

**Animal Services Advisory Board (ASAB)
Approved Minutes for March 18, 2009 Meeting**

Present ASAB Members: Daniel Textoris, Pat Sanford, Jean Austin, Kris Bergstrand, Bonnie Norwood, Rachel Beckham, Suzanne Roy, Tracy Carroll, Susan Elmore

Absent ASAB Members: Rob Gray, Dewana Anderson and Ross Oglesbee.

Others in Attendance: Animal Services Director Bob Marotto, Shelter Manager Jess Allison, Program Coordinator Sarah Fallin and Animal Control Manager, Irene Phipps.

Public Members Present: Elizabeth Overcash

Welcome and Opening Comments—ASAB Chair, Susan Elmore, called the meeting to order.

A small reception was held for Commissioner Mike Nelson to welcome him on to the ASAB as the new BOCC liaison.

Motion was made by Jean Austin and seconded by Kristine Bergstrand to approve the Agenda dated March 18, 2009. **VOTE:** Unanimous.

Motion was made by Jean Austin and seconded by Tracy Carroll to approve the minutes dated February 11, 2009 with additions to include concerns expressed during that meeting from several members about not including the microchips as part of the adoption, but to offer it as an elective to adopters. **VOTE:** Unanimous

Rabies Update— Bob Marotto reported that there was a third positive rabies case on March 6, 2009. It involved a raccoon and four dogs, three of which were unvaccinated. Two of three were euthanized and a decision on the third unvaccinated dog has not been decided. The one vaccinated dog was re-boostered.

Mr. Marotto also reported that in February we held the first two of the low cost Rabies Clinics with a successful turnout, a combined total of 139 animals were vaccinated.

General Public Comment—None

Unfinished Business—

February Statistics—Jess Allison gave an overview of the February 2009 Animal Sheltering Statistics and she reported that overall the numbers look good.

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FY09/10 Budget Update—Bob Marotto provided members with two documents in reference to the budget. One is an email from County Manager, Laura Blackmon announcing her resignation and it addresses the budget situation that Orange County is currently facing. A significant factor is that the amount of revenue shortfalls for the fiscal year is higher than anticipated at approximately \$8.7 million. Ms. Blackmon announced there would be no cost of living or merit increases this year for staff. The county would also have to find ways to cover a projected increase of 8% in the cost of healthcare. The Commissioners and Managers are committed to doing everything that can reasonably be done not to lay off staff.

Mr. Marotto also reviewed a Summary Sheet developed to present to the Board of Commissioners through the Managers Office for Animal Services at a work session earlier this month on the budget and 10% reductions, approximately \$43,000.00. Included are service reductions and savings associated with the move to the new Animal Services Center. The Managers along with the Commissioners are reviewing this information.

Mr. Nelson added that the 8.7 million shortfalls may not be all of it but until the State Legislature finishes their budget process we cannot say for sure if that number will increase.

ASAB Committee Status Reports—

Dangerous Task Force—The committee held one meeting this month and the main topic of discussion was how to restrain animals in a secure way that not only protects them but the citizens of Orange County and in a cost effective way. Ms. Sanford reported that a draft would be prepared for the board to review. Mr. Marotto requested that we coordinate in terms of how the initial version is received by staff in order to provide feedback prior to a working document coming to this board for review. It would also be helpful to staff to project some type of time frame.

Potentially Dangerous Dog Appeal—Jean Austin reported that there have been no meetings held since the February 4, 2009 hearing. Ms. Austin did say that the appeals process is getting refined as each case is heard and that the techniques used are improving.

Mr. Marotto did report that the last case had interesting jurisdictional issues. Both parties lived in Orange County but someone who lived in Chatham County made the report. One issue that emerged was that the event occurred on a Private Road and the question asked was, is it off the owner's property if it is on a Private Road. At the end, the declaration was reversed two to one not because of this issue but because there was not a sufficient amount of evidence to justify the facts that lead to the declaration based on the dogs behavior.

Spay/Neuter Committee—Pat Sanford reported that the committee has ask staff to review the Strategic Spay Neuter Plan and they would like to vote on it at the April ASAB meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 23rd at 6:00 p.m. The Orange County Animal Shelter's stats are one of the best stats in North Carolina. Ms. Sanford believes that that low numbers

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show that we can get the euthanasia rate down to 30% or less on an annual basis within three years. The committee is looking at having a three county strategic plan, which would include Chatham and Durham counties. If the plan is adopted the committee hopes that it will have a domino effect in North Carolina.

Placement Partner Committee—Bob Marotto reported that at this time no progress has been made. The committee has not had time to put together the inventory of rescues that we currently transfer to but that list will be provided at a future meeting.

New Business—

Partnering Organizations— Elizabeth Overcash, Co-Chair of Helping Paws was invited to give an overview of their organization. Ms. Overcash reported that they work with Orange County Animal Shelter and Paws 4-Ever and their main focus is to train members on how to walk dogs and to socialize cats. They also do community outreach almost every weekend to help get as many animals from the shelter adopted. They have trained 100 volunteers and approximately ten of the volunteers currently work at the shelter.

Animal Services Appreciation— Sarah Fallin requested from the board that we recognize Mr. Conrad Hawk, Jr. that made a \$5,000.00 donation and Mr. Frazier Keck who recently donated a Mercedes, which will be auctioned off, and the monies received will go to Orange County Animal Services. A motion was made by Pat Sanford and seconded by Daniel Textoris to present Conrad Hawk, Jr. and Frazier Keck Certificates of Appreciation for their donations.

VOTE: Unanimous

Mr. Marotto mentioned that in addition to these donations a bequest was received from an estate for approximately \$12,000.00, which is currently in probate. The plan is to use all of these funds for the purchase of medical equipment to be used in the new Animal Services Center.

2008 Statistics in Review—Jess Allison gave an overview of two handouts she provided to members. The adoption goal for each month is one hundred animals and it is believed that due to the economy we are currently not meeting that goal. We continue to work closely with the Placement Partner Groups in order to get as many animals placed but they too are affected by the hard economic times.

Euthanasia Bill—Bob Marotto reported a question from the County Manager's office wanting to know if we have reviewed the Euthanasia Bills (H6; H27). One of the Commissioners had been contacted about developing some type of county support for one of the bills. The bills discuss a series of changes that were made in the Animal Welfare Act regarding the euthanasia and certification practices rules and regulations. Both bills are essentially saying carbon monoxide would be outlawed. Additional background is about how the current professional

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standards that we follow compare to the proposed bills. Mr. Nelson said that the Orange Counties legislative packets go out in April. The board decided that there would not be enough time to prepare anything to meet that deadline and that the issue would be revisited at a future ASAB meeting.

*Motion was made by Jean Austin and seconded by Susan Elmore to adjourn the meeting.
VOTE: Unanimous.*

Next ASAB Meeting: *Wednesday, April 15 2009, at 6:30 p.m. in the Southern Human Services Center Conference Room, 2501 Homestead Road, Chapel Hill.*