

January 29, 2020

**BURKE COUNTY ANIMAL ADVISORY BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING**

The Burke County Animal Advisory Board met in regular session on Wednesday, January 29, 2020, at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Burke County Board of Commissioners' Chambers, located at 110 N. Green Street in Morganton, North Carolina. Members present were:

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| <b>PRESENT:</b>      | Debbie Hawkins<br>Gwen Stephens<br>Allen Keller<br>Dr. Linda Schilkowsky<br>Amy Burnette |
| <b>ABSENT:</b>       | Jeff Robinson and Megan Bradley  |
| <b>ALSO PRESENT:</b> | Kaitlin Settlemyre, Animal Services Director   |
| <b>ALSO ABSENT:</b>  | Rebecca McLeod, Health Director (Resource for AAB)                                       |

**CALL TO ORDER**

Debbie Hawkins called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion: To approve the agenda for January 29, 2020 as presented.**

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| <b>RESULT: APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)</b>   |
| <b>MOVER: Allen Keller</b>  |
| <b>SECONDER: Amy Burnette</b>   |
| <b>AYES: Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Dr. Linda Schilkowsky, Amy Burnette, Allen Keller</b> |
| <b>ABSENT: Jeff Robinson and Megan Bradley</b>  |

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion: To approve the minutes of December 18, 2019 as presented.**

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| <b>RESULT: APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)</b>   |
| <b>MOVER: Allen Keller</b>  |
| <b>SECONDER: Gwen Stephens</b>  |
| <b>AYES: Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Dr. Linda Schilkowsky, Amy Burnette, Allen Keller</b> |
| <b>ABSENT: Jeff Robinson and Megan Bradley</b>  |

**PUBLIC COMMENTS - NONE**

**ACTION ITEMS**

**ELECTIONS**

Elections were held for the Board positions of Chair, Co-Chair, and Secretary. Results are as follows:

**CHAIRPERSON**

**Motion: To elect Debbie Hawkins as Chair of the AAB.**

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| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)</b>  |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | <b>Gwen Stephens</b>   |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | <b>Dr. Linda Schilkowsky</b>   |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | <b>Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Amy Burnette, Allen Keller and Dr. Linda Schilkowsky</b> |
| <b>ABSENT:</b>   | <b>Jeff Robinson and Megan Bradley</b>   |

**CO-CHAIR**

**Motion: To elect Gwen Stephens as Co-Chair of the AAB.**

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| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)</b>  |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | <b>Dr. Linda Schilkowsky</b>   |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | <b>Amy Burnette</b>  |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | <b>Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Amy Burnette, Allen Keller and Dr. Linda Schilkowsky</b> |
| <b>ABSENT:</b>   | <b>Jeff Robinson and Megan Bradley</b>   |

**SECRETARY**

**Motion: To elect Megan Bradley as Secretary of the AAB.**

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| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>APPROVED &amp; TABLED (UNANIMOUS)</b>   |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | <b>Allen Keller</b>  |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | <b>Amy Burnette</b>  |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | <b>Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Amy Burnette, Allen Keller and Dr. Linda Schilkowsky</b> |
| <b>ABSENT:</b>   | <b>Jeff Robinson and Megan Bradley</b>   |

Ms. Hawkins said that Ms. Bradley expressed interest in being Secretary. However, due to Ms. Bradley's absence, the Board tabled this item, pending Megan's official approval at the February meeting.

**UPDATE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS SUB-GROUP**

Jeff Robinson was not present to give an update for handouts/posters at the Sheriff's Office.

Gwen Stephens reported on the progress of the public service announcement (PSA) sub-group. She said rough drafts have been sent to Kaitlin, who made suggestions and sent them back to the committee. Once the committee has reviewed and made the corrections, these will be

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returned to Kaitlin, since she is a county employee and must make the final decision. Hawkins asked for a timeframe to complete. Gwen reported it should be completed within a month.

Allen Keller asked if the first PSA was going to be about what Animal Services does. He then reported that BCFFA (Burke Co. Friends for Animals) continues to be inundated with clients that want to surrender animals. When turned away at Animal Services, because they are a "managed intake" operated facility, they show up at BCFFA upset. Keller wanted the public to know that Animal Services operates differently, with managed intake and that pet owners need to schedule with Animal Services to surrender a pet. Gwen Stephens said one of the PSA's addressed this.

Hawkins asked Settlemyre if Animal Services is still distributing the rescues resource list, which they are. Settlemyre said the majority of the owners will schedule an appointment, but there is a high rate of non-compliance to show up for the appointment.

PSA's will be presented to the public by using the COMPAS tv government channel, county website, radio ads, newspaper, and possibly a billboard.

Hawkins asked about Animal Control handing out a flier to people who want to surrender their animal. Owner retention still needs to be the primary goal and educating people on what they might do to keep their animal. Captain Rogers indicated Animal Control would be willing to hand out fliers. An Animal Services volunteer will help design a basic flier for this issue.

