



# Forsyth County Animal Control Advisory Board

Annual Report  
May 2008

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## **I. Background**

The Forsyth County Animal Control Advisory Board is an eleven (11)-member board identified in Forsyth County Code Chapter 6, Sec. 6-5 Animal Control Advisory Board. The Advisory Board makes recommendations on animal control codes, policies and programs related to animals. Members are appointed by the Board of County Commissioners pursuant to identified interest categories. The advisory board conducts regular public meetings and prepares an annual report for the Board of County Commissioners. Pursuant to FCC Chapter 6, Sec. 6-5 the Advisory Board has adopted By-Laws governing the purpose, duties, operations and membership subject to the approval of the County Manager.

Information regarding the Advisory Board is available to the public as a section of the Department of Animal Control web-site. The web site is utilized to provide information regarding advisory board function, membership, meetings, agendas, meeting minutes, reports and as one of several methods for the public to provide input on issues under consideration.

The Animal Control Advisory Board Public Meeting is held at 6:00 p.m. at the Department of Animal Control. This meeting acts as a forum to solicit public opinion on ordinances, services, and policy. This function also provides information on services, other than those of the Animal Control Department, available within the community. Annual reports then provide a foundation for strategic planning through the creation of a series of Five Year Plans.

## II. Membership and Representation

<u>Categories</u>	<u>Member</u>
Two (2) at large members	<b>Franklin M. Cromer Joe Redman</b>
A representative of the Forsyth County Veterinarian Association	<b>Dr. Timothy Strickland, DVM</b>
Two (2) members affiliated with animal welfare organizations	<b>Jennifer Tierney Lori Sears</b>
A member who is the owner of a fertile hunting dog	<b>Thurman Dillon</b>
A member who is affiliated with a purebred animal registry	<b>Julie Magness</b>
A member who does not own a companion animal	<b>Jerry Canady</b>
A member who owns an animal other than a dog or cat	<b>Sandy Mayberry</b>
A representative of the Health Department	<b>Larry Bunn</b>
A representative of a municipality receiving animal control services	<b>D. Ritchie Brooks</b>
Animal Control Director <i>Ex-Officio non-voting member</i>	<b>Tim Jennings</b>

### **III. 2007-2008 Work Plan**

The Advisory Board has adopted a multi-tracked work plan to provide organization and focus to its meetings. The program tracks may be identified as:

1. Program Development - the advisory board receiving presentations from individuals, staff and organizations regarding current community resources and service gaps.
2. Code Issues - Discussion and review of County Code and potential amendments.

#### **Program Development Issues**

##### **Presentation**

Friends of the Shelter  
FCAC Community Care Program & Foster Homes

##### **Feral Cats**

Development of Local Trap Neuter Return  
Partnership Program

##### **Public Outreach**

The advisory board adopted a policy of conducting extensive public outreach before making formal recommendations on code issues to the Board of County Commissioners. A meeting is dedicated to public comment on code issues under discussion and outreach include:

- Paid ads in addition to PSA notifications;
- Direct notification to interest organizations & individuals;
- Web page postings of proposed codes;
- Dedicated email & telephone voicemail number for comment.

##### **Animal Shelter Surgical Suite**

Development of policy and procedure for determining shelter animals as candidates for medical procedures.

#### **Code Issues**

Public Outreach meetings have been conducted regarding the following proposed code amendments.

##### **Dangerous Dog - Breed Specific Codes**

*Presentations:*

*Local Impacts  
National and regional trends  
Sample codes*

##### **Sec. 6-1. Definitions.**

*Dangerous Dog*

##### **Sec. 6-46. Redemption by owner generally.**

Forsyth County maintains a longer holding period for stray animals than state statute mandate.

##### **Sec. 6-47. Destruction or adoption of unredeemed animal generally.**

Language limits ability to manage shelter toward desired performance goals by mandating biting animals may not be put up for adoption. Not all breaks to skin are related to aggressive behavior.

##### **Sec. 6-50. Destruction of wounded or diseased animals.**

A 5 day hold for feral animals may be inhumane.

##### **Sec. 6-55. Violations and penalties.**

Regarding licensing violations only. An automatic penalty waiver if compliance within a specific period.

## Program Development Issues

### **Animal Shelter Signage**

The need for directional signage to the shelter.

### **Differential Licensing**

Program effectiveness encouraging spay/neuter.

### **Animal Control Special Programs**

Enhanced Patrol

Outreach/Events

CART

Advisory Board

Shelter Volunteers

Shelter Operations Team

State Associations

### **Animal Adoption & Rescue Foundation**

Foster homes and resources.

FCAC Community Care Program.

## Code Issues

### **Restraint of dogs**

Permanent tethering and associated behavior issues.

### **Residential Zoning**

Limitation on numbers of pets per premise.

## **Hearing Tribunal**

A sub-committee of the Advisory Board hears appeals of civil citations and abatement orders, and provides a written recommendation regarding final disposition of the appeal to the department Director. The Director of Animal Control then issues a final determination letter.

- The hearing tribunal is held every two months at 1:30 PM at the Forsyth County Animal Shelter
- In 2007 the Hearing Tribunal conducted fourteen (14) hearings.

