so we know what is acceptable. It doesn’t matter how they came in because you are willing to return them. It is a matter of whether they have the money or not. If we want to place a value judgment on why they came in or if that person is a suitable owner, we do that through regulation, citations, follow-up enforcement, things like that. It should be easy to track the discounts. The arrangement we have with the City allows us to do that. We are not for profit. Every dollar we don’t collect is a dollar we don’t have in resources. We take it very seriously. We find ourselves trying to process about 24,000 animals a year for the County and are spending dozens of man-hours per week drawing lines for other organizations. It is difficult to be the middleman. KL – my suggestion is to look at the pilot program. CW understands your need for speed but would have to feel data was reflective of what happens. Minimum for me would be 3 months. KL and I can get together to come up with criteria and bring it to our next meeting.

6. Receive a Report from Clark County on Number of Animals Reclaimed by Owner and Dollars Received

DAVID MARCH (DM) – Board fees for FY10 $67,829, FY 11 through January, 2011 were $42,100. We should get more money this year if they remain consistent. Impound fees for FY10 were $86,383 and FY11 through January we took in $62,385. KL asked impounds to be sent to Committee by e-mail. DM – board fees support the feral cat program with cat traps and a stipend annually to the feral cat sponsor. The impound fees primarily go out for the sterilization programs. Last year we gave HCW $120,000 for sterilizations and are on track for another $120,000 this year. KL asked HAROLD VOSKO (HV) to address his use of the $120,000. HV - $50,000 is being used this week for an ad on Univision, Hispanic Outreach, offering the first 200 callers with pitbulls or Chihuahuas a free s/n. We will probably do closer to 300. On Channel 3 we are doing that same program for the less fortunate and will be doing about another 200. This does not count all the feral cats we sterilize. Last year we sterilized 12,100 animals, 65% were either subsidized or totally paid by us. It costs $800,000 to run the clinic, $250,000 for vets, $60,000 for rent, $120,000 for supplies. We just came back from a conference in North Carolina and I can tell you we have the highest standard. On a daily basis most of them have 2 licensed vet techs. On a daily basis, we have 3 and 4. We take in in services about $400,000 to $500,000 so we have to raise another $300,000 to stay open. The $120,000 is part of that plus we have to make $180,000 in grants. We work hard

7. Educational Outreach
   a. Receive a Subcommittee Report

CW, JP and CC were asked to determine if they should put together an ad hoc committee to look at education. CW gathered info from HCW, AFI, Humane Society and Paws for Change. Two things jumped out: there is no budget so what happens are good ideas with no way of tracking whether they have been able to make a difference. I asked CC to speak with his friends to find out how they wanted to get information. Of course, Facebook and e-mail came up. I found a Facebook page where people sent in videos of dogs in shelters that needed to be adopted. I sent them an e-mail and they told me how they did it. We could do the same thing. It would be pretty much no money. It is an emotional decision to adopt an animal. I don’t think people think about vet bills. I don’t know where to take this. Maybe it is best that each of the organizations continue on their path until the economy gets better. Maybe we can add some information to the pamphlets we already have and get them out to all the vets and other animal establishments. I think it is up to the various organizations to tell us what they think we can do and whether we want to do it now or revisit it. KL thinks Facebook is a great idea and is something we have to look at if we are going to do this.

JANICE RIDONDO (JR) – in my opinion you have lost the adults. You have to get in the schools. I know social media is what they are about but you have to get to the little ones cause they are the ones who will change their parents’ behavior. We need to get to the new Superintendent and get into the elementary schools. Don’t give up. Every day we have to be talking about getting to the little kids. CW – we all know what is going on in the schools right now. From a pragmatic perspective, I agree with you totally but I don’t know how we can get this on their radar.
GINA GREISON (GG) – it is free to send out e-mails and Interact (CCSD e-mail system) has about 17,000 people on it. It is free to go to teachers’ union, the support staff union. Go to the hotels and put information in their newsletters. It just takes time to reach out and ask people for their help to do this. We can ask teachers who want to be involved to create clubs and expand the program that Brooke Ugaro is already doing with Paws for Change. There is so much that can be done without costing money, including creating a Facebook page just for a CCSD Humane Group and spread that information through the schools and it is free. Everyone could use good press. It is time for this group to put something together and go to the School Board meeting, meet with Superintendent and ask to do a presentation. Get buy in from the unions, get buy in from the School Board.

CW – we were asked to see whether we should form an Ad Hoc committee to look at these ideas, are you raising your hand. GG - absolutely and my daughter who sat on this Committee previously also will help. Channels 4 and 2 can still be utilized. There is some free press out there and we can find a way to get some sponsors to help out. We need to take that first step. KL – I don’t want to cause problems with what is already being done by groups out there. We need to make sure we are not stepping on the toes of HCW, the Humane Society or NSPCA and that we try to pull them in. They have been talking about this and we don’t want to step on the toes of the groups that are already out there doing something. Maybe we can enlarge the Ad Hoc committee and bring them in. CW – the Facebook site I went to is called Dogwork. Check it out.

JR – you talk about the other groups and not stepping on anybody’s toes, send out an e-mail or whatever you have to do. No more waiting. Gina is willing to be on it. I am always available. I go to Tom with everything. Let’s do it. We are all on the same team. I encourage you to start tonight. Pick a day and I will get a room at the Government Center and we can talk about how we are going to go forward.

