

**NAME OF BOARD:** Animal Services Advisory Board  
**Report Period:** 2015-2016

**ORANGE COUNTY ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS  
ANNUAL REPORT/WORK PLAN FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

The Board of Commissioners welcomes input from various advisory boards and commissions in preparation for its annual planning retreat. Please complete the following information, limited to the front and back of this form. Other background materials may be provided as a supplement to, but not as a substitute for, this form.

Board/Commission Name: **Animal Services Advisory Board (ASAB)**

Person to address the BOCC at Work Session—if applicable and contact information: **NEW CHAIR, ASAB.**

Primary County Staff Contact: **Bob Marotto, Animal Services Director**

How many times per month does this board/commission meet, including any special meetings and sub-committee meetings?

**In 2016, the ASAB will again have a monthly meeting except for the months of July and December. Monthly meetings ensure that there is sufficient time to listen to stakeholders and address agenda items in a deliberate and timely manner. In the event that there is not a definite need for a monthly meeting, none will be held.**

Presently, the ASAB has only one standing committee:

**Potentially Dangerous Dog Appeal Committee: This standing committee is required by North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS) to hear appeals initiated by owners of dogs declared potentially dangerous.**

**Note that adoption of the proposed unified animal control ordinance may well have an impact in this area. If the ASAB becomes responsible for the appeals process for administrative orders and civil penalties, a new standing committee with only a projected work load will need to be formed**

Brief Statement of Board/Commission's Assigned Charge and Responsibilities.

**The ASAB will continue to serve as a sounding board for stakeholder groups, reviewing animal-related policy issues raised by residents or identified by the BOCC. Animal Services and other county staff will continue to direct residents to the ASAB as a critical step in any**

**consideration of stakeholder concerns, before bringing an item to the Board of County Commissioners.**

**The ASAB would stress that it is fundamentally concerned not only about animal welfare but about the human aspects of animal issues and services. Indeed, one board member is the Health Board veterinarian for Orange County. In addition, the ASAB values and seeks to support the “human-animal bond” and the role of animal companions in enriching the quality of life for individuals, communities and cultures.**

**Of special concern are the services needed by disadvantaged and often underserved households. A good illustration is the ASAB’s support for Animal Services partnership with the Department of Social Service to provide affordable pet sterilization to households of lesser means. A more recent initiative is support for efforts to create partnerships with the Family Success Alliance and also the Roger’s Road Neighborhood Association and Rogers Eubank Neighborhood Association (RENA).**

**What are your Board/Commission’s most important accomplishments?**

**The ASAB continued to work with staff and stakeholders to support and promote a strategic plan for managing pet overpopulation in Orange County. The board was integral to developing a plan to address free-roaming cats as a critical component of pet overpopulation in Orange County.**

**The ASAB continued to conduct appeal hearings for potentially dangerous dog declarations made under North Carolina’s general statutes. The opportunity for an appeal is mandated and also an important check and balance for county Animal Services. So far in 2015 XY potentially dangerous dog declarations have been appealed and several of these are currently under further appeal in Superior Court.**

**The ASAB considered whether Animal Services should participate in research oriented toward helping shelter animals. They did so at the request of staff which, absent known and accepted guidelines and protocols, has declined to participate in such research. (Most recently staff regrettably declined a request made by a faculty member at the NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine seeking to reduce morbidity and mortality arising from diarrhea in young cats.)**

**The ASAB also collaborated with staff in reviewing applications as part of the county’s process for funding outside agencies. The board sought to identify agencies that augment the “animal services” provided by the County as well as to seek support for efforts furthering or enhancing the human-animal bond.**

Finally, the ASAB has sought to assist the BOCC in ensuring that board vacancies are filled in a timely and effective manner by making recommendations based upon interviews with candidates for different openings. In addition, the board provides each new member with an orientation, which includes an introduction to the ASAB, a review of county policies for boards and commissions, and an overview of County “animal services.”

List of Specific Tasks, Events, or Functions Performed or Sponsored Annually.

In addition to activities mentioned above, the board hosts a variety of partner organizations, thereby helping to strengthen important working relationships, and supports the annual Open House, which promotes positive community relations.

Describe this board/commission’s activities/accomplishments in carrying out BOCC goal(s)/priorities, if applicable.

Work done by the ASAB in coordination with Animal Services staff touches several principles and priorities. Three principles and priorities seem noteworthy with respect to the ASAB in calendar year 2015. These are:

#### **Sustainable Services**

- Supported strategic plan for managing pet overpopulation to control medium and long-term costs.
- Concentrated on necessary (or core) services and notable developments in the field of animal welfare and continued to seek and enhance partnerships through use of Partner Profiles.

