



Public Safety Department
Animal Services Division
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Manatee County Animal Services Advisory Board

Wednesday, May 25, 2016; 5:45 p.m.

**Manatee County Animal Services
305 25th St. W., Palmetto, Fla.**

In attendance: Lisa Barnott, Dr. Doyens, Rebecca Neal, Jean Peelen, Gerald Thomas, Lisa Williams, and Sarah Brown, chief, Animal Services Division and Assistant State Attorney Lisa Chittaro

Meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m. by board chairwoman Jean Peelen.

Approval of April 18 meeting minutes

Division Chief Updates

- Current shelter census given: Intake of 420 animals in April; 54 adoptions, 200 transferred to rescues, 60 return-to-owners
- 94 percent save rate for the month
- Due possibly to the large amount of publicity recently, there have been 31 adoptions just in the last week
- There is an offer letter out for a new shelter manager
- Hans Wohlfahrt, the new outreach and events specialist, was introduced; has been on the job for one month. Has lots of plans to get AS and the animals out in front of the public
- June is Adopt-a-Cat month
- Adopt-a-palooza is scheduled for Aug. 6
- The first shelter partners' meeting was held; there will be a concentration on pet retention techniques to try to minimize surrenders
- AS and the county's rescues are going to work together to provide collaborative stats, in order to give a more complete picture of the animal rescue/adoption/euthanasia in the county
- Working on more complete kennel cards, intake records to help potential adopters have as much info as possible
- Implementing new training methodology, to use positive reinforcement (e.g. Easy Walks instead of prong collars)
- Pets that are adoptable but who need work will be classified as "rescue only."

Board Discussion on Policy Ideas

Seven main ideas were identified from last month's meeting. Each board member was asked to work on at least one:

1. Can Animal Services support itself through services? Gerald Thomas

2. Recommend increases in funds allocated by County Commission to provide spay/neuter services to qualified, low income individuals. Rebecca Neal
 3. Recommend change of current policy regarding the neutering of dogs found at large. Lisa Williams
 4. Act to limit the sales of dogs and cats at Manatee pet stores, thus affecting the economic future of puppy mills. Lisa Barnott
 5. Recommend changes to County's animal ordinance. Jean Peelen
 6. Should the no-kill fund move in-house? Rebecca Neal
 7. Owner requested euthanasia – should it be eliminated or modified? Dr. Doyens
 8. Code of conduct/ethics for AS staff. Gerald Thomas
- G. Thomas asked if it would be beneficial to have a code of conduct/ethics for the staff, over and above what the County calls for. Was added to the list as policy idea No. 8.
 - G. Thomas asked if two board members can meet to work on an issue if the meeting is noticed and the public is invited ...
 - R. Neal recommended looking at tag fees in Hillsborough County – more is charged for animals that are not neutered. G. Thomas will work on this in conjunction with policy No. 1.

Twelve-Month Priorities

J. Peelen asked that board members have some timelines prepared for the June meeting.

Board Member Comments

- R. Neal: County is out of low income spay/neuter money in only six months. J. Peelen suggested that if it is a crisis, to bring it back as an emergency at the June meeting.
- G. Thomas: Lots of positive press on both AS and Sarah Brown; much appreciated.
- J. Peelen: Pet adopters are offered a "first vet visit free"; should all vets be offered the chance to be included in the program, instead of the single one who's currently participating? Dr. Doyens, S. Brown agreed. Efforts to reach out to vet community will be pursued.

Public Comment:

- Have we tried having a free spay/neuter day once a month, using different vets? Was determined that there were always going to be expenses that would have to be covered by grants or donations.
- Per Assistant State Attorney Lisa Chittaro, cruelty enforcement has increased, due to better partnership between law enforcement and other community partners, including the State Attorney's Office's Animal Abuse Coalition; also, scientific advancements (forensically) have been made
- More praise for S. Brown and her attitude, availability and responsiveness!
- AS needs better signage; either on the main road or perhaps via a large flagpole?
- Microchips and their registration need to be a priority.

Next Meeting: June 22, 2016 at 5:45 p.m. at Manatee County Animal Services.

Adjournment: 6:55 p.m.