#### IV. STATISTICAL REPORT 2007

Program	2007 YTD Jan. – Dec.		2006 YTD Jan. – Dec.		
<b><u>Custody &amp; Care</u></b>					
Animals Received		% shelter pop.		% shelter pop.	% CHG 06-07
Owner Release	2,721		3,571		
Citizen Strays	1,847		1,770		
ACO Impound	<u>3,518</u>		<u>3,054</u>		
Total Received	8,086		8,395		- 4%
Redemptions	556	7%	483	6%	+ 15%
Adoptions :					
Shelter	1,109		1,057		
Transfers	<u>217</u>		<u>238</u>		
Total Adoptions	1,326	16%	1,295	15%	+ 2%
Euthanasia					
Space Need	886		789		
Health-Medical	3,504		3,038		
Behavioral	<u>1,758</u>		<u>2,695</u>		
Total Euthanasia	6,148	76%	6,522	78%	- 6%
<b><u>Patrol</u></b>					
Service Response/ Complaints	13,751		14,417		- 5%
Investigations	3,038		2,964		+ 2%
Citations - <i>Individuals</i>	935		1,071		- 13%
Cited Violations	1,472		2,124		- 31%
<b><u>Administration</u></b>					
	YTD Jan-Dec 2007		YTD Jan - DEC. 2006		
Pet Licenses	<u>Transactions</u>	<u>Fees</u>	<u>Transactions</u>	<u>Fees</u>	
Altered Dog	20,544		19,897		
Un-Altered Dog	3,962		3,684		
Hunting dogs	537		554		
Show	5		11		
Assistance	0		16		
Non-profit	93				
<b>Total Dog</b>	<b>25,236</b>	\$197,687	<b>24,162</b>	\$191,390	# +4% \$ +3%
Altered Cat	10,188		8,202		
Unaltered Cat	336		243		
Non-profit	60				
<b>Total Cat</b>	<b>10,584</b>	\$56,687	<b>8,445</b>	\$45,178	# +25% \$ +25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,236</b>		<b>32,607</b>	\$236,568	
Suspense Status	300	\$2,130	300	\$2,176	
<b>Total Transactions</b>	<b>36,120</b>	<b>\$256,399</b>	<b>32,907</b>	<b>\$238,744</b>	# +10% \$ +7%

## Work-Plan Summary

### A) Code Amendments

June 21, 2007 The Advisory Board conducted a public meeting to solicit public feedback on the following proposed code amendments:

#### **Sec. 6-46. Redemption by owner generally.**

Amend the stray hold period to the state standard of 72 hours for unidentified animals.

#### **Sec. 6-47. Destruction or adoption of unredeemed animal generally.**

Allow for discretion to be utilized when evaluating biting animals for placement in the adoption program.

#### **Sec. 6-50. Destruction of wounded or diseased animals.**

The addition of feral animals to sick/injured subject to euthanasia before stray hold period expires.

#### **Sec. 6-55. Violations and penalties.**

Provide for an administrative waiver of licensing civil penalties if compliance is gained within 30 days.

Public feedback regarding proposed code amendments:

- Public Comment: 2
- Telephone contacts: 11
- Written submission: 11
- Newspaper Editorial 1

### B) Trap Neuter Return – A Feral Cat Control partnership program

Following a presentation by Forgotten Felines of Forsyth the Advisory Board recommended FCAC staff and Forgotten Felines of Forsyth research and developed a proposal for a volunteer based feral/stray cat control program.

### C) Breed Specific Codes – Dangerous Dogs

Proposed Amendment FCC Chapter 6 – New Article III DANGEROUS DOGS

The advisory board has reviewed breed specific issues and ordinances including an ordinance draft establishing a new section to the County Code: FCC Chapter 6 – New Article III DANGEROUS DOGS

February 21, 2008 a public meeting was held for general discussion of breed specific legislation. The comment may be summarized as:

None of the members of the Animal Control Advisory Board supported the banning of specific breeds of dogs. Generally, members indicated support for tougher penalties to hold owners accountable for the actions of their animals.

Approximately 60 citizens indicated they were interested in providing public comment. 12 people offered public comment as representatives of other citizens with similar comment. All public comment was unanimous not in support of breed specific legislation. Six of the speakers are favor of holding the owner more responsible rather than punish the dogs. 3 supported a Dangerous Dog law as preferable to breed specific restrictions. 3 speakers were in favor of higher penalties to the owners. There were general suggestions about obedience classes for Dangerous Dog violations.

April 17, 2008 The Advisory Board conducted a public meeting to solicit public feedback on a draft Dangerous Dog ordinance:

**Article VIII Dangerous Dogs.**

Public feedback regarding proposed Dangerous Dog ordinance:

- Public Comment: 5
- Telephone contacts: 1
- Written submission: 2

**D) Public Safety - Animal Welfare**

The advisory board will continue to review the impact of aggressive dogs upon public safety and community livability. Analysis will be made of the causes of dog aggression including, but not limited to, studies showing that tethering as a primary means of confinement may lead to aggressive behavior and the effects of spaying and neutering as a means of curtailing dog aggression.

**VI. Recommendations**

**A)** The Animal Control Advisory Board recommends the Board of County Commissioners adopt the code amendments to FCC Chapter 6 Animals:

Sec. 6-46. Redemption by owner generally.

Amend the stray hold period to the state standard of 72 hours for unidentified, unregistered animals. Maintain 120 hour hold for licensed animals.

Sec. 6-47. Destruction or adoption of unredeemed animal generally.

Allow for discretion to be utilized when evaluating biting animals for placement in the adoption program.

Sec. 6-50. Destruction of wounded or diseased animals.

The addition of feral animals to sick injured subject to euthanasia before stray hold period expires.

Sec. 6-55. Violations and penalties.

Provide for an administrative waiver of licensing civil penalties if compliance is gained within 30 days.

Article III Dangerous Dogs

Addresses public safety concerns through specific restriction, and higher penalties, for owners of dogs that engage in aggressive behavior.

**B)** The Animal Control Advisory Board recommends the Board of County Commissioners favorably consider the Department of Animal Control Alternative Service Proposals in the 2008-2009 budget proposal. The proposals address resource allocation needed to maintain minimum effective service levels and enhance pro-active programs such as Differential Licensing.