

**Animal Services Advisory Board (ASAB)
Approved Minutes for March 17th, 2010 Meeting**

Present ASAB Members: Daniel Textoris, Jean Austin, Susan Elmore, Kris Bergstrand, Suzanne Roy, Tracy Carroll, Mike Nelson and Katie Brooks.

Absent ASAB Members: Bonnie Norwood and Dewana Anderson

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

Public Members Present: None

Welcome and Opening Comments—ASAB Chair, Jean Austin called the meeting to order.

Motion was made by Kris Bergstrand and seconded by Susan Elmore to adopt the Agenda dated March 17, 2010 with change in order under New Business. **VOTE:** Unanimous.

Motion was made by Daniel Textoris and seconded by Kris Bergstrand to approve the minutes dated February 17, 2010. **VOTE:** Unanimous

New Business—

FY1011 Budget Process-

Mr. Marotto and Mike Nelson reported that the directive given by the County Manager is to reduce the Fiscal Year 10/11 total budget by 5 million dollars given the shortfall in revenues from sales tax, debt service cost and other sources. There will be significant changes and reorganizations that include targeted reductions of 75-100 positions countywide. The Manager and the Board are committed to achieving the reductions without layoffs by focusing on a hiring freeze, elimination of vacancies and realignment of staff and positions. Staffing and schools are the biggest parts of the county budget. Mr. Nelson feels that this is a good opportunity to figure out more efficient ways for the County to work as a whole. The BOCC is looking at merging and eliminating some of the existing advisory boards. There are a total of 77 boards with seven Commissioners assigned as liaisons to these boards. The cost associated with having this many boards is high due to the staff time associated with supporting them. Appointments to advisory boards have been placed on hold at this time until the review is completed.

Bob Marotto and Paula Ragan met with the Assistant County Manager, Finance and Budget to review Animal Services proposed budget for Fiscal Year 10/11. There will be additional meetings held including a review with the County Manager in April before he makes a recommendation to the BOCC. Mr. Marotto reported that Animal Services is looking to

reduce net operating cost, which is a function of how much we spend and how much revenue we bring in to Animal Services. We are proposing a reduction in select line items in a way that does not eliminate programs that are critical to the Department. We have proposed a number of fee increases and adjustments, including \$50 for an animal surrendered for euthanasia, a fee for use of the large stock trailer to bring an animal to the shelter for impoundment, and a pet licensing increase from \$5.00 for a sterilized animal to \$10. We are looking at preserving the qualities of Animal Services while trying to problem solve for the county. One part of the proposal is to reclassify one of the vacant positions; we are proposing reorganization that takes the Administrative I position to a Healthcare Technician position. This would include using temporary employee funds to create this position. Mr. Marotto added that the temporary fund line item has been a major concern for the Board, they have been reluctant to provide non-permanent funds because oftentimes those positions tend to become permanent but without the benefits. We have requested that, if the Healthcare Technician position is not approved, we get the temporary funds back so that we can continue to utilize the 24 hours for the in house spay neuter program. The first discussion and review of the proposed budget went well and seem to be very positive. This year the Manager has elected to budget permanent salaries at 100 percent for Fiscal Year 10/11, where in years past they were budgeted at 96 percent.

Community Spay Neuter Fund—*Jean Austin reported that Animal Services received good support from the BOCC during the recent meeting that she and Mr. Marotto attended. Her sense is that the spay neuter plan will move forward and she reiterated that it is a cost saving program. She feels that the Department has done a great job of communicating this to the Commissioners. Mr. Marotto reported that the amount of money available for the \$20 Fix Program would be increased for fiscal year 10/11. The new agreement would be a 20-10-10 configuration: \$20,000 to be expended by Animal Kind for the established programs with up to another \$10,000 available from Orange County spay/neuter fund for a dollar-to-dollar matching basis with funds that Animal Kind raises from citizens in the County. The County's share could be \$20,000 - 30,000, and the total amount for the program could be \$30,000 -40,000. Mr. Marotto noted that on the revenue side, we have been reimbursed more than \$3,000 through the state program.*

Review of Outside Agency Applications—

Ms. Austin reported that she, Bob Marotto and Irene Phipps reviewed and considered applications from organizations requesting grants from the County and selected for consideration by the BOCC. Ms. Austin stated that although all three organizations represented worthy causes, it was determined that none of the three organizations had a “proven” track record and only one of the three had direct application to Animal Services' activities and responsibilities. The reviewers were concerned that there had been no meaningful interaction or dialogue between the Animal Services Department and the organizations, although the applications indicated that there had been. Ms. Austin and the others felt that in order to recommend grants, the programs for which the applicants sought funding should have relevance to the services that Animal Services must provide to Orange County citizens, and that those programs have the potential to serve as a resource for referral by the Department to interested citizens or citizens in need of assistance.

