



Forsyth County
Animal Control Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes
April 17, 2008

Julie Magness, Chair
Lori Sears, Vice-Chair
Joe Redman
Mitch Cromer
Dr. Tim Strickland
Jennifer Tierney
Thurman Dillon
Jerry Canady
Sandy Mayberry
Larry Bunn
D. Ritchie Brooks

Members Present:

Larry Bunn
Jennifer Tierney
Thurman Dillon
Dr. Strickland
Sandy Mayberry
Joe Redman
Lori Sears
Julie Magness
Ritchie Brooks

Staff Present:

Tim Jennings
Lt John Day
Liz Jacobson
Kelly Nash
Judy Blevins

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Julie Magness at 6:07 P.M.

- *Minutes*

Tim Jennings advised that Mitch Cromer had a concern in reference to the Dangerous Dog Draft regarding tethering and sterilization. Tim said he advised Mitch that he said he would mention this concern if Mitch could not make the meeting, but understood the tethering and mandatory spay/neuter issues would be separate from the draft Dangerous Dog ordinance, and will be kept on the work plan for future discussion. Motion was made to accept the minutes by Sandy Mayberry. Dr Strickland and Lori Sears both seconded the motion.

Presentation - AARF

The AARF presentation was made by Janice Freeman. Janice Freeman advised the board that AARF has been in existence since 1995 as a non-profit organization. They operate on donations only. The executive director is Rebecca Kennedy. Accomplishments for the past year included hiring of part-time director and rent of a house on Harvey Street. They have adopted out 47 dogs and approximately 70 cats for this year to date. They offer three adoption fairs both at the rented property and at PetSmart on Hanes Mill Road. Tim stated that AARF has had a great working relationship with Animal Control since the beginning of the CCP program. They have taken in animals with special needs most recently a scalded cat and a cat that had multiple stab wounds. Tim also stated that AARF has been a great resource to the department.

Presentation – Outreach Summary

Tim stated that the dangerous dog ordinance was drafted last year after the annual report. Although the county has many references to dangerous dogs there is not currently a definition in the county code of a dangerous dog. With this new title of dangerous dog the authority currently exists within the county code to apply preventative measures and monetary penalties. If the code is adopted and a dog is labeled dangerous it will cost \$250 to redeem and penalties are \$500 for future violations. If appealed, the Advisory Board does have the final determination of the outcome of the appeal. The public was made aware of the draft and advisory board meeting via the animal control website, a newspaper advertisement on 4-11-08, copies of the draft made available at the shelter, news stories on television and radio, as well as interviews on television and radio.

Public Comment – Dangerous Dog Ordinance

James Hart advised the board that German Shepherds are not a dangerous breed and that the breed has often been misunderstood. Richard Willis inquired about where to send comments in reference to the dangerous dog draft. Tim advised e-mail or phone number. Dawn Floyd handed out literature about a variety of websites regarding the chaining and tethering of dogs. Would like the board to focus on no chaining and no tethering within the community. Donna Toney advised the board that her Pomeranian had been attacked and wished to know how, with continued issues with the attacking dog, to have the dog labeled as a dangerous dog. Lt. Day to meet with her after the meeting. Patricia Habib stated that she is concerned the dangerous dog draft will become breed specific legislation as she does not feel that it is clear in definition. Tim Jennings stated that the responsibility lays with the owner not the pet. Decisions are not made on breed or opinions, staff will react differently in different situations. Extra steps for pet owners who have large dogs need to be taken. We are judging the owner not the dog. Everything listed within the draft is already in place; the draft puts together clear terminology for the department to utilize with aggressive behavior in animals.

Old Business

Trap Neuter Release – Tim advised the board that in the 2008-2009 budget funding has been requested to help launch the feral cat assistance program. Will be meeting with Forgotten Felines of Forsyth the next day to work towards a memo of understanding and we will carry over into the next meeting what has been worked out. The North Carolina Animal Federation is conducting a joint conference with the South Carolina Animal Care and Control Association this fall. Tim Jennings has been asked to speak at this conference regarding TNR programs and working with Feral Cat groups.

Annual Report Draft – Tim reported that the report has been updated from comments made at the last meeting. Items added include a recommendation of support for a Dangerous Dog code, a reduction in stray hold from 120 to 72 hours for unlicensed animals, along with additional presentations made to the board. Larry Bunn made a motion to include the dangerous dog code within the annual report as a recommended code amendment and Jennifer Tierney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Larry Bunn brought up differences in acts of aggression caused by abuse versus a Dangerous Dog and would like further discussion concerning the causes of aggressive tendencies.

Tim advised he could add this language to the annual report, and could be presented to the commissioners or he could present another draft report for the board consideration next month.

A motion was made by Lori Sears to approve the current annual report draft with the changes suggested by Larry Bunn and that the boards work on addressing aggressive dogs is a work in progress. The issues associated with dog aggression are varied and require study. Jennifer Tierney seconded. There was general discussion amongst the board discussing the pros and cons of fencing versus tethering and the economic difficulties that these issues can cause. Tim advised he would gather information from different communities concerning tethering and present this information at the next meeting. It was requested that a representative of Dogs Deserve Better come speak to the board. Lori Sears made a motion to invite a guest speaker. Ritchie Brooks seconded, motion was opposed by Thurman Dillon.

New Business

Tim advised that a sign would be posted on Shattalon Drive next week. It is a 24x36 green and white sign. Larry Bunn is to get a quote and designs on the new sign to potentially be put on the front lawn near University Parkway.

Tim advised rabies clinic is April 26, 2008 from 10-3 in the cattle barn at the fairgrounds. Volunteers needed.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 PM. The next meeting will be held May 15th, 2008