

Meeting October 7, 2015

Minutes

Committee members: Susan Elmore, Caroline Green, Maureane Hoffman, Dewana Anderson

OCAS staff: Bob Marotto

Public: DeAnna Rowan, Bette Smith and Margaret Heath

Agenda: To critically re-evaluate the costs and benefits of the proposal for participation in animal research studies.

Major concerns/issues (benefits) for participation:

- Select research (academic collaboration) has the potential to improve animal health, especially that of animals in shelters
- Procedures would not result in pain or distress on animals
- Enhanced relationship with other animal welfare interests
- The community could understand or perceive that we are doing beneficial things for the animals
- We want the shelter to be more than a place that just shuffles animals in and out

Major concerns/issues (costs) against participation:

- There could be a backlash from the community. The misunderstanding that this participation could cause in our community may not be an easy thing to address or correct. OCAS has put much time and effort into good community relations and it would be unfortunate to see this effort eroded by such a potential misunderstanding. Perception by the community is an important consideration.
- The shelter should do what it does best, which is addressing the sheltering and animal control services of our community and addressing pet overpopulation. Branching out into an area in which it has no expertise (sample collection for research projects) could take valuable time and resources away from its primary mission (spreading yourself too thin). Must fit in with OCAS operations.
- Could cause OCAS inefficiencies and dysfunctions for example, if there are needs for sample collection or requests for public records
- May need to indicate on an animal surrender form that the animal or animal specimens may be used for animal research (public relations issue and/or legal issue)
- If people thought that their animal might be used for research then they might be discouraged from bringing their animal to the shelter

Vote was 3:1 to move forward.

ASAB will need to vote and approve.

Bob will take to the county manager to gauge Commissioner's positions.

If there is approval on all sides, then the committee would work on the fine details of the guidelines. Effective communication with the public would have to be a priority.

Animal services mission: strives to meet the needs of residents by working with volunteers and other partners to deliver cost-effective and integrated sheltering and animal control services that ensure the health, safety and well being of humans, pets and the community as a whole. Addressing the problem of pet overpopulation with a proactive and positive approach is an integral ingredient of the department's mission.

Meeting July 15, 2015

Minutes

Susan Elmore, Bob Marotto, Caroline Green, Maureane Hoffman, Dewana Anderson

- Shelter has the responsibility to support research that will benefit the lives of all shelter animals
- Research would have to be compatible with the mission statement and articulate how the proposed research would be consistent with the shelter mission (e.g. Kitten diarrhea). That is, the research should have a specific focus on shelter health and wellness.
- No euthanasia, invasive procedures or pain/suffering for the research project
Noninvasive sample collections such as nasal swab, fecal samples, blood, tick collection, etc. would be acceptable.
- Should be institutional IACUC review of the study.
- Can't be for-profit research
- If the research meets all of the above criteria, then participation would still be at discretion of the OCAS Director (logistics, etc. can't conflict with overall operations)
- Ask Wake County Animal Shelter what their protocol is and what issues they have encountered to date.
- Take back to the advisory board then to the manager and board and see if they would like for us to move forward OR
- Are the political risks warranted? Yes. How will they be minimized? Forming focus groups with all concerned parties participating. To have a well thought out and developed framework for moving forward.
- Take back to advisory board and form focus groups of people in the county and region including people who might be supportive and apposed. Should then go to the manager and then to board.