Mr. Marotto added that the outside agency funding process has historically been handled through the Human Resources Advisory Boards. They try to involve other boards that have interest in grant applications submitted to the County and for this coming fiscal year's budget, three applications pertained to animal related issues. Our recommendations went back to the Manager's office as part of the budget process.

Old Business—

ASAB Committee Status Reports

Placement Partner Agreement—*Mr. Marotto reported that the committee is still working on the final version to be submitted to the Manager in the next month or two.*

Nuisance Animal Ordinance—

Ms. Austin gave an update to say that Mr. Green had attended an ASAB meeting in November 2009, making a request that we consider changing the Animal Control Ordinance to exclude farm animals from being defined as nuisance animals. Mr. Green had been cited after receiving an abatement order for animals getting out of his farm property. Mr. Marotto noted that Mr. Green wished to clarify that his request was not an official request from the Agricultural Preservation Board, of which he is a member. Only that he considered the request to be in line with a recommendation in the agricultural development and farm land preservation document that the Agricultural Preservation Board work with the County Animal Services Board to re-evaluate the Animal Control Ordinance for any negative impacts it may have on farmers. Mr. Marotto reported that he had contacted the Sheriff's office per the request of an ASAB member from last month's meeting to get data on how many animal calls were received last year. The Sheriff reported that there were approximately eighty animal calls; twenty-five of them related to animals were in the roadway. Out of those twenty-five, four to six were large animals. He noted that this does not include calls responded to by the Highway Patrol.

*Motion was made by Kris Bergstrand and seconded by Daniel Textoris to request that Animal Services staff come back to the ASAB with a report based upon all the findings leading the ASAB to the conclusion that there should be no recommendation to amend the ordinance to exclude farm animals from the "nuisance" designation. After adoption by the ASAB, the report would then be transmitted to the Manager's office. **VOTE: Unanimous***

February Statistical Summary—*Jess Allison reported that 196 animals were admitted in February 2010, that is down by 46 animals compared to January. Twelve were recovered, 85 adopted, 40 were transferred and 74 euthanized. Irene Phipps reported that 47 stray animals were brought in by Animal Control, 19 were surrenders and that there were no positive rabies cases last month. Animal Services held a rabies clinic in February with a total of 49 dogs and 47 cats vaccinated, combined with local veterinarians there were a total of 624 dogs and 568*

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cats vaccinated in February. Another clinic will be held on April 22nd at the Public Marketplace in Hillsborough from 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Mr. Marotto added that placement numbers are down, this seems to be a pattern after the holiday and other shelters in the state are having the same experience. It continues to be a struggle to keep the adoption numbers up even as we maintain a community-oriented focus and work hard on outreach. Intake numbers tend to be down as well and we are not sure why that is occurring.

New Business—*Ms. Austin reported that a request was made and authorized for the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) to use the multipurpose conference room to conduct a meeting at the Animal Services Facility. She noted that it was a legitimate business request and that it did not mean that Animal Services endorsed the HSUS or its meeting focus. Mike Nelson confirmed that the County has a policy of allowing community organization to utilize county facilities, and the granting of a request by an animal protection agency to use the meeting room at the Animal Services Center was entirely appropriate.*

Updates—

Open House- *Animal Services has been working on planning an open house in the next few months. This week Mr. Marotto was asked by the Assistant County Manager if this was a justified use of staff time and whether it added value to our operation. We were asked to desist from the activity. The Assistant Count Manager did suggest possibly having an educational event with school children. This suggestion was not pursued and will be discussed further with the Program Coordinator. After reporting this to the ASAB, board members felt strongly about the importance of having an Open House and have volunteered to provide whatever is necessary to make it happen. Mr. Marotto will go back to the Assistant County Manager to communicate the Board's willingness to assist in planning and implementing the Open House, and then follow up with board members.*

Spay/Neuter Day USA, 2010— *Mr. Marotto reported that it was a success in terms of the Resolution passed by the BOCC, and that a total of 22 animals were spay/neutered by POPNC on that day. In addition, Helping Paws set up a booth on the UNC campus to explain to citizens the benefits of spay and neutering your animal.*

Brian Hare with Duke K-9 Cognition will be giving a lecture on April 20th, 2010 at Animal Services regarding the effects of domestication of dog cognition.

April 22, 2010 a Volunteer Appreciation dinner will be held to recognize all of their dedication and hard work for the Animal Services Department.

Irene Phipps announced that Kindra Mammone of CLAWS held a seminar at the Animal Services Department for local agencies in March on raptors and other unusual birds of prey. 33 participants attended the seminar to learn about the handling and rehabilitation of these types of birds.

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Motion was made by Daniel Textoris and seconded by Susan Elmore to adjourn the meeting.
VOTE: Unanimous.

Next ASAB Meeting: Wednesday, April 21, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. in the Multipurpose Conference Room at the new Animal Services Center, 1601 Eubanks Road, Chapel Hill.