



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Steve Kozachik
Ward 6 Council Member
(520) 791-4601
Ward6@tucsonaz.gov

Date: 09/20/2012
TDD: 791-2639

On Monday, September 17th, Tom Taylor, General Manager of Tucson Greyhound Park announced his intention to slowly turn the track into an all-male dog racing venue. He further committed to ceasing the administration of anabolic steroids into the female dogs. While those are important first steps in transforming the track from how it has historically operated, it also raises concerns.

What is paramount is the safety of the dogs. A very specific plan must be identified by Mr. Taylor by which the females are segregated as they are taken off from steroids. These are animals that have been given male hormones over time with the expressed intent of suppressing estrus. As soon as that is stopped, they will come into heat. The potential for aggressive behavior and injury in the kennels if the dogs are not separated by sex prior to cessation of the injections is real and predictable.

Track management and ownership must identify a clear path to either segregating the animals prior to taking them off from the hormones, or identifying an acceptable adoption alternative that will get the dogs into loving homes. We all recall the disappearance of 140 greyhounds from the track back in 2005-2006. The current visibility of the track and its issues with respect to steroids, licensing and the track racing conditions is a safeguard against a repeat of that occurrence.

I have confirmed, and Mr. Taylor has been advised that Greyhound Protection League has offered to work with TGP kennel operators to organize moving the female and/or retired male greyhounds to adoption groups. Greyhound Protection League successfully implemented such a rescue plan in Guam back in 2006. That program involved nearly 200 animals. The League has also offered to share in the expenses of transporting the dogs to adoption groups. To that end, they have already begun contacting over 40 Western States adoption groups and other interested parties.

Mr. Taylor and track ownership have maintained that the safety and health of the animals is their primary concern. They now have an opportunity to act affirmatively, either through segregation and cessation of injections under the close care of veterinarians, by accepting the offer of Greyhound Protection League and immediately beginning the process of adopting out the dogs in a very public and transparent manner, or some combination of the two.

The community is watching with great interest in how TGP responds.

###