

DURHAM COUNTY
ANIMAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, September 27, 2022
7:00 PM

Present:

Committee Members: Jan Paul, Elizabeth Overcash, Kari Linfors, Amanda Gardner, Dr. Kate Bremser, Kari Linfors, Paul MacKinnon, Joy Nolan

Non-voting Members: Commissioner Heidi Carter, Mark Manning, Wendy Pinner, Leah Santelli, Shafonda Allen

Community Members: Sarah Reichman, Brian Mulligan, Jenny Campbell, Susan Teer

Committee Counsel: n/a

Item I – Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Jan Paul provided welcome remarks and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A roll call was taken and there was a quorum.

Item II - Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Kari Linfors seconded by Paul MacKinnon to approve the meeting minutes from the July 26, 2022, meeting. The minutes were approved.

Item III – Animal Services Report

Captain Manning provided the following highlights for the Animal Services Report. Officer responded to 863 calls in the month of August, which is an 11% increase over July. He said they are still short staffed and working with only eight deputies. A new recruit, Erica Rodriguez, is finishing BLET and should be a good fit for Animal Services.

Captain Manning said the average response time to calls were 19 minutes which is a quicker response than the month prior. Animal Services also attended nine community events and there were 167 reports taken in the month of August. He also said that 116 animals were impounded which included bats, birds, cats, dogs, pigs, etc. Twelve of these animals were returned to their owners from microchip information.

There were four animal bites where the animals were confined at the home for monitoring and seven animals were tested for rabies. All of those tested were negative. Captain Manning said although for next month, there was a skunk that tested positive in Rougemont.

Animal Services continues their Rabies vaccination clinic which is now 3 days a week, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. So far this year, they have vaccinated 106 animals.

During the month of August, Animal Services issued 65 warnings, 48 were verbal and 17 written. There were also four civil penalties which totaled \$700. There were 36 animal abuse cases investigated and they were all unfounded.

Kari Linfors asked a question about finding dogs afterhours. She said a few people had asked what they should do when a dog is found after hours. Kari said her friends were told they have to keep the dogs until APS is open the following morning. Captain Manning said that they only respond to emergency calls afterhours. They do not respond to stray dogs afterhours.

Item IV – Shelter Report

Director Allen reported that there had been a Covid outbreak at the shelter with ten positive cases. They are also now closed for one hour a day for lunch and there hasn't been any concerns from the community brought up about the closure. Director Allen also reported that they have been open a few Sundays recently for adoptions.

Director Allen said 445 animals were taken in, in August, which is up more than 100 animals over the same time period last year. She said 495 animals were taken in, in July, which is also up 100. Of these 62% are strays and a good majority are coming in, injured.

Director Allen said they are still over capacity with cats, which is 119, and they typically have 170 or more. She said that the animals are not bad and they are not euthanizing for space or time. They are now doubled in kennels in the front and rear. Director Allen said that last month, 332 animals adopted and 28 were transferred out. APS is making record number of placements.

Dr. Bishop is a contract vet that has come in to help and they have a part-time vet as well as employing SNAP one day a week. Director Allen said they have interviewed a full-time vet.

Director Allen said they are working to make space for animals and APS is covering the additional medical costs to assist with adoptions. They are also partnering with the shelter in Charlottesville Virginia and fourteen cats and one dog were recently driven up. Director Allen said the animal population is exploding and they are partnering with the Bissell Foundation to reduce adoption fees as well as partnering with Best Friends who has reimbursed APS for a couple of adoption events. Over the last two months APS has reduced adoption fees to \$25 for cats and \$50 for dogs. APS pays the rest of the fees for adoption back to the shelter.

APS is also microchipping for all adoptions and those animals redeemed and they were just awarded another grant. They have Spay/neutered 799 animals for the community and plan to do more dates this year. APS is utilizing Tyson Animal Hospital and SNAPP to assist and APS is also helping to pay redemption fees.

Director Allen spoke about the upcoming fundraising event, the Gala which is scheduled for November 19. This is one of their largest events and one of the biggest fundraisers which is held at the Washington Duke Inn.