#### **Making County Government Accessible, Understandable and Transparent**

- Served as a sounding board for stakeholder concerns about animal issues and animal related policies and worked with staff to communicate with the BOCC regarding citizen concerns.
- Made recommendations to the BOCC regarding various animal issues as well as regarding candidates for board vacancies.
- Continuing Involvement as needed in the ongoing effort to establish a unified animal ordinance for the county in order to create more comprehensible regulatory rules for all county residents.

#### **Advisory Board Roles and Responsibilities**

- Provided a setting for stakeholder contact and interaction about a broad range of animal-related matters.
- Sustained ASAB as a county board by vetting candidates for vacancies and making recommendations to the BOCC, conducting orientations for new members, and managing the succession of members and officers

- **Conducted potentially dangerous dog appeal hearing as part of the ASAB's basic charge from the BOCC in accordance with the requirements of NCGS.**

If your board/commission played the role of an Element Lead Advisory Board involved in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan preparation process, please indicate your board's activities/accomplishments as they may relate to the Comprehensive Plan's goals or objectives.

*(The Element Lead Advisory Boards include: Planning Board, EDC, OUTBoard, Commission for the Environment, Historic Preservation Commission, Agriculture Preservation Board, Affordable Housing Board, Recreation and Parks Advisory Council)*

**Not applicable.**

Identify any activities this board/commission expects to carry out in 2013 as they relate to established BOCC goals and priorities.

If applicable, is there a fiscal impact (i.e., funding, staff time, other resources) associated with these proposed activities (please list).

**The ASAB expects to be especially concerned with several areas in the coming year. These are:**

**Sustainable Services**

- **Working within a plan for positively and proactively managing pet overpopulation with special emphasis on free-roaming cats.**
- **Concentrating on basic (or core) services but exploring emergent trends in the field of animal welfare and how they fit in Orange County;**
- **Seeking and supporting effective partnerships with other organizations**

**Making County Government Accessible, Understandable and Transparent**

- **Serving as a sounding board for various issues and policy concerns, and making recommendations to BOCC, in coordination with staff, on matters of concern to stakeholders.**
- **Coordinating with staff to inform the BOCC of strategic initiatives and significant policy considerations**
- **Involvement as needed in establishing a unified animal ordinance to create more comprehensive regulations for all county residents.**

**Advisory Board Roles and Responsibilities**

- **Provide a setting for stakeholder contact and interaction about a broad range of animal-related matter.**

- Conducted potentially dangerous dog appeal hearing as part of the ASAB's basic charge from the BOCC in accordance with the requirements of NCGS.
- Recommend ASAB applicants to the BOCC and orient new members to the role and responsibility of the advisory board.

What are the concerns or emerging issues your board has identified for the upcoming year that it plans to address, or wishes to bring to the Commissioners' attention?

**Managing Pet Overpopulation:** Work with staff to ensure that organizational forms and practices responsible for the county's success in managing over population are recognized, supported and extended into the future to ensure that the country maintains a proactive and cost-effective approach to this significant community problem. Significantly, this effort now includes a 5 year plan for managing free-roaming cats as a critical component of pet overpopulation. The board is also committed to moving forward pertinent ordinance amendments, namely, a differential recovery rate for reproductive versus sterilized stray animals and a microchip requirement for the recovery of stray animals.

**Potentially Dangerous Dog Appeal Process:** Work with department staff the county's staff attorney to ensure that there is sufficient and ongoing training about the requirements and expectations of this appeal process. In addition, work with staff to better elucidate some of the definitional issues that arise in these hearings given the lack of clear definitions of terms such as "vicious," "terrorizing," and "attitude of attack" in the statute.

**Exploring New Frontiers:** Work with staff to see how cutting edge developments in the field can be put into place in Orange County. These include efforts such as Pet for Life oriented toward supporting pet ownership in underserved parts of the county and related efforts seeking to reduce animal intakes. Critical to this effort will be supporting the kinds of partnerships staff are establishing with the Family Success Alliance and RENA and the Roger's Road Neighborhood Association.

**School Partnerships:** Continue to work with staff to explore opportunities to collaborate with Orange County Schools and Chapel Hill Carrboro Schools to promote responsible pet ownership among future generations of county residents. One is to create stronger relationships with school social workers to promote subsidized spay and neuter for pets belonging to economically challenged families or families receiving public assistance. Another opportunity is to support Kids4Kindness in offering pet education to students in the fourth grade. It is hoped that other opportunities for collaboration may emerge as well from such discussion of possible school

**partnerships.**

*Drafted October 6, 2015—RAM*

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