

NAME OF BOARD: Animal Services Advisory Board
Report Period: 2014-2015

**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 2015, the ASAB will again have a monthly meeting schedule to 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 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; and it meets between 10 to 15 times each year.
- **Free-roaming cats and pet overpopulation:** This task force is finalizing its work 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.

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 remains fundamentally concerned about the human aspects of animal issues and services as well as animal welfare, and 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 affordable pet sterilization to households of lesser means.

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. A major component of this work was the creation of a free-roaming cat task force that met more than ten times, held stakeholder listening sessions, and developed a plan to address free-roaming cats as a constituent part of pet overpopulation in Orange County.

The ASAB worked closely and collaboratively with staff on the proposed unified animal control ordinance. Significantly, this encompassed collaboration with the UNC-CH School of Government faculty to address and resolve several controversial issues, e.g., trespass and watchdog.

The ASAB also worked closely with staff to review funding applications from outside agencies. Through this process, the board sought to identify agencies that augment the "animal services" provided by the County where there is a clear resident need for such services.

Finally, the ASAB has sought to coordinate effectively with the BOCC to fill vacancies on the board. This ongoing effort includes interviewing ASAB candidates and making a recommendation to the BOCC for vacant positions. It also includes an orientation for new members, which provides an overview of County "animal services" and introduction to the advisory board in relation to County governance.

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 2014. These are:

Sustainable Services

- **Supported strategic plan for managing pet overpopulation to control medium and long-term costs.**
- **Concentrated on core services and continued to seek and enhance partnerships through use of Partner Profiles.**

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- **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 certain citizen concerns as well as on candidates for ASAB vacancies.**
- **Involvement in the effort to establish a unified animal ordinance for the county including the towns of Hillsborough, Chapel Hill and Carrboro in order to create more accessible and comprehensive regulatory rules for all county residents.**

Advisory Board Roles and Responsibilities

- **Sustained ASAB by filling numerous vacancies, conducting orientations for new members, and developing new board leadership.**
- **Continued to be attentive to the need to manage 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:

Sustainable Services

- **Continue to work toward the full implementation of the County's strategic plan for managing pet overpopulation but on an adjusted schedule.**
- **Continue to concentrate on core services, support and encourage effective partnerships with other organizations, and communicate with residents (as needed) about the preceding.**

Making County Government Accessible, Understandable and Transparent

- **Continue to serve as a sounding board for the BOCC on various issues and policy concerns, and make recommendations to BOCC, in coordination with staff, on matters of concern to stakeholders.**
- **Continue to coordinate with staff to inform the BOCC of strategic initiatives and significant policy considerations**
- **Continuing involvement in the effort to establish a unified animal ordinance for the county including the towns of Hillsborough, Chapel Hill and Carrboro in order to create more accessible and comprehensive regulatory rules for all county residents.**

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.**

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.

Free-Roaming Cats and Pet Overpopulation: The board expects to work

with staff as they proceed with the 5 year plan for managing free-roaming cats as a critical component of pet overpopulation in Orange County. Along with staff, they will work as well on the adoption of several ordinance amendments focused on overpopulation if it does not appear that the proposed unified animal ordinance will be adopted fairly quickly. These include a differential recovery rate for reproductive versus sterilized stray animals and a microchip requirement for the recovery of stray animals.

Unified Animal Ordinance: The board expects to continue to support staff in the process of promoting and adopting the proposed unified animal ordinance. Board support may include appearing at town hearings and discussions of the proposed ordinance since the plan is to have the ordinance reviewed by Chapel Hill and Carrboro before returning to the BOCC for final approval.

Visioning for 2025 and Beyond: The board will begin to think about the future of animal services in Orange County. Initiating this process makes sense since the planning process for addressing pet overpopulation in Orange County is nearly completed and future strategic planning will require a clear vision.

School Partnerships: With staff 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.

Commercial Dog Breeding Regulations: The ASAB expects to approach the BOCC to request a resolution of support for legislation that would regulate “puppy mills” in North Carolina.