

**ANIMAL CONTROL ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS
PUBLIC MEETING COMMENTS
6-27-07 6:30 – 7:30 P.M.**

The meeting began at 6:30 p.m. 14 people attended. Commissioner Córdova welcomed the attendees. Proposed changes were reviewed by Animal Control staff.

The livestock section was said to be a good section. It was suggested the County start a fund to pay for boarding horses in the event of an emergency or disaster situation. The suggested fund amount is \$100,000 which could collect interest. It was mentioned that Animal Control should not give livestock to the Livestock Board. The suggestion was made to create a foster parents system for horses, with a provision that if a horse dies while being cared for by a foster parent, the owner or County would pay for disposal of the horse.

Section 6-37 (a)(3) Impounding animals – One individual suggested taking out the language “cannot be sold” and using the language “is not adoptable.” Another person stated there should be no sales to killers of livestock and talked about the market in Mexico.

Article IV. PERMITS REQUIRED: It was suggested that rescue organizations should be recognized for the permit process and that the County might follow what the City does in this instance.

Section 6-40. Discussion was held about the disconnect between the intact permit requirement of the County (after the first impoundment), the intact permit requirement of the City (before any impoundment or the dog or cat must be sterilized upon reclaim), and the statement was made that this needs to be fixed.

Section 6-42 Animals biting persons. An individual suggested “three strikes, not two” in the area where it states that it is unlawful for a person to keep an animal known to have bitten any person on two separate incidents. It was recommended to add “extenuating circumstances” and adding “depth of bite” as opposed to just a playful nip that does not break the skin.

Section 6-32 – Animal license. Three individuals stated that microchipping should be highly recommended but not mandatory for licensing animals. Much discussion was held about microchipping. One person stated that her dogs never get out and doesn’t want mandatory microchipping. Another one suggested getting a microchip program in place that would cost only \$5, before requiring microchipping pets. Discussion also occurred about tattoos for pet identification.

The proposed fee structure was discussed. One suggestion was to raise the unsterilized pet license fee to \$100, but discussion quickly opposed that idea. Then it was suggested that the unsterilized fee not be \$20 annual as proposed, but \$25. Another fee suggestion

was to decrease the owner surrender fee to \$50 from the proposed \$100 fee. The fee for large livestock daily boarding was suggested at \$10, not the \$8 proposed. It was suggested that before implementation of the new fees, a grace period be allowed for compliance and during that grace period, lots of advertisement about the new rates should occur.

Discussion moved back to Section 6-45 Restraint of animals. The three people who were animal advocates from other jurisdictions spoke at length about their belief that chaining is cruel. The advocates stated that enclosure or a dog run is fine, but chaining should be prohibited. The South Valley residents present returned the argument that chaining is not necessarily cruel, that animals loose in a yard can become mean or aggressive, depending on the owner, and that not all chained animals are aggressive or mean. They talked about the necessity of chaining for animals who have escaped through fences, walls, or gates. It was mentioned that Representative Miguel Garcia passed a Memorial for a study on animal chaining in New Mexico. Commissioner Córdova stated that she believes long chains are adequate and recommends animal control spell out conditions under which chaining should be done; specify chaining conditions; perhaps recommend a time limit.

The meeting ended at 7:45 p.m. People were thanked for attending and encouraged to write comments on public comment sheets or the County web page comment area if they did not say all they wanted during the meeting.