

mal Welfare  
10-26-77

# County Requests Animal Shelter Investigation

Both the Humane Society of the United States and the American Humane Association will be asked to conduct "an impartial investigation" of the Santa Cruz County Animal Welfare Association and Animal Shelter, county supervisors decided on a 4-1 vote Tuesday.

Inclusion of the American Humane Association was specifically requested by shelter Manager Martin Velasquez who indicated he had concerns about the Humane Society of the United States in its ability to do "an impartial analysis."

Velasquez said the U.S. humane society previously had looked into the operation of the pound but never issued a report.

He said also that the district attorney had "investigated" in June and found nothing wrong.

Asked by Supervisor Cecil Smith if the district attorney had issued a report on the investigation, Velasquez said no report was issued.

Supervisor Marilyn Liddicoat opposed the motion for investigation, saying, "You just don't go around ordering people on the premises of an independent contractor; if you don't like what they do, you re-contract."

She said her brother, a veterinarian, refers to some people involved in animal humane so-

cieties as "humane-iacs, because they go so far in their love of animals."

Velasquez, citing the investigations of his program, called on the county board to issue a statement that "there are no improprieties."

While Supervisor Ed Borovatz agreed that complaints about animal pounds "are statewide and national," he said that an investigation would clear the air.

Liddicoat asked the manager if he had seen a letter of complaint about the pound's methods of "euthanization" (killing).

Velasquez answered, "I have yet to find an easy manner, or esthetic manner, to do that." He said that with cats it is especially "not esthetically pleasing."

Smith congratulated Velasquez on an improved operation of the pound, saying it now had more patrol coverage and that he as a representative of the Pajaro-Watsonville district was receiving fewer complaints.

However, Supervisor Gary Patton said he was now receiving more complaints from Seaside District residents. At which point, Santa Cruz resident Hilda Lans spoke from the podium, "There are no complaints, except from Mr. Patton and maybe others who would like the operation taken over by the county."

Patton said he agreed with Borovatz and Velasquez that an investigation would clear the air on whether there are "improprieties."

Velasquez admitted the level of service was inadequate, but that it was all the board could fund, and all that local taxpayers appeared willing to support.

The contract costs about \$250,000 a year, the board pointed out.

The manager said that to do the full job of animal control, the service "should be doubled or tripled."

Borovatz asked him, "Should we terminate the program as ineffective?"

Velasquez answered, "No, we're holding our own."

At the beginning of the discussion, the board clarified that the Humane Society of the United States had no connection with the local Humane Society which had bid on the animal control contract in June.

Patton made an initial motion calling for a full investigation, but it failed to get a second resulting in his saying, "I'm going to get out of the dog business."

A following motion by Supervisor Phil Baldwin to request the two organizations to investigate at no cost to the county won the 4-1 vote.

Liddicoat said she also opposed the decision because the "recommendations from the humane society will be far more costly" than the present contract.

## Socialist Conference Due In SC

The Socialist Party of California has scheduled its 1978 convention in Santa Cruz, party leaders announced Tuesday, with the intent of the convention to nominate local candidates.

"Two counties are seen as possible 'win' counties by the state socialists in local elections. They are Santa Cruz County and Shasta County," Michael Zaharakis, local socialist leader said.

Zaharakis said the socialists will try to get party nominees elected to school boards and "as a test of countywide strength, we may nominate a candidate for county clerk of Santa Cruz County."

He said the socialists did not support the recall attempt against three county supervisors here as it "is reactionary" and therefore would not put up candidates on a recall election.

Zaharakis would not state whether the party plans to nominate for the upcoming supervisorial election in the Seaside district.

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