Jenny Campbell asked how many veterinary technicians are at the shelter. Director Allen said that right now, they have four who can assist with medical care. They are receiving a lot of dogs who are malnourished and are on food programs.

Jan Paul asked about volunteers and if they were still assisting at the shelter. Director Allen said they still have volunteers coming in the shelter and have a large number work on events and community outreach as well as transporting animals to Safe Haven.

Kari Linfors asked about an update on the new building. A new shelter is in the work and about five years out. Commissioner Carter said they have a ten year capital plan and the shelter is in the portion for the next five years. Several million have been set aside for the new building. There are also significant repairs being done at the shelter.

Item V – Old Business

Status of TNVR:

APS and Durham County Sheriff's Officer were asked about an update. Captain Manning said they are still in a holding pattern and there was a meeting with the Attorney Darby, the Sheriff, and County Commissioners in which he attended. He said that there has not been an independent group identified to take on the TNVR program. The sheriff's department said they could not work on procedures in reference to a ordinance change without knowing who would be in charge of the TVNR.

Director Allen said they were not invited to the meeting and didn't attend. She said that they still believe that the way the original ordinance was written was satisfactory to the group. Director Allen said she was contacted by IAR who applied for the Rachael Ray Grant to assist in the spaying and neutering of community cats. This would depend on what happens with the ordinance.

Director Allen said they were working on contingencies depending which version of the ordinance is adopted.

Commissioner Carter said she believed all the County Commissioners approved the proposed ordinance at the last meeting and the next step was to have the Manager and Staff to meet with all groups to figure out the regulations and procedures that would allow implementation of the ordinance.

Captain Manning said they have suspended trapping for the last few months, and they do not have any legal authority to not provide traps if requested, per the current ordinance.

Kari Linfors asked what can the committee do to help this along and Commissioner Carter suggested reaching out to the County Commissioners.

Jenny Campbell asked if why there are two different ordinances being viewed. Jan Paul said the county attorney took it upon himself to come up with a new ordinance that was not approved by AWAC and was also not approved by the County Commissioners. Jan Paul went on to say that the next step was to gather all stakeholders for a meeting.

Commissioner Carter said she would write, on the behalf of AWAC, about the issues concerning the proposed ordinance.

Sarah Reichman commented that the stalling of the ordinance is causing problems in both APS and the Durham Sheriff's Department. She also expressed her frustrations about the state of the proposed ordinance.

Item VI – New Business

Draft Bylaws:

Attorney Darby sent out a draft of new bylaws for the AWAC to review. Jan Paul said aside from grammar errors there was not any concern. Director Allen mentioned that there is a portion that mentions spay/neuter fees would not be a function of the AWAC. Jan Paul agreed that this would not be a part of the function of AWAC. That we focus on policy recommendations.

Captain Manning mentioned that the sheriff wanted to review the bylaws.

Jan Paul asked if there was any other discussion on the bylaws before they were finalized. Amanda Gardner requested the draft be sent back out to AWAC members.

Nominating Committee:

The committee consists of two members of Amanda Gardner and Kari Linfors. An update was provided by Kari. Kari reported that Marianne Bond agreed to be chair and Amanda Gardner volunteered to be secretary. All other positions would wait until the bylaws were updated. Kari Linfors said she would fill in as chair in the absence of the appointed chair. Amanda Gardner also reported that a stand in secretary would be helpful in the event she is not able to attend the meeting.

Jan Paul said that the bylaws would likely be approved in the November meeting and Kari would be able to be appointed as Vice Chair.

The recommendations of the nominating committee was that Marianne Bond be appointed chair and Amanda Gardner be elected secretary. The committee also recommended that when the bylaws were approved in November that Kari Linfors be elected vice chair.

A motion was made by Dr. Bremser to accept the recommendations of the nominating committee and the motion was seconded by Amanda Gardner. The motion carried.

Item VII – Public Comments

There were no public comments.

The meeting was adjourned, and the next meeting will be held Tuesday, November 22, 2022, at 7:00 P.M.