

**ORANGE COUNTY ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
INPUT FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' ANNUAL PLANNING RETREAT**

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 Retreat (if requested by BOCC) and contact information: **Susan Elmore, DVM, Chair, ASAB and/or Michele Walker, JD, Vice 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 2014, the ASAB will again have a monthly meeting schedule to ensure that there is sufficient time to hear public comment 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. The ASAB will continue to be supported, in the main, by the Animal Services Director to control staff time spent in support of the ASAB.

Presently, the ASAB has only one standing committee and one task force:

- **Potentially Dangerous Dog Appeal Committee: This standing committee is required by NCGS to hear appeals initiated by owners of potentially dangerous dog declarations. Based on requests for appeal, this committee often meets between six and twelve times per year.**
- **Free-roaming cats and pet overpopulation: This task force will consider ways in which to promote targeted spay and neuter among various segments of the county's population of free-roaming cats as part of the county's strategic plan for managing pet overpopulation.**

The BOCC's final decision about the appeal process set forth in the 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 (as proposed), 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.

In keeping with the general mission of county advisory boards, 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 review and discussion process for policy and/or programs prior to bringing an issue to the Board of County Commissioners.

The ASAB would stress that it remains fundamentally concerned about the human aspects of animal issues and services as well as animal welfare. It continues to be involved with the full range of services that impact public health and safety as well as community livability. The ASAB would also recall that one of its members is the veterinarian who serves on Orange County's Health Board.

In addition, the ASAB values the "human-animal bond" and the role of animal companions in enriching the quality of life for individuals, communities and cultures. A good illustration is the ASAB's support for Animal Services' partnership with the Department of Social Service to provide low-cost and no-cost pet sterilization to households of lesser means. Another illustration is the ASAB's strong and ongoing support for the department's ten (10) or so annual low cost rabies vaccination clinics, which are responsible for approximately 1000 dog and cat vaccinations each year.

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 developed specific recommendations for the micro-chipping of stray animals being recovered from Animal Services and also developed an innovative recovery schedule to encourage residents to spay and neuter their dogs and cats.

The ASAB also worked closely and collaboratively with staff in reviewing several versions of the proposed unified animal control ordinance. This review was focused as well as general nature and it afforded residents the opportunity to offer comment on specific elements of the proposed ordinance.

In addition, the board worked hard to assure the continuity of its own successful operation after a long period in which the Board of County Commissioners did not appoint new members to boards and commissions. The ASAB Chair continued to communicate with the BOCC Chair or other

Commissioners to ensure consistent and effective coordination and problem solving.

Under the county's new policy and procedure for boards and commissions, finally, the board has also made a strong effort to properly orient new members of the ASAB. This has been done consistently by the board chair and vice-chair along with the department director. Together they have provided an overview of County "animal services" and introduced new members to the introduction to the advisory board in relation to County governance.

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

As previously mentioned, the ASAB supported the department's ongoing effort to promote targeted spay and neuter as well as to aspire to and achieve a very high live release rate for all sheltered animals. To help the county manage pet overpopulation in a humane and cost effective manner, the ASAB worked with staff to develop a proposal for very innovative fee structure for animal recoveries and a microchip requirement for recovered strays.

Also, "Partner Profiles" continue to be a staple for ASAB meeting. In this way, among others, the ASAB has collaborated with staff to create and nourish an assortment of partnerships that support and extend animal services in Orange County.

Finally, the ASAB again worked with staff to review funding applications from outside agencies. This process has continued to work well and the results of the review are provided to the County Manager as part of the department's operating budget recommendations.

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 2013:

Budget Discipline and Core Services

- **Helped communicate the need to concentrate on core services to others.**
- **Helped communicate budget constraints to others.**
- **Supported managing pet overpopulation to control costs and lessen the need for euthanasia as a means of population control.**
- **Supported the department's effort to control net operating costs.**

Making County Government Accessible, Understandable and Transparent

- Served as a sounding board for the BOCC on resident concerns.
- Worked with staff to communicate with the BOCC regarding resident concerns.
- Made recommendations to the BOCC regarding policy items such as the unified animal control ordinance.
- Made recommendations to the BOCC regarding ASAB vacancies.

Advisory Board Roles and Responsibilities

- Sustained and developed the ASAB as a vital part of county governance.
- Implemented new board practices and procedures as set out in the County's new General Policy for Boards and Commissions
- Continued to be attentive to and respectful of the reductions in staff support for the ASAB itself.

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:

Budget Discipline and Core Services

- Continue to work toward the full implementation of the County's strategic plan for managing pet overpopulation
- Continue to concentrate on core services and about resource limitations
- Continue to work with staff to control net operating costs

Making County Government Accessible, Understandable and Transparent

- Continue to serve as a sounding board for the BOCC on policies and programs
- Continue to make recommendations to BOCC, in coordination with staff, on issues of concern to residents

- Continue to coordinate with staff to inform the BOCC of strategic initiatives and significant policy considerations

Advisory Board Roles and Responsibilities

- Continue to recommend ASAB applicants to the BOCC and orient new members to the role and responsibility of the advisory board.
- Work with staff to ensure conformity with county policies and procedures for boards and commissions.

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?

Animal Ordinance: The ASAB expects to continue to work with staff, the community and others to develop a unified ordinance for Orange County. One task will be to review the next version of the proposed ordinance in late January or February and another will be to participate in the presentation of the ordinance for consideration by the BOCC. The ASAB may also help staff in presenting the approved version of the ordinance to the Towns of Chapel Hill and Carrboro.

Spay/Neuter: The ASAB will continue to work with staff and the community to develop and evaluate the efforts at “targeted sterilization” that are at the heart of the county’s community spay and neuter program. In addition, the board will consider the complex issue of “free-roaming cats,” a very complex component of the strategic plan for managing pet overpopulation.

Rural/Urban Issues: The ASAB will continue to work with staff and the community as necessary to address animal-related issues arising out of the interaction between rural and urban areas of the County. The board will continue to communicate and coordinate with the Agricultural Preservation Board in addressing these types of issues.

Board Development: The ASAB will continue to develop itself as an advisory board. This will involve continuing the board’s present effort to become more diverse and reflective of Orange County as a whole. It will also involve periodic orientations for existing members regarding county policy procedures for boards and commissions and the historical fit of the ASAB and staff in the county’s animal services enterprise. Finally, it will also involve an effort to create a strong and cohesive board with a high level of retention that can cultivate its own leadership year-in and year-out.