

September 25, 2019

**BURKE COUNTY ANIMAL ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING**

The Burke County Animal Advisory Board met in regular session on Wednesday, September 25, 2019, at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was held in Burke County Board of Commissioners Chambers, located at 110 N. Green Street in Morganton, North Carolina. Members present were:

PRESENT:

Debbie Hawkins
Amy Burnette
Gwen Stephens
Allen Keller
Dr. Linda SCHILKOWSKY

ABSENT: Jeff Robinson, excused

ALSO, PRESENT: Rebecca McLeod, Health Director
Kaitlin Settlemyre, Animal Services Director

CALL TO ORDER

Debbie Hawkins called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm. Debbie explained to the board members that a resignation from David Coffin had been received. She will let Kay Draughn know so a new pet owner member can be appointed the Commissioners.

Ms. Hawkins read a statement to remind everyone why they are there. (If Debbie wants that in the minutes, she will provide, and it can be inserted here).

Ms. Hawkins moved into having the agenda and minutes approved from the past two meetings.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: To approve the regular Animal Advisory Board agenda for September 25, 2019.

RESULT: APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER: Allen Keller
SECONDER: Amy Burnette
AYES: Amy Burnette, Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Allen Keller, Dr. Linda Schilkowsy,
Gwen Stephens
ABSENT: Jeff Robinson

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: To approve the regular Animal Advisory Board minutes from June 26, 2019.

RESULT: APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Allen Keller

SECONDER: Gwen Stephens

AYES: Amy Burnette, Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Allen Keller, Dr. Linda Schilkowsy,
Gwen Stephens

ABSENT: Jeff Robinson

Motion: To approve the special Animal Advisory Board minutes for August 21, 2019 with a change to page four (4) for clarification of what the Animal Advisory Board can recommend to commissioners.

RESULT: APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Allen Keller

SECONDER: Amy Burnette

AYES: Amy Burnette, Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Allen Keller, Dr. Linda Schilkowsy,
Gwen Stephens

ABSENT: Jeff Robinson

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were two persons who addressed the Animal Advisory Board. Ms. Toni Powers, from Reason, encouraged the Board to address feral cats in the community. She stated that there is much to be done both in the ordinance and with property owners and law enforcement. She also stated that coordination needed to be between property owners and law enforcements to work with rescues to find homes. She also stated that there needs to be a financial incentive for non-altered animals and that those fees could be higher. She stated that Reason had altered 487 cats last year. She thanked the Board for listening to her recommendations. (For more specifics to be included, she gave her report to Debbie)

Ms. Carla Wallace addressed the Board on behalf of Burke County Animal Welfare Alliance and Partners for Cats. She stated that they were pleased with the changes for Animal Services. She had specific complaints to bring before them today: (1) Animal Services closed to public intake, (2) not all cats are online today, (3) TNR – agrees with and should be inside the city limits of Morganton, (4) their team is not allowed to take pictures or videos anymore, they were asked to not share their pictures. She stated that they need personal involvement. She had a question about the shelter being full. She stated that the rescues are getting calls because they do not understand this because they pay taxes. Different rescues are getting calls also about the shelter being full. She stated that people are angry. She stated there is a fear that the State will come in on foster based rescues. She thanked the Board for their time.

ANIMAL SERVICES CENTER UPDATE

Kaitlin Settlemyre gave an update to the Board. She stated that on October 1st and 2nd, they will be making updates to the building floors. This is due to the last inspection from the State inspector. They are using areas that they had previously not used, and the floors and walls had to be addressed (sally port). There will be limited public access during that time. She stated that the adoptions had increased. She also spoke of Caesar,

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the Pet of the Month. She spoke of his experience at the Commissioners meeting and about the fact that he is on his way to Canines for Warriors in Florida. He will hopefully become a service animal for a veteran.

