

## ANIMAL SERVICES OVERSIGHT?

As Lane County prepares to turn running its animal shelter over to a nonprofit agency — Greenhill Humane Society submitted the only proposal — local animal advocates remain concerned about keeping the county's focus on saving, not euthanizing, adoptable animals.

When it comes to euthanizing dogs and cats, “there needs to be an oversight committee and people from various rescues involved with that oversight committee,” Lisa Warnes of Save the Pets says.

Once heavily criticized for killing too many pets, Lane County Animal Services (LCAS) has responded to the No Kill movement by dramatically reducing the numbers of animals killed and increasing those adopted over the past five years. LCAS's advisory committee has a subgroup that meets specifically to give guidance on euthanasia.

Animal advocates such as the No Kill Community Coalition would like to see that committee continue, but Warnes says she hasn't seen any moves in that direction under the new proposal. Adding to the concerns is the recent news that Greenhill euthanized three dogs for behavioral issues.

Greenhill's executive director Cary Lieberman says, “Greenhill will maintain LCAS's ‘no kill’ policy, although that's not what they call it officially.” He says Greenhill's practices and policies are consistent with what most people consider “no kill.”

Lieberman says the dogs that were put down had all bitten people. A dog named Riley, who came from LCAS, rarely broke the skin, but “but he would bite hard enough to bruise.”

He says that Riley's resource guarding level was five on a six point Safety Assessment for Evaluating Rehoming (SAFER) scale. “We do not feel that it is safe to work with

level five or higher aggression in the shelter setting,” Lieberman says. Despite that, he says Greenhill “spent months trying to find a suitable home or rescue, and volunteers and staff worked with him daily.”

“I have a strong concern over it being just the vet and the trainer deciding who will be euthanized,” Warnes says. She says and other citizens concerned about Lane County's pets will be advocating for an oversight committee at upcoming City Council meetings.

Lieberman says, “the suggestion has been made to us by some people in the community that we should have an external review committee or two on top of what we already have in place, and we're exploring it.” He says Greenhill currently has an Animal Care Committee that meets monthly made up of volunteers, staff and veterinarians, which reports to the board of directors, as well as an annual external audit. He says he is open to suggestions for anything that improves the level of care and ability to find animals homes.

Warnes says that it seems splitting LCAS up due to county budget cuts was a done deal from the beginning so “all we can do is demand a really solid, fair, unbiased oversight committee.”

— Camilla Mortensen

## DOUBLE DOWN ON CAPSTONE APPEALS

The certainty of a 1,200-student housing development at 13th and Olive is growing more questionable. Neighborhood advocate Paul Conte filed a second appeal of the proposed development by Capstone, an Alabama-based student housing developer, May 29.

The latest appeal, to the Land Use Board of Appeals, contests the Multiple-Unit Property Tax Exemption (MUPT), the tax break that City Council awarded the project, on the basis that state law requires that the project comply, as submitted or as built, to Eugene's Metro Plan. Conte says the requirements of the Metro Plan were not

sufficiently investigated but were presented to the Eugene City Council as compliant.

Many aspects of the City Council's decision to grant the MUPT were not land use decisions, Conte says, “but when they decided that the proposed development is consistent with the Metro Plan,” that was a land use decision.

“The Metro Plan has very clear and important policies regarding the protection of the stability and livability of neighborhoods, and those were not addressed,” Conte says. He adds that the council could have been in compliance with state law based on an amendment councilor George Brown proposed, which would have mandated that the Capstone project be in compliance with the Metro Plan in the future rather than stating that it already is. Instead, the council voted to exclude that portion of Brown's resolution.

Conte says that City Council's perception of the MUPT approval as an extremely time-sensitive decision might have changed with sufficient investigation, especially if they'd discovered a late-in-the-game paperwork alteration that changed the anticipated completion date of phase one from fall 2013 to fall 2014.

On May 23, Conte filed an appeal of the council's decision to no longer claim ownership of a portion of 12th Alley. “These two appeals are based on some of the ways that the staff and City Council didn't follow the law and did so in a manner that was clearly to ram this thing through in minimal time and without a full community discussion as to our Metro Plan policies and what they require of a project like this,” Conte says.

— Shannon Finnell

## BIG MONEY FOR PUBLIC RECORDS?

Commissioner Rob Handy and his attorney Marianne Dugan have been told it will cost them \$3 million to get the public records they have asked for from Lane County, Dugan says. She has filed a suit on Handy's behalf in Lane County Circuit Court seeking an order compelling the county both to release the documents and to compensate for the costs and legal fees.

The public records request arose after Lane County called a May 3 emergency meeting to decide to release

## A MUSTANG ROUNDUP

Oregon's mustangs and their trainers are in Hines this weekend, as part of an adoption event that includes more than 500 animals in an exhibition of trained horses that, a mere three months earlier, were completely raw and utterly wild.

Whether or not you may define yourself as a horse-gal or guy, this weekend's equine-centric event will be an exciting spectacle, if you happen to be on Oregon's eastside. If you don't plan to drive over the Cascades but are interested in checking out some of Oregon's wild horses up for adoption, there is also currently an online adoption under way on the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) website through June 6.

The Mustang Heritage Foundation and the BLM host adoption events as a way to showcase the trainability of Oregon's mustangs. Tara Martinak of BLM's Burns District office says that the idea is “to try to put more horses into private care.”

“We actually get a lot of trainers that do get attached, we've had a lot of them get teary-eyed,” says Martinak of the professional men and women who dedicate three months' worth of training to turning a mustang into a domestic-ready horse.

Oregon's mustangs inhabit 17 public rangelands (termed by the BLM as “herd management areas”) in southeast Oregon. If you can picture Sisters at the top-left corner of an imagined box-shaped perimeter that reaches down to the California border, it's within that box that these management areas and the Oregon's mustangs exist.

According to a BLM report from April 2011, there is an estimated population of more than 2,100 horses on BLM and U.S. Forest Service rangeland in this state. The horses are periodically rounded up and some of them are removed from the land, which is a source of some controversy, often because of the method by which they are gathered — they are often hazed by helicopter.

A little closer to home, another adoption event that is also a competition is the Extreme Mustang Makeover, which will run from June 29 through July 1 at the Linn County Horse Center in Albany.

For more information and a complete event schedule, call the BLM Burns District Office at (541) 573-4400. Additional information about the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro program and online adoption is available online: <http://wkly.ws/qi>

— Stacey M. Hollis

A mustang captured from Oregon's Warm Springs herd is available for online adoption



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