



LOUISIANA ANIMAL
WELFARE COMMISSION

Governor's Office of Community Programs

P.O. Box 60630, New Orleans, LA 70160

(504) 568-8315

LAWC Minutes

June 18, 2014

Louisiana State Police Fusion Center
376-A E. Airport Rd.
Baton Rouge, LA
Baton Rouge, LA 70806
1:00 PM

Attendees: Dr. Gary Balsamo, Amy Burris, Hilton Cole, Paul Edmonson, Juanita Murphy, Mary Oliphant, Joelle Rupert, Dr. Phillip Dupont

Absent: Dr. Amy Grayson, Dr. Brian Melius, Anita Milling, Heather Parker

Guests: Julie Lewis, Tyler Carruth, James Davis, Dr. Renee Pourrier

- I. **Minutes** - The minutes of the March 19, 2014 meeting were accepted. A motion was made by Ms. Rupert to approve the March minutes and Dr. Balsamo seconded. Motion passed unanimously

- II. **Treasurer's Report** - Juanita Murphy gave a brief Treasurer's report. Ms. Murphy explained that she is still transitioning in the role and working with Ms. Oliphant to ensure that everything is done correctly. As of May 30, 2014, the LAWC account had a balance of \$68,494, which includes a check for K9 Encounters to put on the May training for State Troopers. Ms. Murphy also reported that \$7,000 was deposited on April 14 from the State Treasury.

Dr. Balsamo suggested that we consider renewing the spay/neuter grants with the remaining \$68,000. Mr. Cole suggested that the Grant Committee look into the matter and consider lowering the grant amount. A motion was made by Dr. Balsamo to accept the Treasurer's Report and it was seconded by Ms. Rupert. Motion passed unanimously.

- III. **Presentation of Award** - Mr. Cole introduced Dr. Renee Pourrier to the Commission. Dr. Pourrier was instrumental in LSART and the animal response team needed during a natural disaster. Mr. Cole and Ms. Burris presented Dr. Pourrier with an award on behalf of the Commission.

- IV. **LAWC Pet Registry** - Dr. Balsamo re-introduced the Pet Registry issue to the Commission and stated that there were new developments with the program. He attended several meetings and during one he met two individuals who would like to develop and maintain the Pet Registry site on behalf of the LAWC. He introduced Tyler Carruth and James Davis. Mr. Carruth and Mr. Davis gave a presentation on the "Petabyte" software that they would like to use to develop the LAWC Pet Registry.

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Mr. Cole asked about the security of the website and privacy of information. Mr. Carruth and Mr. Davis said that their system is very secure and the information would only be released with the explicit approval of the LAWC. Additionally, Mr. Carruth and Mr. Davis will add more language to the initial sign-up information that will make it clear to the registrants that their pets information may be used in times of emergency when declared by the state of Louisiana and the LAWC.

A motion was made by Ms. Rupert to “proceed with partnership with Mr. Carruth and Mr. Davis to develop the LAWC Pet Registry” and it was seconded by Dr. Dupont. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Burris named a Pet Registry Committee to oversee the development of the registry and to ensure that LAWC goals are met and maintained. Committee members are Ms. Burris, Dr. Balsamo, Ms. Oliphant, Ms. Rupert, Ms. Murphy and guest Dr. Pourrier. The committee will work closely with Mr. Carruth and Mr. Davis to ensure that the program works correctly and LAWC needs are met. The next step will be to trouble shoot the program with the developers and contact LSU Stephenson Disaster Recovery Center to let them know that the LAWC has partnered with the developers.

- V. **Report on Continuing Education Meeting for Police** – Ms. Lewis gave a report on the recent Continuing Education Meeting for State Police that was held on May 7, 2014. Ms. Lewis stated that 100% of the feedback received from the troopers was positive and that the class was overbooked. There were 65 attendees and Cane’s provided lunch. Ms. Rupert noted that the class was very educational and it was a great presentation.

Dr. Balsamo made a motion to approve \$1,250 for another seminar. Mr. Edmonson seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Ms. Lewis will continue working with the LAWC to hold the next seminar.

- VI. **Discussion of Priefert Cages** – Mr. Cole presented information on Priefert cages to the LAWC. He said that shelters need cages in situations with dog fighting and disasters. Mr. Cole said that the cages are easily transported that the East Baton Rouge Animal Control Center can support by storing the cages when not in use. He stated that he was waiting to receive additional information from the company in terms of ordering the cages. A motion was made by Dr. Balsamo to authorize up to \$10,000 for Priefert cage purchase and Ms. Murphy seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Cole stated that he would report back to the LAWC with the final cost before purchasing.

- VII. **Legislative Report** – Ms. Burris reported on the 2014 Legislative Session. The one major bill pertaining to domestic animals was HB 1091 by Rep. Thomas Willmott which would ban dogs from riding unrestrained in truck beds while on the interstate. The bill passed the House and Senate but was vetoed by the Governor. Ms. Burris urged LAWC members to brainstorm ideas for the next legislative session that will improve the LAWC and the treatment of animals in Louisiana.

- VIII. **Discussion of LAWCA** – Ms. Burris asked to discuss the LAWCA and told Commission members that she feels that it is time to revisit the suspension and discuss the LAWCA as it pertains to the LAWC. Concerns were brought up regarding the relationship of the LAWC and LAWCA/Mr. Pinckney Wood. Dr. Balsamo and Ms. Burris stated that during a meeting with the Attorney General’s (AG) office, members of the LAWC were told that a relationship with the LAWCA could potentially make LAWC members personally liable for incidents that occur while the LAWCA is conducting LAWC business. The AG suggested that any organization that conducts business on behalf of the LAWC carry its own insurance policy. Mr. Wood was asked via email and via phone conversation to obtain an insurance policy. As of the date of this

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meeting, he was unable to do so. Additionally, Ms. Burris and Ms. Murphy brought up concerns that the LAWCA could raise funds on its website for LAWC. Upon suspension of the LAWCA relationship, the commission asked that Mr. Wood refrain from raising funds for LAWC or LAWCA.

Ms. Burris requested that the Commission hold a vote to determine whether the LAWC continue working with Mr. Wood and the LAWCA and maintain the relationship or whether it was time to separate and cease a relationship with the LAWCA. A motion was made by Ms. Rupert to permanently end a relationship with the LAWCA due to legal concerns and the motion was seconded by Dr. Dupont. All in favor were Ms. Rupert, Dr. Dupont, Ms. Murphy, Dr. Balsamo, and Mr. Edmonson. Opposed were Ms. Oliphant and Mr. Cole. The motion passed 5-2. Dr. Balsamo stated that he would contact Mr. Wood via email and via phone to alert him of the decision. It should be noted that as of the date of the meeting, Mr. Wood indicated that no funds had been raised.

- IX. A motion was made by Dr. Dupont to adjourn and seconded by Mr. Edmonson. The motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 2:49PM.

Minutes completed by Amy Burris, September 15, 2014.