

Approval of the meeting minutes from January 14, 2016

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONAL CENTER FOR ANIMAL CARE AND PROTECTION HELD AT 11:00 A.M. ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2016, IN THE COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM LOCATED AT THE NOEL C. TAYLOR MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 215 CHURCH AVENUE, ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan O'Donnell
Christopher Morrill
Barry W. Thompson
Christopher Perkins

MEMBERS ABSENT: David Moorman

OTHERS PRESENT: David Flagler
Anne Marie Green
Andrea Trent
Tony Zerrilla

Mr. O'Donnell called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. and Ms. Trent called the roll.

Mr. O'Donnell made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2015 meeting; the motion was seconded by Mr. Perkins and carried by a voice vote, all members present voting in favor.

The next item on the agenda was the operations update. Mr. Flagler commented that the statistics for October, November and December were similar so he would comment on the year end numbers. For calendar year 2015, there were 500 fewer dogs and cats cared for as in 2014. The live release rate for dogs was 93% and 62% for cats which was over a five percent increase in the live release rate from 2014. No healthy animals were euthanized. This is an annual trend for them. With regard to the adoption statistics during this same time period, they maintained around 35 cat adoptions and 40 dog adoptions for each month with a year-end total of 290 cats and 471 dogs that were adopted.

Under general operations Mr. Flagler reported that the shelter had its annual State inspection on December 8th without any issues. The leveling of the floor in the community cat room that was approved at the last meeting had been completed and the next step is to move in the furniture to allow for six to eight cats to share that hallway. Dr. Rogers is now working with them and having access to his mobile surgery clinic has been a great asset.

Mr. Flagler next gave an update on the volunteer program. Students from Virginia Tech did a project of collecting data from the lost and found pet posters, reports and websites to try and determine whether or not those animals had been found. This gave them an opportunity to update the posters in the lobby.

In October, eight new volunteers joined the shelter with 276 reported hours at the shelter and 195 reported hours working away from the shelter. In November, there were five new volunteers with 245 hours in the shelter and 112 away from the shelter. In December, there were three new volunteers with 285 hours at the shelter and 62 hours away from the shelter. Roanoke County has decided to centralize volunteer programs and Mr. Flagler commented he is serving on that committee.

With regard to marketing initiatives, Mr. Flagler commented that they had a Howl into Mewl-O-Ween event during Halloween where they stayed open late with six or eight animals being adopted. They participated in PetSmart's National Adoption Weekend at Valley View Mall with 19 animals adopted. In December they had an event with 30 animals adopted. They had a donation of billboard space at the corner of Orange Avenue and 13th Street the week between Christmas and New Year's holidays. The same donor wants to sponsor a spring billboard for a 2-3 week period in April.

Mr. Flagler next gave an update on grants. The sink has been placed in the cat isolation room and the cages have been shipped. PetSmart Charities has undergone a major restructuring with their charities and has terminated all of their charity employees. They are giving them an opportunity to re-apply for positions in the new structuring, but they do not know at this time what the impact will be on the donations to shelters. In response to a question if the other national pet stores provide funding, Mr. Flagler responded that they do, but not to the degree that PetSmart Charities does.

Ms. Trent commented that the Fiscal and Administrative Operations Committee continues to meet on a monthly basis and they are spending the majority of their time working through the budget. Also, they are working on an amendment to the initial agreement which is currently under review by their attorneys. Ms. Trent further commented that it was decided by the Board that they would look at a calendar year instead of fiscal year for the next budget year. They have the numbers for December 31st and it appears that the City lost a fraction of a percent and the County was the recipient of the additional percentage of utilization. We are building those figures into the current budget.

With regard to the financial report, Mr. Zerrilla commented that we have six months of activity which is a good time to see where we are compared to budget. Excluding the money that we have budgeted to use from the reserves, the revenues are right at 50%. With respect to expenses, wages and benefits are right at 50% of budget; contractual services are slightly higher at 54% of budget and the fiscal agent fee is at 50%. Other charges are at 38% of budget because there is a large insurance bill that has not been paid yet. Capital outlay is \$10,000 for the year so far with only \$3,000 budgeted. Mr. Flagler commented that the overage is the cost of building the wall in the corridor and the \$2,000 that was approved and set aside to level the floor. Mr. Zerrilla next commented that with all of the variances, the expenditures are right at 50% of budget. Page four of the analysis showed all of the grant activity. Most of those have all been utilized and Mr. Flagler is working down the cat isolation room grant and the pet ID program grant.