Kaitlin explained that the new Animal Services Center hours would begin on October 1, 2019. They would be open to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 am to 7 pm. Wednesday, Friday, and Saturdays they would be open from 10 am to 4 pm.

She also explained that they had written their Standard Operating Procedures and that they would be in effect upon approval from the Commissioners. If anything stands out as a problem, then the AAB could let her know.

She stated they currently have 60 animals for the three (3) staff members to care for. She also explained that the Animal Services Center staff would be proceeding with the forms and MOUs. If the AAB saw anything that might create a problem, then they could give recommendations.

Kaitlin went on to explain managed intake. She stated that this was better than before they took over the shelter. She stated that you can't have the old way and expect to have more adoptions. This would work out better for everyone. She stated that they spoke with persons when they came in to do an owner surrender and half of them are due to financial reasons. They do let the rescues know so they may be able to help. Allen Keller stated that may need to figure out what else needs to be said to person to decrease the outrage that persons are feeling if they can't owner surrender when they want to.

REVIEW/AMEND OF BY-LAWS and RULES OF PROCEDURES

Debbie Hawkins asked if anyone had had a chance to review the combined by-laws and rules of procedures. The group discussed to table these documents to the next meeting.

Motion: To table the review of the by-laws and rules of procedure until the next meeting.

RESULT: APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER: Dr. Linda Schilkowsy
SECONDER: Allen Keller
AYES: Amy Burnette, Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Allen Keller, Dr. Linda Schilkowsy
ABSENT: Jeff Robinson

Motion: To approve the mission statement for the Animal Advisory Board as presented.

RESULT: APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER: Allen Keller
SECONDER: Dr. Linda Schilkowsy
AYES: Amy Burnette, Jeff Robinson, Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, David Coffin, Allen Keller, Dr. Linda Schilkowsy
ABSENT:

QUARTERLY RESCUE AUDIT

Ms. Hawkins opened the discussion of the audits by asking everyone to review the audits they had been sent. Ms. McLeod explained that both Mountain Pet Rescue and Brother Wolf had returned all the required documentation for the board's audit. She stated that there was one cat pulled in April 2019 that there was no

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documentation for. The One Day Rescue group had pulled this cat and three (3) emails had been sent requesting information on the cat's status. No response to any of the emails. So, One Day Rescue is not in compliance with the audit.

Motion: To approve the Brother Wolf and Mountain Pet Rescue documentation for their audit.

RESULT: APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Dr. Linda Schilkowsy

SECONDER: Allen Keller

AYES: Amy Burnette, Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Allen Keller, Dr. Linda Schilkowsy

ABSENT: Jeff Robinson

Board members went on to discuss which rescues had not been audited to date. Ms. McLeod gave the background history on which ones had been audited to date. The group looked look over the information given to them for the next audit and decided to audit Rusty's Legacy (first 4) and Avery County (1) for the next audit.

The group decided to randomly pick which animals and since Avery only pulled one, they chose that one. With Rusty's Legacy, they decided to pick the first four animals listed. Kaitlin will get the phone numbers and emails and give to Debbie to contact them.

AUDIT PROCEDURES – ORDINANCE CHANGES

Debbie Hawkins led the discussion on the random audit procedure and changes needed to the ordinance for these changes. Ms. Hawkins had sent out a draft of such procedures and suggested ordinance change. She explained that an Excel database could be developed with the animal ids from Animal Services, and a formula added to randomly decide what would be randomly audited. She went over the draft Random Audit Procedure and explained about the 10% to be pulled for audit. Discussion from the group about rescues not providing accurate information if allowed to only submit three months later. Discuss from the group about having them submit their documentation within five (5) working days. Please review the draft for specifics. Ms. McLeod explained that most of the proposed changes would not change the section in the current ordinance because it was stating the same thing, in a different way. The part that needs to be suggested for change is the part on where the rescues are found to not comply from their audit and the suspension times. The other information on the "how to" do the audit is an internal procedure that would not have to be put into the ordinance. Ms. McLeod will work on the suggested ordinance changes based on this discussion and will send to Ms. Hawkins.

