**DURHAM COUNTY**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Animal Welfare Advisory Committee**

**Tuesday, January 23, 2024**

**7:00 PM**

**[Virtual Meeting – Microsoft Teams]**

**Present:**

*Committee Members:*Dr. Jenny Campbell, Shenell Little, Lt. Georgette Ray, Dr. Ashley Banes

*Non-voting Members:*Captain Mark Manning, Lt. Wendy Pinner, Shafonda Allen, Commissioner Heidi Carter, Jan Paul

*Community Members:* Sarah Reichman, Brian Mulligan, Madelein Jones, Alisha Kettner, Rodney Jenkins, Karen Kelcy

*Committee Counsel:* Nathan McKinney

*Sheriff’s Counsel:* Keisha Lovelace

**Item I – Introductory Remarks**

Dr. Jenny Campbell called the meeting to order after 7:00 p.m. A roll call was conducted, and there was a quorum.

**Item II - Approval of Minutes**

The meeting minutes for the November 2023 meeting were not approved at this meeting.

**Item III – Animal Services Report**

Dr. Ashley Banes comes to AWAC with strong recommendations. She has been appointed but still needs to be sworn.

Last November Animal Services created four civilian positions within Animal Services. They had 30 applicants in the pool and are two weeks away from having a review board and go through the process. They will be hiring within a month.

Captain Mannign provide a brief report on Animal Services’ activities in December. Animal Services responded to 886 calls for service during December. Their response time was down to 17 minutes (it 19 minutes previously). Animal Services attended one community event. They completed 162 different incident reports and impounded 100 different animals, including two bats, four birds, 17 cats, four chickens, 66 dogs, one fish, one goat, one rabbit, two raccoons, and one aquatic snail (which was left in someone’s home during an eviction). Of the animals impounded, ten animals (one cat and nine dogs) were returned home due to microchipping. Of the 66 dogs impounded, 33 dogs came from stray calls. There were 34 nuisance calls and 20 home confinement checks for animal bites. Animal Services investigated four rabies cases and tested five animals, all of which were negative. Animal Services issued 66 warnings and issued 10 civil penalties. Animal Services provided 88 rabies vaccinations. Animal Services also assists the civil division on evictions when they leave pets.

Animal Services anticipates a strong uptake in civil penalties due to an increase in calls received (especially in regard to tethering).

**Item IV – Shelter Report**

Director Allen provided the shelter report. The shelter took in 425 animals in November and 316 animals in December; the majority were strays (67% in November and 69% in December). The shelter is still microchipping every animal adopted out. Even so, most stray animals come in with no identification.

The shelter had a successful fundraiser this month, and all dogs are receiving new dog beds.

Unfortunately, intake is up, while adoptions are down. The shelter is having difficulty placing large dogs. There are over 200 animals in foster care. Kitten season is beginning, as well. The shelter is planning the annual Walk for the Animals.

**Item V – Old Business**

We discussed positions. Marianne Bond is confirmed through December 2024. We now have Dr. Ashley Banes, who still needs to be sworn in and go through ethics training. Captain Mannign will provide Dr. Banes with information on swearing in.

**Item VI – New Business**

There was no new business.

**Item VII – Public Comments**

Karen Kelcy provided public comment. She wants to help get information out to the public on what animal control does. She is interested in what we as citizens can do to help get that information out.

Dr. Jenny Campbell introduced Karen to Sarah Reichman and Jones. Karen clarified that she wanted to help with providing resources to help the community understand the role of animal control. She noted a bit of negativity on social media about animal control and a misunderstanding of their role. She was surprised at their call volume.

Sarah explained that animal welfare is complex on many levels and that expecting Animal Services and APS to solve all the problems in our community is unrealistic. We also have community nonprofits that work within the community on different levels and on different issues, such as Beyond Fences and Independent Animal Rescue. Sarah is working on gathering information on spay/neuter resources in Durham as well. Director Allen agreed that there can be a misunderstanding of Animal Services among the public and especially on social media. The public does not have a clear understanding of what Animal Services legally can and cannot do, as Animal Services is limited by the laws that they enforce.

Jones brought up that the city website does not have the 2024 meeting dates for AWAC. We need to get this updated so as to be transparent and accessible to the community.

Jones asked about ride-along outings with Animal Services. Captain Manning stated that Animal Services is happy to do a ride-along for a member of the public. The individual riding along would need to complete a liability form and schedule a ride-along. Brian Mulligan has done a ride-along and stated that he learned a lot from this experience. You can set up a ride-along by contacting Captain Manning at [MLManning@DurhamSheriff.org](mailto:MLManning@DurhamSheriff.org).

Jones asked for an update on the new Durham County animal shelter. Commissioner Heidi Carter stated that there is a capital improvement plan, updated every two years, and that plan has $3.4 million scheduled to go toward a new animal shelter in 2024 to 2025.

A motion was made to adjourn and seconded.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 26, 2024.