Mr. Morrill asked the timing on next year's budget and Ms. Trent responded the Committee is waiting on some figures from the County on health care so they can finalize the personnel. Everything is pretty much complete on the operations side. Mr. Zerrilla commented that they will formally bring the budget to the Board in April for approval.

Under old business:

Mr. Flagler commented that with regard to the roof, they are working with the County to bring in an engineer to spec out the requirements for the RFP. Ms. Trent commented that she included in the agenda package information from the previous meeting regarding the roof.

Under public comments:

Dr. Jim Franko commented that his wife has been a volunteer at the pound since July. He then commented that he has been told there is not a very positive environment for volunteers at the

pound and the information that has been shared with him is very negative and in some ways adversarial and their efforts are not appreciated.

He asked the Board to take more interest in developing a positive relationship between the volunteers and the employees that the environment at the pound would be enhanced. He suggested that they make some unannounced, unplanned visits and to speak individually with the volunteers to get their opinions.

Shari Herzog commented that she is a volunteer with the pound and she asked the Committee's current status on the foster program at the pound. Mr. Flagler responded that the foster program is intended to find temporary homes for animals that need assistance medically or behaviorally. As they see the need, they make animals available for foster and the website shows the numbers that have been identified for fosters. One issue they have is many people want to foster animals that need to be at the shelter so the animal is available for adoption. The County has created an ordinance that allows people who live in the County to now have an additional animal as part of their pet limit if it is part of the foster program. Mr. Morrill asked about the County ordinance and Mr. O'Donnell responded that they did have a limit of three dogs, but it was raised to four if one or more of those are in the foster program.

Mary Jane Barrett commented on an incident that happened when she was trying to adopt a dog for her sister and how she was treated by the staff at the pound. She also commented on the billboard and commented that perhaps they should try to partner with credit unions.

Karen Crawford commented that she is has been a volunteer for five years. She asks who has the authority to activate and deactivate key cards. Mr. Flagler responded Trish Deaton.

Gary Crawford commented that his wife is Karen Crawford and her key card along with Ms. Franko's key card were deactivated and the pound has refused to reactivate them. She was not told why it was deactivated. He further commented on her commitment to volunteering and that volunteers at the pound are not appreciated.

Sarah Martin commented that she is a volunteer for Angels of Assisi and Southwestern Virginia Wildlife Rescue and through her research she has found it is possible for a community to be "no-kill". Mr. Flagler commented that for the animals that are being euthanized they base the criteria on the Asilomar Accords, which is a national standard for identifying animals. Healthy animals are animals that have behaviorally and medically sound for adoption. Other categories are treatable and rehabilitatable, treatable and manageable and unhealthy and untreatable. We hope as a community that we will evolve to where we are able to save all of the treatable and rehabilitatable animal. Once we have reached that, we hope to evolve to find homes for all of the treatable and manageable animals so that the only ones that are facing euthanasia are the ones that are unhealthy and untreatable.

Ms. Martin further commented on the pound's mission statement which is to provide temporary shelter, to return them to their owners or find them suitable homes. It is not to rid the community of overpopulation or to kill animals that have nowhere to go. She then asked how many cats were killed in each month from September to December and Mr. Flagler commented that the statistics are maintained on the website. She also asked if the pound had taken specific steps toward becoming "no kill" and Mr. Flagler responded that seeing the live release rate increasing is showing the organization evolving towards "no kill". Nationally a "no-kill" organization is one that can place 90% of the animals in their shelter. They do that for dogs, but cats are the problem. It is not just a shelter issue, it is a community issue and people need to accept responsibility for these animals in the community and get them spayed or neutered.

With no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry W. Thompson
Recording Secretary