



State of Louisiana  
**Animal Welfare Commission**

*Office of the Governor*

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***LAWC MEETING MINUTES***  
***JANUARY 4, 2012***

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Balsamo called to order the regular meeting of the Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission at 1:00 P.M. on January 4, 2012, in the Galvez State Office Building, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

**ROLL CALL**

The following members were present: Dr. Gary Balsamo, Ms. Margaret George, Mr. Hilton Cole, Mr. Pinckney Wood, Dr. Brian Melius, Ms. Joelle Rupert and Ms. Mary Lee Oliphant-Wood.

Absent were: Mr. J. T. Lane, Ms. Amy Burris, Dr. Amy Grayson, Ms. Susan Schneider and Lt. Paul Edmundson.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING**

The minutes from the last meeting were read. Mr. Pinckney Wood questioned the identity of the members that voted to disband the Louisiana Animal Welfare Auxiliary. The minutes were then approved unanimously by vote of the Commission as read. Motion for approval was made by Ms. Joelle Rupert and seconded by Margaret George.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

The treasurer's report was presented by Ms. Mary Lee Oliphant-Wood and was accepted by unanimous vote of the commission after a motion by Mr. Hilton Cole and seconded by Ms. Joelle Rupert.

**OPEN ISSUES**

Dr. Gary Balsamo announced that the website could be viewed at [LAWC.LA.GOV](http://LAWC.LA.GOV).

The spay/neuter grant program was discussed. Dr. Gary Balsamo agreed to write a general note explaining the program for us to send out. The deadlines of June 1st for all applications to be received and of September 1st to announce awards were decided upon.

Discussion on qualifications of applicants followed. Ms. Joelle Rupert made a motion to accept the new deadlines and Dr. Brian Melius seconded it. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of the commission.

The law enforcement seminar has not been scheduled yet. Discussion on whether Lt. Paul Edmundson was still a commission member was held, with no resolution. Mr. Hilton Cole agreed to check into the possibility of whether Continuing Education Credit Hours could be offered at the seminar. Mr. Pinckney Wood suggested that a \$3000. grant given by the ASPCA years ago could be used for the seminar.

### OPEN ISSUES CONTINUED

The Pet Registry was discussed. Dr. Brian Melius reported that he discussed the registry with Dr. Ghere. Dr. Ghere said he would help, but the parishes are not using uniform data reporting. Ms. Mary Lee Oliphant-Wood suggested that all the commission members should try Pinckney's registry program, as she found it easy to enter her pets. This registry can be accessed from the LAWCA.ORG website under the Pet Registry tab. Dr. Gary Balsamo said he would look into the possible use of existing rabies records.

The LAWCA was discussed and copies of articles were given out. Mr. Pinckney Wood informed the commission that the LAWCA board has seven seats, and a majority—four seats— are LAWCA members.

### NEW BUSINESS

The idea of changing the LAWCA position of Treasurer to Secretary/Treasurer was brought up. Dr. Brian Melius made a motion to create this new position and it passed unanimously after a second from Ms. Margaret George. The commission agreed that the purchase of a tape recorder with permanent tapes would be a benefit to this new arrangement.

The election of officers for 2012—2013 was then held. The nominees were:

Chairman—Dr. Gary Balsamo

Vice Chairman—Mr. Pinckney Wood

Secretary/Treasurer—Ms. Mary Lee Oliphant-Wood

Ms. Margaret George made a motion to suspend voting rules and Dr. Brian Melius seconded her motion. The motion passed unanimously. All nominations were accepted by acclamation.

Mr. Pinckney Wood discussed going back to the State Legislature to get "teeth" into our recommendations when shelters do not comply. Mr. Hilton Cole said civil court may be used for this purpose.

Mr. Pinckney Wood also brought up the idea of using ads to tell the public how to report cruelty issues. The Chairman asked him to present a budget for approval. The use of a phone and a reward system needs to be considered in the budget.

Dr. Gary Balsamo announced that future meetings would be held the 2nd Wednesday in March, June, September and December.

### ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Brian Melius moved that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Ms. Joelle Rupert. After a vote by the commission, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Lee Oliphant –Wood  
Mary Lee Oliphant-Wood  
Secretary/Treasurer

Minutes must be approved at the ensuing Commission meeting.