

ANIMAL ISSUES MOVEMENT

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Deputy: Adam R. Lid

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Los Angeles City Council
Personnel & Animal Welfare Committee
200 N. Spring Street – City Hall
Los Angeles CA 90012

CF #13-0345 – OPPOSITION TO ELIMINATING GRAVEYARD SHIFT AT LOS ANGELES CITY ANIMAL SHELTERS

The following briefly addresses some of the issues cited by LAAS GM Brenda Barnette in her justification for eliminating Animal Care Technicians (ACT) on the graveyard shift at Los Angeles Animal Shelters.

Ms. Barnette claims that the following shelters have no kennel workers at night but fails to address what other staffing might be maintained. NOT ONE of the agencies she cited leaves their facility without professional animal care at night, except Irvine, which is very small and connected to Irvine Police Department. All but L.A. County maintain only one shelter facility. This information was deemed from personal calls to the shelters:

- Long Beach Animal Services: 24-hours/7 days ACO in the field/shelter (15,000 annual population)
- Orange County: ACO 24 hours assigned to shelter
- Long Beach: ACO on duty 24 hours
- SEAACA (Downey): ACO 24 hours
- Pasadena Humane: ACO 24-hours a day
- Riverside County: ACO's on call 24-hours, often at shelter during night
- Irvine: Part of the police department – all officers are under Irvine PD (1 animal per kennel – only 42 dogs/46 cats as of 4/2/13)
- Los Angeles County – has ACO and Kennel Attendants in shelters 24 hours
- Inland Valley Humane Society (Pomona) – ACO on call 24 hours and dispatcher (ACO) in shelter 24 hours

Ms. Barnette has stated that \$256,000 a year will be paid for private security guards for the shelters. With the additional six (6) positions she was just authorized, there is no reason that at least five (5) entry-level ACT's cannot be hired to allow 24-hour staffing of our shelters. (According to the Controller's 2012 list, the average burdened salary of an ACT is around \$54,000/year.)

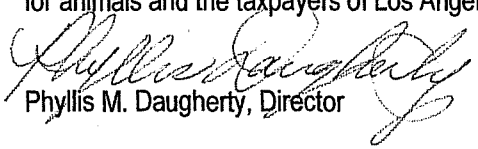
Here are also two alternatives that could be used to lower the need for staffing and yet provide 24 hour services to the public and the animals: (1) Maintain only two (2) ACT's at each shelter on graveyard and deploy the remainder of the 15 – 22 that Ms. Barnette mentions to day/swing shift (plus the six new positions); and/or close shelters one additional day a week on a rotating basis, retaining only redemption and animal acceptance services to the public (that means owners can search and redeem a lost animal or animals may be surrendered on those days.) The rotating second day would provide five open shelters and one closed every day of the week.

Ms. Barnette opposes all efforts to maintain staffing at night. In the past, she has shown very poor management judgment in placing highly paid Captains on administrative leave for months; arranging a publicized LAPD raid on the shelters; and misrepresenting that she had the first No-Kill Month in City history, while her stats do not support this claim. The proposed staffing change is one more example of her inexperience and failure to provide leadership and innovative thinking in management.

Anyone testifying on this issue should be asked for his/her background in animal sheltering and interaction with LA City shelters on a 24-hour basis. This decision should not be based on a public "popularity contest," decided by Mr. Barnette's best friends.

Los Angeles is a 24-hour city—in contrast to the other jurisdictions listed by Ms. Barnette. The public pays for and the stray, injured and homeless animals of this city need and deserve 24-hour attention, both in the shelters and in the street.

Animal Issues Movement urges you to disapprove this plan by Ms. Barnette and require her to develop humane and efficient programs for animals and the taxpayers of Los Angeles commensurate with her \$203,000 salary per year that provide necessary 24-hour care.


Phyllis M. Daugherty, Director