HV – education is a complex thing. Animal rescue is complex. We just ran the ad with the Hispanics and out of the 200 we are doing for free, 40 are pitbulls and the rest are all Chihuahuas. The other gazillion are poodles. Pitbulls we can’t get. People won’t get their pitbulls fixed. That is education. None of them have cats. If they do, they don’t think they are pets. We ask everybody if they have other pets. None have cats. That is education. It means they are not taking care of the cats. You can only imagine what is going on in their neighborhoods with the cats. We started our education program two years ago. One thing I have learned about animal rescue is it moves in slow motion. Pups on Parole program took us 6 months. The feral cat clinic took me 6 months to put together. This education thing took a year to put together. It takes time. It doesn’t just take off. Last year when we started the education program, we were in one school; now we are in 18 schools. It just takes time. We will work with anybody. We have been working with Lied, Humane Society, and NSPCA. We also want to go to JP’s facility. We are going to Roos N More this month. We have a youth group that comes to our clinic. I am not worried about someone stepping on our toes. It just takes a long time, it moves slow. It takes time to put the programs together and be successful. It took us ten years to get a clinic. There are not enough dedicated people out there.

CW – whatever we do, we need to understand what the return on our investment is. That investment is time, people’s time. I didn’t get any of that from anybody. I heard about the good things you are doing. I was disappointed you couldn’t say what the return was for all that you put into place. We have to figure out ways to get people involved, to donate money and to be able to show them the return we are getting because they spent time or donated money. That is hard to do. KL – we will get the Ad Hoc Committee and move forward.

b. Animal Care & Responsibility Education
Addressed above

8. Information-sharing by Committee Members

CC won a 4H competition.

9. Comments by the General Public

JANA WRIGHT (JW) has comments about Animal Foundation and applauds you for wanting more information from them. Everyone’s goal is to get animals back to their owners but you have to have numbers. You have to show something to warrant a contract revision by the BCC. Beside CLV, I believe they also keep the fees from NLV so it is only CC that takes this money and uses it to support feral cat programs, the s/n program and pays for an employee. If you are leaning toward allowing a pilot program and making that recommendation to the BCC, ask TAF to come up with something like we have with HCW that if you have a SNAP card, a check-up card, TANF card, Social Service Medical card, Medicaid card and they can prove the animals is theirs, that a reduction of fees be matched by TAF so if they are s/n a dog and charge $80, maybe it is $40. I have reservations but am open-minded to what you will come up with. The HCW contract with CC for $120,000 has very specific guidelines. They have to maintain their monthly Feral Cat Clinic where they do at least 200 cats. They do whatever is brought in but there are expectations of 200 cats at this monthly clinic. They have to do monthly Ferals of at least 996 cats a year and for unincorporated CC they are required to do owned animals, 1,200 dogs and 800 cats and for no cost or low cost, $10 for a cat or $20 for a dog if people have this SNAP, TANF etc. We are going to trust you to make an assessment for constituents in unincorporated CC and if there is a need, you will work with them. I don’t know anybody that will s/n a dog for $20. We feel very good with this contract with HCW. It averages out to about $30 an animal. We are really supportive of that and would hate for monies not to be available to support that program. HCW has created curriculum. I am with Gina about CCSD. Come up with a power point presentation for CCSD. Kim Yates has a curriculum HV has offered his support. Get in the elementary schools. There is something that has worked that is in place. Teachers are always looking for something to educate. Let’s rock, let’s roll.

JR wants you to change the night of your meeting but I don’t want you to change Thursday. I just want you to change which Thursday it is. Congratulate Gina for SB 223. It is out of the Committee, going to the floor.

Why are we putting the fine on the animal? Why do we let someone come in and put all the money on the dog and they want to do what they want with their money. Responsible people, their dogs get out for whatever reason and they are going to pay. DM – frequently when we pick up an animal, the officer will issue a citation and attach it to the paperwork of the animal. If we pick up a dog running down the street, I don’t know where it lives. So when they come to claim their animal, we are going to deliver the citation to that owner. Unfortunately, we can’t get there for 4 or 5 hours to give the citation. The shelter cannot issue it. JR – can he take their information. DM – they can and we have told them, if we cannot get there, get a copy of their driver’s license, provide it to us and we will file criminal charges.

TAMI SIMON representing Best Friends Animal Society locally would like to ban retail sales of cats and puppies from puppy mills. Currently has over 500 signatures of people who would like to see this happen in CC. Similar bans have already passed in 7 cities across the US and 1 in British Columbia. There are many more that have introduced and some that are still pending. I have a packet of the research and information that I will present if given more time. My intent is to address substandard breeding of dogs and cats in this community and to reduce the number of homeless animals that die in shelters. It is not intended to shut down a pet store at all but high volume commercial breeders that supply the pet stores all over the country. The pet stores can and have successfully transitioned to operate under a more humane business model where they are using an adoption only approach. They are working with and hosting adoption events for shelters and rescues and increasing demand for their other product and services. Stephanie & Co. has two stores that did convert to the humane model. Since CC is the leader in animal protection ordinances in our valley, I would
love to have CC lead the way once again with an ordinance such as this. JP is going to Utah this weekend to talk to Best Friends about some horses we rescued from the slaughter lot and our teams are not built for this type of stuff so I am going to talk to them on Monday to see if we can have a relationship with CC and Best Friends on large animals.

10. **Set date, time and agenda of next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 21, 2011 at 6:30 at Paradise Community Center.

11. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.