



April 19, 2021

Re: New General Manager of the Animal Services Department; VANC Resolution Passed Unanimously at Meeting on April 8, 2021

Mayor Eric Garcetti
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012
mayor.helpdesk@lacity.org

Dear Mayor Garcetti:

Hi, Eric, I hope everything is going well with you.

At its monthly meeting on April 8, 2021, VANC unanimously passed the following resolution:

The Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils (VANC), representing all 34 Neighborhood Councils in the San Fernando Valley, requests that Mayor Garcetti meet by Zoom with representatives of the relevant stakeholders – Animal Rescue Organizations, Animal Services Department Volunteers, Animal Activists, and Neighborhood Councils – prior to naming a new General Manager of the Animal Services Department, so that the best candidate can be selected for the position.

The background of this resolution is as follows:

As you know, the current General Manager of the Los Angeles Animal Services (LAAS) Department has announced her retirement as General Manager, effective in early May 2021. The new General Manager will be appointed by the Mayor and must then be confirmed by the City Council.

This is an extremely important position, which determines the lives, health, and safety of thousands of animals and of the people who care about them. L.A. Animal Services Volunteers, Rescue Organizations, and other stakeholders are essential to the operation of the Animal Services Department, more so than any other City department. The department simply could not operate effectively on its budget without the involvement of these stakeholders.

The concerned stakeholders of the City -- Animal Rescue Organizations, Animal Services Volunteers, Animal Activists, and Neighborhood Councils -- should have input into the decision of who the new General Manager will be. In order to choose a highly qualified candidate and assure a cooperative and productive environment, the stakeholders must have a real voice in choosing the next GM, rather than simply having someone thrust on them. Input from stakeholders must be solicited well before confirmation hearings at the Personnel, Audits, and Animal Welfare Committee of the City Council, before Mayor Garcetti names his selection; this should be a truly collaborative process.

The new General Manager should readily accept input from stakeholders regarding operation of the department. Volunteers should not be penalized or fired for making suggestions regarding the department, or even being critical of it. Please see: *Budget Advocates Call for Investigation of Animal Services Department Volunteer Program*: <https://citywatchla.com/index.php/budget-advocates/19044-budget-advocates-call-for-investigation-of-animal-services-department-volunteer-program>

The new GM should also be attuned to the will of the voters of the City and the Neighborhood Councils when it comes to issues involving animals. Please see: *What's Going on At the West Valley Animal Shelter—Will It Remain a City-Run Shelter?*: <https://citywatchla.com/index.php/cw/los-angeles/20457-what-s-going-on-at-the-west-valley-animal-shelter-will-it-remain-a-city-run-shelter> and <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=20-1114>

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jill Banks Barad, Chair and Founder of VANC

cc: Deputy Mayor Barbara Romero, Barbara.Romero@lacity.org
East Valley Area Representative Caroline Menjivar, Caroline.Menjivar@lacity.org
West Valley Area Representative Vahid Khorsand, Vahid.Khorsand@lacity.org