

# DURHAM COUNTY

## MEETING MINUTES Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

7:00 PM

[Virtual Meeting – Microsoft Teams]

### **Present:**

*Committee Members:* Dr. Jenny Campbell, Shenell Little, Elizabeth Overcash, Marianne Bond, Joshua Sotomayor, Dr. Kate Bremser, Jan Paul

*Non-voting Members:* Captain Mark Manning, Lt. Wendy Pinner, Scott Tanner, Leah Santelli, Shafonda Allen, Commissioner Heidi Carter

*Community Members:* Sarah Reichman, Herman Sperling, Chase Omary, Brian Mulligan, Grace Marsh, Jones

*Committee Counsel:* Nathan McKinney

*Sheriff's Counsel:* Keisha Lovelace

### **Item I – Introductory Remarks**

Dr. Campbell started the meeting at 7:02 pm and it was determined that there was a quorum. Dr. Campbell announced that members of the community had an announcement which would be at the end of the meeting. Marianne Bond went through a roll call of those on the call to include voting, non-voting members, and community members.

### **Item II - Approval of Minutes**

The meeting minutes for the last meeting were emailed out to all committee members. No corrections were noted and a motion was made by Marianne Bond and seconded by Elizabeth Overcash to approve the minutes as written.

### **Item III – Animal Services Report**

Captain Manning reported the Sheriff's appointee is in the process, Georgette Ray. The Sheriff's Office is in the middle of the budget year and Captain Manning was going to highlight overall statistics.

They have been approved to have seven positions allocated to the Animal Services Division. Two office staff positions have completed the interview process and the four Animal Control Officer and one Corporal position posted within the next two weeks. This is a hybrid model with some sworn and non-sworn staff.

In 2023 the calls for service increased 4.3% for a total of 10,556 calls, which is a lot considering only being staffed with eight people.

The largest amount of calls is for stray animals. During this time period they responded to 2,097 stray dogs and from this 539 dogs were impounded. Two hundred were returned to their owners through microchip program. This is up 37.1% from the prior year.

They added a third day to the rabies vaccination clinic and will be looking to increase this to four days. Animal Services administered 894 rabies vaccines and provided 85 vouchers for rabies vaccines to community members.

Animal Services has conducted community outreach by sponsoring children for the holidays and providing gifts as well as having books at the office for children who may visit. They have also provided animal behavior presentations to middle and high school students. Animal Services has also provided supplies such as leashes, collars, and toys to community members for their animals.

The average response time increased from 19 minutes to 20 minutes, from the prior year. They completed 2104 incident reports, participated in 73 community events, issued 745 warnings for violations and 77 civil penalties for a total of \$15,800.

#### **Item IV – Shelter Report**

Director Allen said the shelter is extremely full and intake is up everywhere. For the first 3 months of the fiscal year, APS received 1,800 animals. Sixty-eight percent are stray and the majority are dogs. The animals coming in are not feral, they are owned animals. She they are in good condition and people are looking for them. Director Allen reiterated that collars with tags and microchips are in need.

APS is working on several campaigns and just completed the Movers for Mutts which is sponsored by Two Men and a Truck. It is a month of promotions and adoption discounts for the month of October.

APS adoptions were down from the prior year not as much as last year and the shelter is full of larger dogs. They are constantly doing promotions. The doggie day out is still going strong and the foster program is growing. APS just had the annual Gala and with the help of staff and volunteers, raised \$284,000.

They are continuing the Safety Net Program and the Behavior Hotline to assist community members with their animals.

#### **Item V – Old Business**

No old business

## **Item VI – New Business**

Committee assignments and terms that may be coming to an end, Dr. Kate Bremser and Marianne Bond. Marianne believed her second term was up in January and the bi-laws allow for 2 consecutive terms. Jan Paul said the last report she received from the clerk showed that Dr. Kate Bremser was appointed on March 27, 2017 and January 31, 2023 as the license veterinarian. Marianne's shows her start date as Feb 25, 2019 and end Jan 31, 2025. Dr. Campbell will check on an update.

## **Item VII – Public Comments**

Sarah Reichmann congratulated Captain Manning on the addition of staff and to APS on their fundraising. On Sept 22, 2023, Elizabeth Overcash, Jones and Sarah Reichmann developed a taskforce to address animal welfare in Durham County. The informal taskforce is looking at what resources are available in Durham as well as the needs of the community and how the resources available can meet those needs.

They acknowledge that there is a need for more affordable spay and neuter resources. Sarah said some potential projects might be working to change the size restrictions in DHA so more people can have companion animals.

Another suggestion is to develop a resource page for the public for all of the affordable community options for vet care and spay and neuter from local non-profits.

Lastly, looking at a way to work on return to owner fees as they are set in the ordinance.

Director Allen said there are fees required and set in the ordinance. The amount is down from what it was in prior years because there is not a fine associated with it anymore. APS does assist in paying the fees. The last time the fees were adjusted in 2012.

Jones asked about an update in the proposal for the new shelter. There is no new update and this is an ongoing project in the county plan.

Jan Paul made a motion to adjourn and Marianne Bond seconded the motion to adjourn. Attorney McKinney noted that there was no objection by any voting members.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 23, 2024.