

Lane County Animal Services Advisory Minutes

March 10, 2014

Members Present: Ann Jensen, Chair, Tamara Banavige, David Calderwood, Dale Hyland, Scott Bartlett

Members Absent: Dr. DuWayne Penfold, Dr. Bill Young

Guests Present: Pat Farr, County Commissioners Liason
Cary Lieberman, Greenhill Humane Society
Jaclyn Rudebeck, Greenhill Humane Society

Staff Present: Mike Russell, Lane County

Public Present (signed in):

Robyn Broadbent	Flydogs2@aol.com
Tamara Barnes	tamarabarnes1@gmail.com
Marilyn Lance	Marilyn.lance@gmail.com
Alice Davenport	aadavenport@yahoo.com
Vivian Nichols	viviannic2001@yahoo.com
Linda Fulp	desertlovr1@aol.com
Linda Garrett	lind.garrett@yahoo.com
Sylvia Zunin	sylpeaches@hotmail.com
Diane Bolte-Silverman	boltesilverman@comcast.net

The meeting started at 3:02 p.m.

Welcome/Public Comment

Chair Ann Jensen called the meeting to order. She opened public comment.

Marilyn Lance testified that she is concerned about the euthanasias occurring at 1st Avenue Shelter. She said she has contacted shelter staff and asked for details and has not received adequate response. She said she would continue to work for the benefit of animals in the community.

Chair Jensen closed the public comment period.

Approval of the Minutes

The committee reviewed minutes for February 2014 minutes. David Calderwood moved to adopt the minutes as presented, Dale Hyland seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Lane County Officer Activities

Mr. Russell explained that the report was not available as the Animal Services Office Assistant was out of the office for most of the month and he will present February and March reports in April.

Mr. Russell also informed the committee that online licensing was nearly ready and should be ready for public use within the next week.

1st Avenue Shelter's Activities

Cary Lieberman passed out the 1st Avenue Shelter and Outcome reports. Overall Live Release is 92% rate. For animals transferred to Greenhill, 99% Live Release rate.

Scott Bartlett asked about the volume of animals compared to when LCAS was running the shelter. Mr. Lieberman stated the volume of animals is comparable to when LCAS was running the shelter.

The committee discussed the coverage of the Lane County Animal Control Officer and challenges with trying to respond to calls for service from Florence on the coast, to Blue River up the McKenzie River.

Mr. Bartlett asked why there have been so many emails about specific animals within the shelter that face euthanasia. Mr. Lieberman explained that Greenhill's approach is different than what LCAS did in that they are trying to be more careful about working with specific rescues to make sure communication is clear and that both 1st Avenue Shelter and the perspective rescues have correct information rather than broadcast emails that have mis-information and actually cause more misunderstanding and challenges. Mr. Lieberman said that the "Red Alert" system formerly used by LCAS does not work for Greenhill in operating the shelter because they do not set dates for euthanasias and saying "this animal has two weeks left" is not the way Greenhill operates the shelter.

Mr. Lieberman related a case in point with "Rhett". Rhett needed to be rescued and Greenhill was in communication with a perspective organization, but because of the "communication war" going on, not by Greenhill, wrong information entered the process and it took longer to resolve Rhett's case because of it. In the end, the rescue took Rhett and he is doing fine.

Chair Jensen asked about clarification on complaints that the information on animals on the 1st Avenue Shelter website is not accurate or not updated. Jaclyn Rudebeck responded that she has been working to revise procedures for office staff regarding the website information. Sometimes information is incomplete because there is no known owner and shelter staff simply does not have the information.

1st Avenue Shelter Assessment Policy and Procedure Review

Ms. Rudebeck explained that the majority of dogs that come into the shelter are strays and as a result no behavior information is known about the animals. Staff tries to get as much information from those dropping off the animal at the shelter, either a finder or an Animal Control Officer. Ms. Rudebeck explained that, along with ongoing behavior observation, the shelter uses a standardized behavior assessment tool from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), called SAFER®. More information on the SAFER® assessment process can be obtained by going to www.ASPCApro.org. Ms. Rudebeck went on to explain the process and supplemental tests staff perform. Ms. Rudebeck explained that one of the tests involves a dog's response to another dog. She said that there are times when another live animal may not be available for this test so they do use a life-sized fake dog at times. Ms. Rudebeck stated that she is working to get key staff certified in the SAFER® assessment. Ms. Rudebeck stated that no animal has been euthanized based on its reaction to the fake dog. It is more beneficial when talking to potential adopters if they have other pets in the home.

Mr. Bartlett explained that the current design of the shelter does not help animal's stress levels and asked what the plans are to build a new one or address the deficiencies in the current building. Mr. Lieberman said that he hopes to address this over the next seven years.

Chair Jensen encouraged Greenhill to get staff certified as soon as possible.

Mr. Bartlett asked if there is apparent neglect or abuse, is that taken into consideration before doing the assessment. Ms. Rudebeck responded in the affirmative.

Chair Jensen and Tamara Banavige asked if there is an animal identified for euthanasia for behavior issues, is there criteria or a scoring requirement. Ms. Rudebeck said that there is a behavior matrix that the shelter uses observations from the assessment, observations from daily interactions, and is given a behavior level 1 through 4. Level 1 is adoptable, Level 2 is manageable and potential adopters will be advised, Level 3 may be adoptable or candidates for a rescue organization depending on degree or severity, and Level 4 are dogs with severe behavior issues that may be candidates for a rescue with specific abilities to address the behavior issues or identified for euthanasia.

David Calderwood passed out an outline of Greenhill Humane Society behavior resources for the committee's reference.

Mr. Calderwood stated that his response to Rhett's case was to ask other Rottweiler breeders about the behaviors identified in the emails and that they said, as an example, mouthing humans is not something that is normal for a Rottweiler and should not be encouraged in the breed. He said he is glad that Rhett went to a rescue.

Commissioner Farr thanked Ms. Rudebeck for the behavior assessment information and asked about her background. Ms. Rudebeck said she is an attorney and studied psychology in college. She served on the Board of Greenhill for several years before becoming a staff member.

Mr. Bartlett asked if the former LCAS Euthanasia Review Committee was a good process and what is the internal review for Greenhill. Ms. Rudebeck stated that Greenhill's Board President, Dr. Valentine, receives and reviews all the documentation for every animal that is euthanized. Greenhill also has an Animal Care Committee that sets policy and developed the matrix spoken about before. Ms. Rudebeck also said that euthanasia decisions are not made unilaterally, except in the case of severe medical issues, and that they are made by consensus of staff.

Discussion on Licensing Enhancement

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Mr. Russell asked the committee to finalize its recommendations to the Board of Commissioners. The committee discussed the recommendations for:

-Lifting zoning limit laws -Licensing of animal rescue organizations

-Centralizing licensing to one agency -A Inter-jurisdictional Advisory Committee -Free or low-cost micro-chipping with license purchase

Adjournment

The meeting ended at 5:06 p.m.

Approved April 14, 2014

Minutes Recorder
Mike Russell, Parks Manager