

**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: **Kristine Bergstrand, DVM, Chair, ASAB but a new chair will be elected at the January 16, 2013 meeting**

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 2013, the ASAB will have a monthly meeting schedule. The ASAB decided to return to a monthly meeting schedule from the bimonthly meeting schedule it has kept since the middle of 2010. The reason for the decision was that bimonthly meetings did not offer sufficient time to hear public comment and address agenda items in a deliberate and timely manner.

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. In addition, the director's time commitment may actually be minimized by the election of a secretary with record keeping responsibilities at the first meeting of the year (January) in 2013.

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.**
- **Animal Recovery and Sterilization Committee: This task force is considering a legislative issue as part of the County's strategic plan for addressing pet overpopulation. In particular, it is considering whether there are ordinance changes the County should make to**

encourage the sterilization of dogs and cats recovered as strays—particularly dogs and cats impounded as strays more than one time.

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

According to Orange County's new General Policy for Boards and Commissions, the ASAB provides a critical interface between the community and elected officials. Accordingly, 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 step in any review and discussion process prior to bringing an issue to the Board of County Commissioners.

Two recent examples of citizen concerns brought to the ASAB for consideration were noise complaints related to crowing roosters and whether that species should be added to the County's Animal Control Ordinance, and possible cat sheltering enhancement of caging and enrichment.

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. 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 recognizes the importance of the "human-animal bond" and values the role of animal companions in enriching the quality of life for people. 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. 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 has partnered with staff to continue to facilitate partnerships with other animal organizations. At many meetings there is a "Partner Profile" presentation. In 2012, these included the Orange County chapter of the Coalition to Unchain Dogs, Pet Overpopulation Control—North Carolina, AnimalKind, Triangle Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic and the North Carolina representative of the Humane Society of the United States.

Also, the ASAB again worked 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 and in the case of Triangle Wildlife Rehab Clinic, remove some of the burden from staff in responding to wildlife questions from the community, freeing them to focus on the goals of Animal Services

The ASAB coordinated with staff to address two specific issues raised by residents of the county, namely, whether noise from crowing roosters should be regulated and the identification of shelter animals. The ASAB closely coordinated with staff to review these issues, and prepared written reports with carefully formulated recommendations for the BOCC.

Along with ASAB Chair and Animal Services Director, members of the ASAB met with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Agricultural Preservation Board (APB) and the DEAPR Director to discuss the issue of crowing roosters and noise control. One outcome was agreement to approach the County’s new Director of Public Affairs to consider how to bring the full range of attributes of rural life to people who may be considering Orange County as a home. Another outcome was continued discussion of other points of interface between the ASAB and APB, e.g., disaster responses for livestock and other large animals.

In addition, the ASAB continued to work with staff to support and promote a strategic plan for managing pet overpopulation. In particular, the board began work on the legislative component of the strategic plan, and began to assess whether the County should require the sterilization of dogs and cats that are repeatedly impounded and recovered by an owner or keeper. This initiative encompasses a review of pertinent practices throughout the country and North Carolina, and an effort to create greater incentives for animal owners and custodians to sterilize their dogs and cats.

Finally, the ASAB assured the continuity of its own successful operation in a changing operational context for boards and commissions in Orange County. In the first place, the ASAB Chair communicated much more closely than in past years with the BOCC Chair to ensure consistent and effective coordination between the two bodies. This proved especially important in regard to more charged program and policy issues, providing a genuine bridge in the absence of a designated Commissioner liaison for the ASAB.

In addition, the ASAB collaborated with Animal Services staff to reconstitute the board’s membership once the BOCC lifted its freeze on appointments to boards and commissions. This ongoing effort has included interviewing ASAB candidates and making a recommendation to the to the BOCC for vacant positions. It has also included conduct of an orientation for all new members, conducted by the ASAB Chair and the department Director, 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.

As previously noted, the ASAB hosted a variety of partner organizations, thereby helping to strengthen important working relationships. The ASAB also supported the department’s very successful annual Open House. In specific program areas, the ASAB supported the department’s ongoing effort to support and spread targeted spay and neuter as well as to aspire to and achieve a very high live release rate for all sheltered animals.

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 2012. These are:

Budget Discipline and Core 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.
- Communicated budget constraints to others.
- Supported departmental initiatives to increase revenues, such as the department’s move to online licensing and donation services.

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- Served as a sounding board for the BOCC on citizen concerns with animal related policies.
- 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.

Advisory Board Roles and Responsibilities

- Sustained ASAB by filling numerous vacancies that occurred during the BOCC “freeze” on board appointments
- Implemented or prepared for the implementation of new board practices and procedures as these are 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 but on an adjusted schedule.**
- **Continue to concentrate on core services and to seek effective partnerships with other organizations.**
- **Continue to communicate with residents and others (as needed) about the preceding.**

Making County Government Accessible, Understandable and Transparent

- **Continue to serve as a sounding board for the BOCC on policy concerns including kennel permits in the rural buffer (and possibly other areas of the County).**
- **Continue to make recommendations to BOCC, in coordination with staff, on issues of citizen concern**
- **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 full implementation and effectiveness of new board protocols 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?

Spay/Neuter: The ASAB intends to begin considering the complex issue of free-roaming and feral cats as part of the legal element of the County's strategic plan for managing pet overpopulation. However, the ASAB recognizes that this process may begin later rather than sooner and that it must be coordinated with other activities and staff obligations. Also, the ASAB may seek to work with staff to develop a volunteer corps to do outreach and provide transportation for qualified residents.

Volunteer Program: The ASAB will be working with staff to further grow and enhance the department's robust and highly productive volunteer effort. Budgetary concerns include the acquisition of appropriate volunteer management software and the addition of another full-time equivalent position in the area of program management.

Animal Ordinance: As already mentioned, the ASAB expects to play some role in the review of kennel permit requirements in the rural buffer as that review process proceeds. In addition, the ASAB is aware that staff is attempting to create a comprehensive ordinance for Orange County, applicable in different ways to rural areas and towns, and expects to review some version of this work. The ASAB also expects to approach the BOCC with a policy recommendation regarding dogs and cats that are repeatedly impounded and recovered and expects this may entail a proposal for budget action as well as an ordinance amendment.

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. In addition, the ASAB expects to coordinate with county staff in considering and developing a County ordinance regulating "commercial breeding operations." A county ordinance may be necessary if the effort to amend North Carolina's General Statute. It may also be necessary if the criterion for "commercial breeding operations" becomes watered down through the legislative process.

New County Policies for Advisory Boards and Board Development: Early in 2013, the ASAB will complete its transition to operating under the County's new general policy and the County's new policy specific to the ASAB itself. Among other things, this transition will include the creation of a secretary to perform tasks that to date have been performed by staff. More generally, the ASAB will continue to develop itself and foster new leadership, which is notable because of significant changes in its composition, i.e., the addition of numerous new members and "retirement" of experienced members.