



Forsyth County Animal Control Advisory Board

September 17, 2015

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Forsyth County Animal Control Department
5570 Sturmer Park Circle
Winston-Salem, NC 27105

Sandra Averitt, Chair
Tina Sanderford, Vice Chair
Sandra Clodfelter
Thurman Dillon
Molly Douglass, DVM
Priscilla Ivester
Janice Freeman
Chad Griffin
Priscilla Ivester
Koy Kincaid
Robert Lakey
Tracey Shifflette

Members Present

Sandra Averitt	Tina Sanderford
Sandra Clodfelter	Koy Kincaid
Thurman Dillon	Molly Douglas
Priscilla Ivester	Robert Lakey
Chad Griffin	Tracey Shifflette

Staff Present

Tim Jennings
Karin Burnette
Chad Miller
Scott Bird
David Morris

CALL TO ORDER

The Advisory Board meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Sandra Averitt. Janice Freeman provided notice she will be unable to attend.

- *Approval of meeting minutes July 16, 2015.*
MOTION: Sandra Averitt made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 16, 2015 meeting. The motion was seconded by Thurmond Dillon and approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

OLD BUSINESS

- **2015 Work-plan-** Special Programs:

Staff provided presentation and handout on the FCAC Special Programs that are providing assistance to the animals in the County's custody.

Stay Together Program- A free program, conducted and coordinated by volunteers. It is offered monthly to people who have adopted a dog or cat from the Forsyth County Animal Shelter, as well as the general public. The goals of this program include helping pet owners with the transition and responsibility of bringing a new pet into their

home. The STP program also wishes to help owners deal with behavior issues that may lead them to consider giving up their beloved pet. The number of shelter pets returned to the shelter after their adoption in FY14 was 142 versus 116 in FY15 ~ **a 23% reduction**. Dog Help Team is the 2nd Tuesday of the month & the Cat Help Team is the 2nd Saturday of the month

Volunteers-

Lead Volunteers - Facilitates and/or coordinates programs and trains volunteers to assist with shelter animals and public education events.

Animal Care - Helps FCAC provide a clean, safe environment for the animals in our care. Socialize animals and provide basic training as part of our **SPOT (Shelter Pet Obedience Training)** program. Gives shelter pets the tools they need to thrive in their new homes.

Adoption Assistance - Helps shelter pets find the perfect home. A great way to spend your free time: helping a homeless animal find his/her forever home. Greeting the public, directing clients around the shelter, answering visitor questions, assisting the public with viewing animals.

Day Custodies - Trusted volunteers take adult shelter dogs out for a morning or afternoon. This enables the volunteer to provide great information about the dog from how they ride in cars to how they interact with strangers. It also reduces stress on the animals by letting them get out of the kennel for a while. Once the day custody is over, photos and writeups are posted on Facebook to help get the animals adopted.

Community Events & Adoption Fairs- Provides support for county-wide initiatives including The United Way Campaign and The Arts Council of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County's Annual Fundraising Campaign, and the Heartwalk. Also includes special events featuring FCAC Animals available for adoption such as YMCA Greeters & Events, Triad Dog Games & Project Pearl Adoption Fairs. Furever Friends volunteers conduct weekly Sunday Adoption Fairs at the Animal Shelter showcasing adoptable County pets.

Hiking Hounds- A Lead-volunteer coordinated program of twice monthly organized community walks with shelter dogs. Walks take place on the 2nd & 4th Sundays of each month with between 6-12 dogs usually going along each time. This program allows our adoptable shelter dogs to get the socialization and exercise they need in order to help them find a home. Volunteers who walk write reports on how the dogs behave, which helps potential adopters get some insight on how the dog behaves outside of the stressful shelter environment.

Project Pearl- is a non-profit organization partnered exclusively with Forsyth County Animal Control that works with local photographers to increase awareness of and lower the euthanasia rate of healthy, adoptable animals in Forsyth County. In FY 2010-11, FCAC adopted 1,175 animals vs. FY 2014-15 with 1,672 animals adopted. A 30% increase in adoptions.

"Lend a Lens"- The **Lend a Lens** Program began when two volunteers recognized a need to increase the awareness of adoptable animals at FCAC. They began working with professional photographers who volunteer their time to photograph and edit the photographs. A rotating group of 15 photographers donate tens of thousands of dollars twice a week to photograph 15-25 animals per session. Other volunteers help bathe and provide in-session help to the photographers. Since its inception in 2011, FCAC has seen a significant increase in both the number of volunteers at the shelter, as well as in adoptions.

Foster Homes - Project Pearl funds and coordinates a system of foster homes for animals in need of medical care, behavior assistance, or foster care pending case resolution. 2013-14 combined, Project Pearl spent \$84,737 directly on medical treatments / spay & neuter / and foster animal care. 2014: \$38,820 spent on 97 Medical Fosters: including 18 heartworm positive dogs, 19 surgical recipients and 60 other medical cases.

Sponsorships - Animals may be sponsored by individuals or organizations by contacting Project Pearl. There is no guarantee in regards to adoption outcome of individual animals. Project Pearl has provided reduced adoptions fees by

sponsoring on occasion all 1 year and older cats, black dogs, and special consideration for animals that would benefit from a spay / neuter procedure prior to being available in adoption program. The county does not lose any revenue as Project Pearl reimburses the county for all fees and it is good for increasing adoptions and public interest.

