

Franklin County Animal Advisory Board Minutes January 28, 2009

The Animal Advisory Board of Franklin County, North Carolina met at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioner's Meeting Room, County Administration Building. The following Board Members were present: ex-officio members: Franklin County Animal Control Director Graham Stallings and Commissioner Bob Winters; voting Board Members: Dianne Barrett, Elyse Goldman, DVM, Bess Nicholson, Brenda Simmons, Mark Speed, Jackie Oakley and Paulette Woods. Also present were Franklin County Manager Angela Harris. Members of the general public present included: Lawanna Johnson and Alicia Black. Absent: ex-officio members Franklin County Humane Society President Ida Estep and Kimberley Barth, DVM.

Dianne Barrett, vice chairperson introduced and welcomed newly appointed voting Board Members Mark Speed (Commissioner Swanson), replacing Chip Broughton and Jackie Oakley (Commissioner Mitchell) replacing John Ryan.

1) Public comment: Lawanna Johnson on feral cat issues

Johnson requested the AAB to revisit the feral cat issue and her offer to set up a managed feral cat colony at the landfill.

Spring kitten season means an increase in the landfill cat population which currently totals 20-30 cats. She recommends a trap/neuter/return program and pointed out that simply trapping and euthanizing the cats has not eradicated the problem due to the continuing food source. In addition, some trapped and euthanized cats are actually domesticated and adoptable.

Johnson requested that County Attorney Darnell Batton work with her attorney to draft a liability waiver based on the several examples she provided from HSUS and other feral cat groups. She felt that the currently used shelter volunteer waiver sets a precedent for creating an acceptable one for feral cat volunteers. Johnson stated that several people are independently feeding cats at the landfill besides herself and Alicia Black, who was previously involved with the Stanford Feral Cat Project.

Harris pointed out that none of the current people feeding cats are sanctioned by the county. Winters agreed that is the difference of the liability issue for Johnson's group that would be sanctioned versus the public who is not sanctioned by the county. The landfill is for trash disposal and not other purposes which could increase liability for the county and its residents.

Johnson cited the Duvall County no-kill program as a success story in stabilizing feral cat populations. Johnson concluded that there are three concerns: stabilize the feral cat population, minimize public interaction with the cats, and improve their lives. She requested the AAB take this under advisement and, if the liability issue can be worked out, begin feral cat management on a trial basis.

- 2) Board members reviewed and approved minutes of the November 19, 2008 meeting.
- 3) Election of new chair

Harris stated that the bylaws provide the vice chair will act in the absence of the chair without further provisions for replacement. Winters suggested election of AAB officers to run coterminous with the Commissioners' terms; elections to be held in January instead of July.

- 4) Old Business

- a) Status of spay/neuter follow-up for animals adopted from the shelter

Stallings stated ACO Johnson is the Adoption and Rescue coordinator and will make contact to verify spay/neuter; if AC does not receive proof the animal will be picked up as stated in the ordinance. Estep has redrafted the adoption agreement to make it consistent with the county ordinance.

Goldman presented an Adoption/Medical Contract Proposal for Franklin County Animal Shelter and Participating Veterinarians. Bunn Animal Hospital, Franklin Animal Clinic, Heartwood Animal Hospital, Rolesville Veterinary and Tar River Veterinary Hospital will participate in this low cost spay/neuter for animals adopted from AC. The vets will provide proof to AC to verify spay/neuter. The adopter still has the choice to use a different vet, it is not mandatory to use a vet from the participating list.

Barrett stated as a courtesy to Franklin County AC, Safe Haven for Cats will provide spay/neuter, pain medication, full physical, rabies and other shots, nail clip, etc. for \$50.00. Adopter must bring proof cat was adopted from Franklin County. Barrett requested to have Safe Haven added to the list of participating Veterinarians.

Winters suggested AC continue to collect the \$50.00 deposit for spay/neuter in the adoption fee. The participating vets will charge the adopter \$50.00 less and then bill the county for the deposit held in escrow. It will be the responsibility of the adopter to transport the animal to the vet.

- b) Status of doorknob hangers to be used to notify people of cat trapping in area

Stallings stated doorknob hangers are in use, ACO is placing them in neighborhoods where they are trapping with of animal description, reclaiming fees and shelter contact information.

- c) Status of Pet Disaster Planning Group

Barrett stated with Estep absent a report will be will be given at the next meeting.

5) Training for AC personnel

a) Identification of feral cats

Simmons speaking for Estep stated several professionals used to dealing with feral cats, some affiliated with Safe Haven, will contact Stallings to set up a meeting.

b) Dealing with fearful, upset animals/boisterous puppies

A dog trainer will meet with Stallings and ACO for training and will be on call for advice as AC has problems.

c) Identification of sick animals requiring veterinary attention

Estep is gathering materials on this issue and has spoken to Barth about presenting some of this information. Stallings stated AC relies on a specialist for advice on whether the animal needs to be euthanized.

d) Phone answering and dealing with public

Woods stated Ms. Shearin, Franklin County 911 director would be in contact with Stallings about a training meeting for AC. Stallings stated AC now has a recorded line to verify information, accountability and quality control. The staff must follow protocol and be respectful.

6) Policy that only Stallings can authorize euthanasia; veterinary appointments and animals to be euthanized

Stallings stated this policy has already been put in effect, he will be the only one to contact veterinarians regarding euthanasia; in his absence he will delegate someone to act in his place. A vet will evaluate an animal to determine if it needs to be euthanized; this would not be done just because an ACO says it is needed. This policy will be added to the SOP.

7) New business

Harris stated she has signed the paperwork for a grant from PetSmart for additional funding for spay/neuter; Estep is working on this grant. The commissioners are interested in the AAB exploring any and all grant opportunities to expand AC services.

Goldman will do a rabies clinic at the shelter once a month. Cats will be done inside the building and dogs outside. SNAP will provide spay/neuter at the shelter once a month.

Winters suggested using Capstar on the shelter animals to help control fleas with the possibility that Bayer would donate the Capstar. The FCHS has been donating flea control for the kittens at the shelter.

Woods announced due to a schedule change in her department that the January 28, 2009 meeting would be the last meeting she would serve as secretary to the Board.

New Secretary elected by unanimous vote, Elyse Goldman, DVM.

- 8) The next meeting is scheduled for February 25, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. at the County Administration Building.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Submitted by Paulette Woods, Secretary to the Board