

**CITY OF PETALUMA
ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES FOR AUGUST 6, 2008**

Committee Members: John Cerini, Tim Christensen, John Eliot, Grant Garl, Eileen Hallock, Jonathan Long, Nancy Manchester, June Gerron, Charlie Reinhart (Chair)

Absent: Pamela Morris

Council Liaison: Samantha Freitas

Staff: Nancee Tavares, Kathy Sousa

- I. **Call to Order:** 7:05 p.m. by Chair, Charlie Reinhart
- II. **Approval of Draft Minutes:** Member of the public, Diane Reilly Torres would like noted that she was at July 2008 meeting and that she handed out materials. Nancy Manchester said her name was spelled incorrectly. Samantha Freitas approved with changes; Jon Long seconded.
- III. **Public Comment (for items not on the agenda):** Marcelle Guy read and distributed handout on the Point Reyes Bird Observatory position on feral cats on horse ranches. Diane Reilly Torres distributed "A Tail from Outer Space", a cartoon magazine about pet over-population.
- IV. **Committee Comment:** Charlie Reinhart announced that she is resigning from the Committee. Members thanked her for her dedication and shelter support over the years.
- V. **Shelter Report:** Kathy Sousa explained that the shelter is now quite full of both dogs and cats. Adoptions are somewhat slow, probably due to the economy. Nancee Tavares announced that Riverfront Gallery is doing a benefit for the shelter in September, with a percentage of sales going to the shelter. She asked for volunteers from the Committee to help at the September 6 and 7 Bay Area Pet Fair at the Marin Civic Center. (Eileen Hallock volunteered.)
- VI. **Fencing at Rocky Dog Park – Update:** Nancee said that the fence is completed, but had already been cut. The contractor repaired it at no cost.
- VII. **Legislative Subcommittee recommendations: Feral Cats:** Committee member Eileen Hallock read letter she had written about relationship between the animal shelter and feral cat advocates. Lynn Richardson read letter from Jennifer Kirchner, executive director of Forgotten Felines of Sonoma County. The organization will provide spay/neuter, education and other aspects of a TNR program for Petaluma. Marcelle Guy recommended that entire feral cat ordinance be rescinded. Angela Zumsteg asked about the non-profit organization the Advisory Committee is considering forming. She has a DVD on forming a non-profit she will share. Committee member John Eliot asked why the half-mile boundary around the wetlands was removed from the proposed legislation. Charlie Reinhart responded that the Ellis Creek mitigation plan does not include the half-mile boundary. She also explained that the half-mile distance is confusing to the public and is hard to enforce. Councilmember

Samantha Freitas asked how the changes were developed. Charlie Reinhart explained that they were developed through the input of the public, committee, research and Animal Services staff. Councilmember Freitas recommended that the word “clear” be removed from the ordinance. Charlie Reinhart explained that the City of Petaluma already has a TNR program. Feral cats can be redeemed from the shelter, however it is very seldom that a caretaker comes in searching for a lost cat. Education must be in integral part of any program, as are finances. She said the plan could have been done earlier if there wasn’t existing animosity. Member Eileen Hallock said City should go ahead with a program similar to Sacramento’s Miller Park Feral Cat Program. However, the City cannot bear the expense. Angela Zumsteg said Jennifer Kirchner of Forgotten Felines was turned down in 2004 when she offered to help. Marcelle Guy said that former committee chair, Sheri Cardo, was lied to about the ordinance. Diane Reilly Torres researched the feral cat and Ellis Creek mitigation plan. She requests a non-lethal predator removal program, perhaps using perimeter fencing. In Defense of Animals gave her a list of charities that might be willing to donate. She said she doesn’t feel the present park boundary is right. Charlie Reinhart explained that it is a clear barrier and easily defined. Shelter Supervisor Kathy Sousa explained that the vast majority of feral cats are brought in by the public because they are causing a nuisance. Committee member Jon Long explained subcommittee was trying to be objective in removing the half-mile boundary. He said that business parks are not a good place to house a colony because personnel changes and businesses close, leaving the cats without care. Charlie Reinhart suggested the City try to locate city lands on which to house cats. She said that the shelter has no space in which to house feral cats long-term and said the shelter has started a Barn Cat Program. Councilmember Freitas said the changes to the ordinance are a good first step and are only the beginning. She stressed that everyone needs to continue working together. Gail Thompson said that deforestation and building kill wildlife – not feral cats. Committee member John Cerini said if the changes to the ordinance are approved, public needs to work with Animal Services and compromise. Must have caretakers who take responsibility. Marcelle Guy announced that public access television is showing an Alley Cat Allies film about feral cats. Jon Long moved that committee accept changes and recommendations. Nancy Manchester seconded. All voted yes, with the exception of John Eliot who abstained.

- VIII. Discussion and possible action on Committee reorganization re: Selecting new Chair and Vice Chair:** Eileen Hallock nominated John Cerini as Chair. Jon Long seconded. All voted yes. John Cerini was appointed Chair. Charlie Reinhart nominated Jon Long as Vice Chair. Eileen Hallock seconded. All approved. Jon Long was appointed Vice Chair.
- IX. Update from Committees:** Jon Long said that members of the Fundraising Subcommittee will attend a Friends of the Petaluma Animal Shelter (FOPAS) meeting and discuss possible collaboration. Eileen Hallock explained that as a member of the Arts Council, she will be erecting a Day of the Dead altar at the shelter. It will be a place where people can put their intentions for lost pets and leave a donation for the shelter.
- X. Adjourn:** Approximately 8:35 p.m.