WORK MEETING WITH RESCUES – SEPTEMBER 6, 2019

Ms. Hawkins discussed with the board that she and Amy Burnette had met with the rescues about their concerns on September 6, 2019. Notes from that meeting were not finalized and Ms. Hawkins went over the highlights from that meeting.

Items discussed by those present included: Managed intake, (2) audits, (3) community cats, (4) feral cats. Debbie will send out minutes to the group once those are finalized. There was a discussion from the board about the gap analysis and feral cats in the community. They discussed what had been done before for feral cats. There will have to be work with animal control officers and changes to the ordinance(s) that would have to take place. At this point the current ordinance(s) restrict what can be done.

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Kaitlin discussed educating the animal control officers about the programs. This will take time and there is a huge need to work something out with them. Ms. Hawkins talked about trap/kill after being altered. She stated that this is a waste of money if they have been altered. The County needs a Trap, Neuter, Release (TNR) program. She stated that there is huge distrust and fear on where colonies are and there needs to be conversations started because data needs to be collected for grants to be written.

Ms. Hawkins asked for everyone to read their ordinance. The need to be educated about the law is important. In Section 6-12 on page 18 of the current ordinance, it explains about how persons who harbor an animal and not notify animal services, that they are breaking the law. This is important because persons look for their lost animals and if someone thinks they can keep them and not notify, then that is a disservice to the owners. The group discussed how to get the word out to the public about this law, i.e. News Herald, County website, Animal Services Facebook page, etc.

The board discussed meeting with the rescues at least a couple of times during the year. They felt that this was a good thing and appreciated hearing from them.

Ms. Hawkins spoke to board members about the need for a new Vice- Chair since the resignation of David Coffin. The floor was opened for nominations. Gwen Stephens' name was introduced. Dr. Linda Schilkowsy made a motion for Gwen to be Vice-Chair. A second was made and the nominations were closed. A vote was taken, and all were in favor.

Motion: To approve Gwen Stephens as Vice-Chair for the Animal Advisory Board.

RESULT: APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Dr. Linda Schilkowsy

SECONDER: Amy Burnette

AYES: Amy Burnette, Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Allen Keller, Dr. Linda Schilkowsy

ABSENT: Jeff Robinson

The board discussed the rest of their 2019 meeting dates. They stated that they wanted to meet more frequently, at least monthly. Ms. McLeod stated that all they had to do was to do a second resolution for the year once they decided on the dates they wanted to meet. The group decided to add the following two dates on October 23rd and November 20th. They decided to keep the December 18th meeting. They voted to amend the 01-2019 resolution.

Motion: To amend the 2019-01 Meeting Resolution for the rest of 2019.

RESULT: APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Allen Keller

SECONDER: Dr. Linda Schilkowsy

AYES: Amy Burnette, Debbie Hawkins, Gwen Stephens, Allen Keller, Dr. Linda Schilkowsy

ABSENT: Jeff Robinson

Kaitlin Settlemyre spoke to the group about the Volunteer Program and forms. She stated that the orientation is set for October 8th from 5 to 7 pm. Persons interested in volunteering will have to have a background check, driving record check and confidentiality agreement completed with the County's Human Resources department. They will also have to complete all the Volunteer Program forms. Each person will be asked to make a three (3) month commitment to the program. The first group of volunteers will be with the Burke

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Animal Welfare Alliance volunteers. They will be cleaning the runs and feeding animals. After January 1st of 2020, more volunteers will be allowed to work at the animal services center.

ADJOURN

Ms. Hawkins then asked the board if there were any other items to discuss. Hearing none, Allen Keller made a motion with a second from Amy Burnette to adjourn. All in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm.

Approved this the 23rd day of October 2019.



Debbie Hawkins
Chairperson, Animal Advisory Board