

**Animal Services Advisory Board (ASAB)
Approved Minutes for April 16, 2008 Meeting**

Present ASAB Members: Daniel Textoris, Pat Sanford, Susan Elmore, Jean Austin, James Kramer, Ross Oglesbee, Bonnie Norwood, Tracy Carroll and Suzanne Roy

Absent ASAB Members: Dewana Anderson, Kristine Bergstrand and Moses Carey .

Others in Attendance: Animal Services Director Bob Marotto, Animal Shelter Manager Jessica Allison, Animal Control Manager Irene Phipps and Administrative Assistant Paula Ragan.

Public Members Present: Elliott Cramer and Michael Soluski

Welcome and Opening Comments—ASAB Chair, Ross Oglesbee, called the meeting to order.

Motion was made by Jean Austin and seconded by James Kramer to approve the Agenda dated April 16, 2008, with one change to move item 4a until Mr. Cramer arrives for discussion. **VOTE:** Unanimous.

Motion was made by Jean Austin and seconded by James Kramer to approve the minutes dated March 19, 2008, with corrections to a few typographical errors. **VOTE:** Unanimous

General Public Comment—None

Unfinished Business—

Tethering Ordinance Update— Mr. Marotto reported that the Tethering Committee reconvened to ensure that they have agreement about definition of the proposed tethering restriction and the definition of the restriction that is now incorporated in the version that is being reviewed for approval by board members. The definition is that it would not be permissible to tether a dog for more than a total of three hours in a 24-hour period. Motion was made by Jean Austin and seconded by Bonnie Norwood to approve the Tethering Ordinance Amendment and to pass along to the Board of County Commissioners. **VOTE:** 6 in favor 2 opposed--Motion Carries.

Pet Overpopulation Committee—Pat Sanford reported that the committee has been working with the feral cat caretakers and the feral cat coalition and they would like to see owner's of feral cats to be licensed or at least know where they are located within the community. The committee would like to see a spay/neuter program through Animal Kind be offered to the owners of the feral cat colonies in order to reduce the number coming in to the shelter being euthanized. Motion was made by Bonnie Norwood and seconded by Jean Austin to approve the budget outline in the Memorandum from Animal Services Director Bob Marotto (dated April 10, 2008) regarding Community Spay/Neuter Fund: Program and Guideline Proposal. **VOTE:** Unanimous

March Statistical Summary—Ms. Jess Allison gave an overview of the March 2008 statistical summaries. It was pointed out that the March adoptions were low, as she had predicted they would be at the March 20, 2008 meeting. Ms. Allison did report that the reclaims were higher than in past months. The committee and staff are working to identify additional things that could be done to help increase the adoption numbers. Some ASAB members suggested that the general condition of the economy and the

UNC remediation effort around the current shelter location may be affecting adoptions. One specific suggestion was that there be more media coverage to inform the community that the shelter is still open to and serving the public.

Adoption of Pit bulls from Orange County's Animal Shelter—A member of the public, Mr. Elliott Cramer gave an overview of the information he previously provided and requested that the ASAB limit the numbers of pit bulls on display to the public and feels that they are being adopted out to people who are not appropriate adopters. In addition, Mr. Cramer suggested that this breed of dog should only be adopted out to people that have experience handling pit bulls and are aware of their behavioral traits and tendencies as he believes there is evidence showing that these dogs are inherently more dangerous than other breeds. He also emphasized that he was struck by the number of pit bulls and pit bull mixes at the shelter and on the shelter's website.

Another member of the public, Mr. Michael Soluski, conveyed that he owns a pit bull and a boxer and that he believes that his own and other dogs behave as allowed by owners, who are responsible for ensuring acceptable behavior. He indicated that he was against any breed specific changes in adoption practices, and asked where such changes would end if they were initiated..

Ms. Jess Allison reported that the shelter is very careful about the evaluations and adoptions of this particular breed of dogs. She indicated that the Animal Shelter staff generally holds this particular breed of dog to a higher standard. If there are any signs of aggressive behavior, they are usually not put up for adoption. Mr. Marotto suggested that we think about whether or not we are at or beyond the best practices in the industry for our evaluation and placement of these dogs and other dogs. The best practices of the industry should be our guide, not being discriminatory but recognizing that there are some special considerations that should be factored in.

ASAB members discussed various issues throughout and on the basis of statements made by staff and members of the public. These issues included the quality and accuracy of available statistics on dog bites by breed; the challenges or difficulties of breed (and mixed breed) identification; the extent to which aggression has genetic rather than environmental roots; and the extent to which animal owners are responsible for the behavior of their animal and how they affect others in human communities.

*Motion was made by Jean Austin and seconded by Bonnie Norwood to individually gather more information on this topic and to table this request for now. **VOTE:** 6 in favor 2 opposed--Motion Carries.*

New Business—Bob Marotto reviewed the Project and Activity Schedule handout and reported that this is a way to plan and organize our work and commitments. It ensures that we are not doing too much, and risking doing anything less than very well, and that it helps ensure that our work load is commensurate with available resources.

Select Updates—Irene Phipps reported that two rabies clinics were held today, one earlier today at the Animal Control Office in Hillsborough with 27 vaccines administered and 14 licensed. The second clinic is being held in the Annex Parking lot next door this evening. The next two rabies clinics will be held at the Animal Shelter on Saturday, April 19, 2008 and Wednesday April 23, 2008.

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Jess Allison provided an overview of the UNC remediation effort that is underway near the Animal Shelter. She reported that staff has been reviewing safety protocols just in case there is any release of chemicals into the air during this effort. A safety drill with staff was held today at the shelter and went very well. Ms. Allison mentioned that the entranceway in to the shelter is now different due to the remediation project and signage has been placed throughout the new route in to the shelter off of Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd to help direct traffic to the shelter.

Motion was made by James Kramer and seconded by Jean Austin to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

VOTE: *Unanimous.*

Next ASAB Meeting: *Wednesday, May 21, 2008, at 6:30 p.m. in the Southern Human Services Conference Room, 2501 Homestead Road, Chapel Hill.*