Priscilla Ivester mentions how easy the Sponsorship process is and wishes that more residents knew of this option.

- ***Shelter Definitions***

Tim Jennings referenced the draft for discussion of FCC Sec. 6-1 Definitions regarding *Abuse*. The issues to be addressed are needing a better definition of required shelter in Forsyth County. Referencing the underlined proposed additional language, amendments, and three (3) new sections. Key issues are regarding timeline to how often food and water are provided, extreme of weather referencing wind chill and humidity. Size or space of the structure, minimum space requirements and protection from direct sunlight. Solid surfaced floors that are sanitary and protect the animal from potential injury. Listing sample conditions that would not constitute adequate shelter. An air temperature range for animals kept outside. Secure transport for animals in truck beds or trailers such as be cross tied and secured.

Upon request Tim Jennings reviewed the process of how code change proposals or program recommendations occur and presented to the Commissioners. Process involves public outreach, scheduling public meetings, set up voicemail, website information with Q and A, press releases to media to get public opinion. The public response to proposals then becomes part of the Annual Report that documents the recommendations.

Priscilla Ivester asked if this is negligent abuse as opposed to willful abuse. She also requested clarification if amendments adopted then are they misdemeanors.

Tim Jennings advised the code provides for civil penalties such as fines and declarations, but also establishes that the violations can be addressed as misdemeanors. The officers work closely with the County Attorney, District Attorney and magistrates regarding the investigations and determination if the situation is criminal.

Robert Lakey asks for 24 hour timeframe explanation as he feels the language says that if an animal is not fed in 24 hours then people are going to be charged with a crime. Tim Jennings says the 24 hour timeframe is already written in abandonment code and the language was brought in from the section.

Chad Griffin brings up discussion on available officers on duty, and extra workload burden on officers. Officer David Morris describes how he would interpret the proposed code language and how it would be utilized. Officer Morris explains how “black and white” definitions are helpful, “gray” definitions are not.

Dr. Douglas believes the public needs specific guidelines on Definition of Abuse codes and laws.

MOTION: Tracey Shifflette proposed a motion to approve new language for proposed Shelter Definitions and initiate the process for amendment. Seconded by Koy Kincaid. The motion was approved by majority vote.

- ***Tribunal Determinations - documentation***

Discussion of the written recommendation of tribunal determinations to the Director of the department. It was decided to add 3 signature sections on the recommendation form so that Tribunal Members may show dissent by writing “Dissent” next to signature or a dissenters box for example can be created. Burden is on the State to provide sufficient evidence to uphold violation. The dismissal or waiving of the penalty may be used to encourage/reward people to comply with the code requirements. Recommendations can be made, i.e. *to uphold Potentially Dangerous Declaration as a warning, then if further violations happen goes straight to Dangerous Dog. Preventive Measures are discretionary on PDD declarations. Fines may also be reduced or waived if Appellant has made positive actions such as building of a fence.* The department history regarding a residence, or pet owner may be provided and included in Staff Reports to Tribunal members prior to case being heard. The County Attorney has recommended that information be provided during the penalty phase of the hearing.

MOTION: Molly Douglas requests the Person History Report be provided with Staff Reports to Tribunal members prior to cases being heard. Seconded by Thurmond Dillon. The motion was approved unanimously.

- ***Repeat Offender Education***

In this area there is no local government mediation departments for the tribunal to refer neighborhood issue to for resolution. There was discussion regarding the impact upon department resources if an organized program of training was recommended. More interest was shown for actions such as creating a listing of approved Triad dog trainers/behaviorists for 1st offenders.

Staff provided examples of what some tribunals are doing with contingency determinations. An example: *Provide documentation to FCAC within 90 days that animal has met with behaviorist/trainer and then possibility of 50% reduction in penalties.*

Boxes can be provided to Tribunal members on Determination forms for adding contingencies to be checked off if applicable.

- Stay Together Program.
- Attend Dog Training at approved provider.
- Send animal training brochure.

Staff expressed the opinion that many offenders may not be interested in contingencies and would just want to pay fines in full or attempt to ignore them.

NEW BUSINESS

- ***Hearing Tribunals***

October & December hearing calendar was presented. Changes to the schedule includes the following

Oct. 8th: Janice Freeman, Tracey Shifflette, Tina Sanderford

Oct. 15th: Chad Griffin, Robert Lakey, Sandra Clodfelter

Dec. 10th : Thurmond, Sandra Averitt, Robert Lakey

Discussion about sending Digital only Tribunal Hearing Staff Reports came up and it was determined that hard copies are still needed.

- ***Monthly Report***

FY August statistical report was reviewed. 24% increase in adoptions as compared to this time last year. 3% increase on animal intakes. Euthanasia up minimally. Licensing was down compared to August of last year, but may be due to the revised invoicing process with a household statement, resulting in amended due dates for all pets, versus the former process of individual invoices by pet. Discussion ensued on the policy of Forsyth County being a 2 tag county, meaning that a rabies certification tag and a County license is required. A 2 tag handout was created and is available to those that seek it.

ADJOURN

MOTION: With no further business, Sandra Averitt asked for a motion to adjourn. Koy Kincaid made the motion, which was seconded by Tina Sanderford. Sandra Averitt adjourned the meeting at 7:50 pm.