



Forsyth County
Animal Control Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes
July 17, 2008

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

Members Present:

Julie Magness
Lori Sears
Jennifer Tierney
Thurman Dillon
Joe Redman
Ritchie Brooks
Charles Cahill
Mitch Cromer

Staff Present:

Tim Jennings
Liz Jacobson
Kelly Nash
Matt Smith
John Day

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Julie Magness at 6:06 P.M. The board welcomed Charles Cahill, newly appointed advisory board member representing the Department of Public Health.

- *Minutes.*

A motion was made by Lori Sears and seconded by Jennifer Tierney to approve the minutes. Thurman Dillon had concerns and requested an amendment to the May 15th minutes stating that in general discussion concerning tethering several board members did not agree with the materials presented. A motion was made to approve the minutes by Thurman Dillon and seconded by Mitch Cromer. Motion was passed with no opposed.

Public Comment

There was no public comment

Presentation

- *Fur-Ever Friends*

The Fur-Ever Friends organization has asked for their presentation to be rescheduled to the September meeting.

New Business

- *Tethering code*

Tim stated that the department of Animal Control is continuing research on this topic and has been in contact with other jurisdictions. Currently data on file does not reflect how the pets were primarily contained. This year we have had approximately one thousand calls in regards to aggression and over three hundred calls of dog bites. Tim pointed out that going through these calls would not provide an accurate representation of the total situation. Lori Sears suggested adding this information to future reports. Tim agreed that this could be done. There was general discussion in regards to concerns over budget issues and enforcement feasibility of proposed ordinance amendments concerning tethering. Thurman Dillon made a motion to shelve this issue for two years. Joe Redman seconded the motion. There was further discussion among board members concerning the studies done by the CDC, AMVA and the USDA concerning the issues of aggression, biting, neglect and tethering. The accuracy of these studies was questioned by some members of the board. Julie Magness expressed concerns over the staff shortage and does not agree that shelving this issue for the two years as motioned would be beneficial. Jennifer Tierney suggested that this issue not be put

off for two years and instead data should be gathered as soon as possible as time allows. Previous motion presented by Thurman Dillon was not passed with three in favor and four opposed. Lieutenant Day brought up state codes that applied towards tethering of livestock such as goats, horses and cattle. There are no general codes restricting tethering, however it is not recommended. This issue arose from a request from the commissioners at a previous meeting. Tim stated that the issue of tethering is broader than public safety, as it often is involved in cases of neglect, and that it may be thought of as being proactive and providing a community guideline for responsible pet ownership.

- *Appeals Tribunal*

The schedule for the August appeal hearings was provided. Members who volunteered to serve were Lori Sears, Charles Cahill, and Mitch Cromer. Next tribunal hearing is August 21st, 2008.

- *Statistics: YTD June 2008*

Matt Smith presented the number of received animals have not changed, the redemptions and adoptions are up, and euthanasia is down. The reduction in euthanasia is surprising considering a cock-fighting seizure of 64 roosters. Over all the statistics do not represent only dogs and cats. Euthanasia due to time and space has dropped and we have not seen the usual summer increase in intake. Matt reported to the board that we have added additional information to our intake registries to accommodate data requested. Lieutenant Day spoke to the board stating there is an increase of 4% of complaints. Most policing is citations in regard to licensing, non-compliance, neglect and preventative measures for dogs. The lieutenant asked that the board keep in mind the staff shortages of the last two summers through January of this year. Although we are catching up, the response to lower priority calls has been slower due to staff shortages. Tim Jennings advised the board that currently YTD there have been 22 confirmed cases of rabies. Last year at this time there were 13. Most of these animals are raccoons. As the number of cases increase so does the workload for officers. Tim Jennings advised the board of the new animal fighting hotline and the reward offered by the Fur-Ever Friends organization. Jennifer Tierney further explained Fur-Ever Friends partnered with HSUS a year ago in providing an animal fighting conference to forty officers over thirteen counties. To further their efforts in stopping animal fighting and cruelty they now offer a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those involved in animal fighting. An anonymous phone line has been established at animal control for this purpose.

Old Business

- *Feral Cat TNR Program*

Tim updated the board on the progress of the partnership program with Forgotten Felines of Forsyth. This program is beneficial to the animal control department as Forgotten Felines has a volunteer base that will allow us to refer these community feline issues to their organization. Twelve traps and 700 microchips were purchased for the furthering of this effort. This will help to identify colonies and will also assist us in gathering a database of recognized colonies so that we have access to potential problem areas regarding community feline issues. Tim Jennings advised the board that FCAC has been invited to conduct a workshop at the South Carolina Animal Care & Control / North Carolina Animal Federation conference to discuss government interaction with these kinds of animal welfare organizations due to the uniqueness of our approach to these community issues.

- *Annual Report*

Tim Jennings advised the board of the proposed schedule for the annual report and recommendations to be presented to the county commissioners.

- *Signage*

There has been no progression due to the financial issues the county is facing. As there will be no tax increases there will not be any extra funds in the budget and department heads have been asked to provide management strategies for cost reduction. All departments were asked to provide management strategies for sustainable budget reductions. Many departments lost positions. FCAC addressed this issue by proposing five strategies that were accepted. These areas include:

1. Subsidy of adoption microchips has been removed. A charge for the microchip is now included within the adoption fee. Adoption fees are still competitive within our community.

2. Reorganization of the Patrol Division: Upon a vacancy occurring in the Animal Control Officer classification, it will be filled with a non-commissioned Animal Care Officer dedicated to nuisance calls.
3. Funding for temporary help cut 50%.

Jennifer Tierney pointed out that cutting temporary help reduces canvassing and licensing and rabies data entry. These functions of the department will now require more staff time. These cut backs may appeal to volunteers interested in assisting in other ways. IE: events, canvassing, rabies clinics etc.

4. Quality of animal feed has been reduced. Nutro brand feed had previously been utilized by the department; currently Pedigree is in use.
5. Removal of NACA training. NACA training will be no longer be provided to every officer.

Jennifer Tierney suggested getting donor groups for fencing or signage to be able to move forward in these areas of interest.

Adjourn

Julie Magness motioned to adjourn the meeting, Mitch Cromer seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM. The next meeting will be held September 18th, 2008