Stephens talked about county departments holding block parties – may be a good opportunity to disseminate information.

### **UPDATE FROM COMMUNITY CAT PILOT PROGRAM GROUP (CCPP)**

The CCPP Group wants trapping done more humanely. Some examples they gave included no weather control, i.e. sun/rain, animals being left in cages for days, and sharp lids left on food cans. Ms. Hawkins asked them to draft a definition of COMMUNITY CATS and also inquire what needs to be done for the ordinance revision.

### **ORDINANCE REVIEW**

- a. Dangerous Dogs: Meeting is in the first week of February
- b. Community Cats: Inquire about ordinance revisions
- c. Unaltered Pets: Meeting is in March
- d. 6.6, 6.7, 6.8, 6.9 & Definitions:
  - i. Imminent Danger: An animal that is trapped, been hit by a vehicle, a danger to itself/others
  - ii. When is euthanasia in the field appropriate? According to the Field Ops Manual (Debbie to e-mail everyone a copy), page 32 states that euthanasia in the field is appropriate when an animal is either suffering, severely injured, or chemical immobilization cannot be accomplished.

### **SHELTER NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

**Motion: To recommend the Commissioners accept the Needs Assessment for the Burke Co. Animal Shelter, prepared by Shelter Planners of America, as presented.**

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| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>APPROVED (4-1)</b>  |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | <b>Gwen Stevens</b>  |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | <b>Amy Burnette</b>  |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | <b>Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Dr. Linda Schilkowsky and Amy Burnette</b> |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     | <b>Allen Keller</b>  |
| <b>ABSENT:</b>   | <b>Jeff Robinson and Megan Bradley</b>                                       |

Note: Dr. Schilkowsky and Mr. Keller expressed concern that the new 13,000 sq. ft. shelter as proposed in the Needs Assessment, is not large enough.

**ANIMAL SERVICES UPDATE**

- Homeless Sheltering: AS is looking into warming stations for homeless owner/animals.
- Emergency Management: AS is working on a disaster management plan.
- Local Rescues Pulling: The AAB will conduct audits for animals held within Animal Services, as well as those impounded by Animal Control. The selection of animals will be random.
- Strays vs. Trapped: Kaitlin provided a handout detailing the number of dogs and cats brought to intake that were either strays or trapped.
- Flexibility with Fees: Debbie to ask the Commissioners about the flexibility of fees and if the County Manager is the only person authorized to change the fees.
- Transfers to Rescues Numbers: In 2019 there were nine cat rescues pulling (470 cats were transferred); In 2019 dogs there were 11 dog rescues pulling (442 dogs were transferred).

**Motion: To recommend to the County Commissioners that authority be given to the County Manager to waive / reduce fees, as needed, for adoptions and adoption events for Animal Services.**

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| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>APPROVED (UNANIMOUSLY)</b>  |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | <b>Allen Keller</b>  |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | <b>Gwen Stephens</b>   |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | <b>Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Dr. Linda Schilkowsky, Amy Burnette and Allen Keller</b> |
| <b>ABSENT:</b>   | <b>Jeff Robinson and Megan Bradley</b>   |

**AUDIT**

A random audit was performed on Partners for Cats and Cats Paws with no deficiencies noted.

**Motion: To recommend revising the audit section of the Animal Ordinance to: 1) make audit section less specific and draft a policy to include specifics to audit, 2) include Animal Services in the random audit selection, and 3) include Animal Control in the random audit selection.**

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| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>APPROVED</b>  |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | <b>Allen Keller</b>  |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | <b>Gwen Stephens</b>   |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | <b>Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Dr. Linda Schilkowsky, Amy Burnette and Allen Keller</b> |
| <b>ABSENT:</b>   | <b>Jeff Robinson and Megan Bradley</b>   |

**ORDINANCE DISCUSSION**

Sec. 6-2. (c) was discussed. Change was made in 2017 ordinance which added the line "In circumstances of no severe distress or imminent death, the owner must sign a release in order for the county to take ownership of any animal." The Animal Ordinance of 2010 did not state this. In order to provide education to the public about the managed admission / intake of Animal Services, and the need for Animal Control to prioritize field calls to emergent issues, this section of the ordinance needs to be revised.

**AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

- Secretary Position
- Community Cat Pilot Program Update
- PSA's Update
- Dangerous Dog Ordinance Update
- County Manager Fee Authority
- Audit / Draft Policy

**ADJOURNED AT 7:24 P.M.**

There was no further business to come before the Board.

**Motion: To adjourn.**

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| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>APPROVED</b>  |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | <b>Allen Keller</b>  |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | <b>Gwen Stephens</b>   |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | <b>Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Dr. Linda Schilkowsky, Amy Burnette and Allen Keller</b> |
| <b>ABSENT:</b>   | <b>Jeff Robinson and Megan Bradley</b>   |

The next meeting will be February 26, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

Approved this 26<sup>th</sup> day of February 2020.



Debbie Hawkins  
Chairperson, Animal Advisory Board