

DURHAM COUNTY ANIMAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of November 23, 2021

Present:

Committee Members: Marianne Bond, Jan Paul, Kari Linfors, Brian Mulligan, Joy Nolan, Amanda Gardner, Kate Bremser

Non-voting Members: Commissioner Heidi Carter, Mark Manning, Windy Pinner, Leah Santelli, Shafonda Davis

Community Members: Anissa Litwin, Sarah Reichman

Committee Counsel: Willie Darby

Next Regular Meeting: Tuesday, January 25, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

Item I - Introductory Remarks

The meeting was called to order by acting Chair, Jan Paul, at 7:03 pm. A role call was conducted there was a quorum.

Item II – Approval of Minutes

The September 28, 2021, meeting minutes were emailed to all members, prior to the meeting, and one correction of a date was noted. A motion was made by Marianne Bond to approve the amended minutes and the motion was seconded Brian Mulligan. The minutes were approved by the voting members.

Item III - Animal Services Report

Captain Manning noted that the Sheriff's Department was in the process of compiling new budget requests for the following fiscal year. Captain Manning said that they responded to 1,785 stray dogs, that 810 were located, 595 were impounded, and 215 were returned to the owners. He noted that this was a 36% increase of reunification over the prior year. Captain Manning also reported that 750 rabies vaccinations were administered in house and 59 rabies vouchers were handed out. He also noted that 1300 animals were vaccinated, and this was a 48% increase over last year. Captain Manning reported that the Healthy Animals initiative continues, and 122 citizens and animals benefited from the program.

The animal services average response time was 23 minutes which is an 11.5% decrease of over last year. Due to staffing and COVID, animal services conducted less community events of the prior year but increased their vaccinations by scheduling appointments.

For the month of October, Animal Services responded to 784 calls for service and that this month's average response time was 18 minutes. 51 animals were impounded, and 14 returned to owners. Captain Manning reported that there were two positive exposures of rabies, one involving a bat and one a skunk. 33 animals were surrendered

Item IV – Shelter Report

Director Davis reported that there is a difference in statistics between Animal Services and APS and that some reporting does not overlap. In October, 436 animals were brought into the shelter, 223 dogs, 179 cats, 34 others. Director Davis noted that there are a large amount of stray animal calls on the weekend and overnight and the animals do not have identification. She requested owners utilize identification tags with a good phone number so the owners can be contacted, and it is a necessity to reunite animals. She also mentioned that there are microchipping services at the shelter and that the information on file needs to be kept up to date.

APS continues their outreach programs and in October, 52 animals were spayed or neutered and 34 were microchipped. APS also helped 3 owners with redemption fees and they are delivering food to 15 families. The Food Pantry is also active, and 957 lbs. of food and 126 lbs. of litter were given out.

Director Davis said volunteers are coming back in and there is more donor support. From 7/1/21 to 10/31/21 1641 animals were brought into the shelter. 734 were dogs, 714 were cats and 193 other animals. During this same period, 736 animals were adopted, and this is an increase over the same period last year where there were 485 adopted. Director Davis also mentioned that the shelter was doing more rescue transfer.

Director Davis said the Tails at Twilight Gala event was very successful and brought in \$233,872. She also said that the shelter needs to raise \$800,000 a year to help fund normal activities. They are also in the process of hiring a new veterinarian. The prior veterinarian had been with the shelter for many years and the position is currently posted.

Item IV – Old Business

Correction/Modification of Committee Bylaws

Jan Paul emailed screen shots of a set of bylaws, from May 26, 2015, to all members prior to the meeting and Attorney Darby is attempting to locate the bylaws for the committee at the clerk's office. The bylaws will be discussed in further detail at the next meeting in January. All members should review and bring suggestions to that meeting.

TNVR

The committee voted unanimously, at an earlier meeting, that our county ordinances be amended to allow TNVR to occur in the county. The committee recommended that the ordinance be changed, and this did not include drafting and ordinance to be adopted. Jan Paul noted that the County Commissioners and staff would work through the process to choose and change language to update and adapt the ordinances.

Attorney Darby sent a copy of proposed changes to the ordinance that were recommendation from Kelsey Gilmore-Futeral from Best Friends Animal Society. The changes focused on adjusting the language so there were no conflicts with TNVR. Attorney Darby said the process for changing the ordinances typically includes two readings, a public hearing and reading and then a second reading for the vote.

Director Davis mentioned a few concerns with the proposed language and specifically with the definition of community cats. The language read like microchipped cats are not included in TNVR and Director Davis said that some organizations are microchipping cats and that should fall into the community cat definition. She suggested all ear tipped and sterilized cats be considered community cats whether microchipped or not.

The second item of concern is the language that says community cats shall be returned to the location where they were picked up. Director Davis suggested using the language, “may” which will allow cats for adoptions if possible. The other concern with the language is that it only allows for euthanasia for medical reasons when there may be other reasons, such as behavioral, that would need to be considered.

Lastly, working days for a hold was updated but the state only requires stray holds for 72 hours. Director Davis would like some consideration for a change while the rest of the ordinance is being updated.

Attorney Darby suggested bringing the revised ordinance, with suggestions from APS, back to the committee for review. Marianne Bond made a motion to allow the committee to incorporate the additional suggestions by Director Davis in the revision for review. The motion was seconded by Brian Mulligan and passed unanimously.

Committee Member Terms and Election of Officers

Jan Paul provided information on the committee member terms and what organization/governing body the members represented.

Amanda Gardner – is a Durham County District Attorney designee with an indefinite term
Kate Bremser – Veterinarian, Sheriff’s appointee, expired Jan of 2020 but advised she was reappointed and expires January 2023.

Shannon McCabe is a Sheriff’s appointee and is interested in being reappointed. Her term expires January 31, 2022.

Jan Paul expires is a Sherriff’s appointee and is willing to stay on. Her term expires January 31, 2022.

Marianne Bond is a Durham County Commission appointee, and her term expires January 31, 2022. She has submitted an online application to continue serving on the committee.

Brian Mulligan is a Durham County Commissioner appointee, and his term expires January 31, 2023.

Kari Linfors is an APS of Durham appointee, and her term expires January 31, 2023.

Richard Rose has retired from the Durham County Sheriff’s Office and Sergeant Pinner is currently assisting with his duties.

A nominating committee for AWAC appointments was formed and consists of Brian Mulligans, Amanda Gardner, and Kari Linfors. Attorney Darby suggested the nominating committee identify a chairperson, vice chair and secretary between now and the next meeting. A motion was made by Attorney Darby that the committee report back at the next meeting for an official vote for new officers. The motion was seconded by Brian Mulligans and passed unanimously.

Attorney Darby will check with the Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners to verify whose terms expire at the end of January and obtain information on appointments and election of officers.

Item V – New Business

“Dangerous Dog” Law and Ordinance

This item is on hold for a discussion at a later date.

Discussion of Electronic Leashes

Brian Mulligans was inquiring as to whether there was approval for the electronic leashes, and he did reach out to Captain Manning. Brian Mulligans does not feel that these types of leashes should not be approved. This discussion was also tabled until the January 25, 2022, meeting.

Item VI – Public Comments

None.

A motion was made by Amanda Gardner and seconded by Brian Mulligan to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 pm.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 25, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.