



ANIMAL CONTROL ADVISORY BOARD

MAY 17, 2017

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE COUNTY'S TNR AND RTF PROGRAMS.

NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

SET DATE AND TIME FOR NEXT MEETING

ADJOURN

VOLUSIA COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

MAY 17, 2017

PRESENT: CATHY DRIGGERS
KAREN K. CLARK
NICHOLAS MONGELLO
DIANE FERGUSON
DR. PAUL REHME
JENNA ERICKSON
JUDY MALONE
ROBERT BAIRD
JEANNINE COLLETTI
ALEXANDER PENALTA

SERGIO PACHECO, VCAC DIRECTOR
DEE FERGUSON, VCAC FIELD SUPERVISOR
SHARI WILLIAMS, VCAC OFFICE MANAGER

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 am by Sergio Pacheco who calls for introductions for the new board members. All members introduce themselves. Pat Mihalic has an excused absence.

Mr. Pacheco calls for the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair for the board.

Ms. Clark makes a motion to nominate Cathy Driggers for Chair. Ms. Malone seconds it. Motion is passed.

Mr. Baird makes a motion to nominate Karen K. Clark for Vice-Chair. Mrs. Colletti seconds it. Motion is passed.

Mr. Pacheco proceeds to give an update on the county's TNR (trap/neuter/return) feral cat program.

Mr. Pacheco states back in fiscal year 2011/2012 the county spent \$120,000 at the humane societies to euthanize feral cats. Currently this fiscal year, we've only spent \$36,000 at the humane societies. The TNR and return to field programs have been a great success.

Mr. Pacheco states we also have an agreement we are trying to put together with the West Volusia Humane Society. During kitten season we couldn't find enough fosters to foster the kittens. Anytime we take kittens to the humane societies, the county is

charged \$88-\$90 per cat. Now, with the help of West Volusia Humane Society, we call them when we have kittens and they'll foster them until they're old enough. We then pick them up and spay or neuter them for free, and they adopt them out. We save taxpayer dollars, they make a revenue, and the kittens get to live. They're also going to accept some stray dogs from the west side. Anytime we pick up a stray dog we have to take it to the east side. Most of them belong to someone and they have to drive to the east side to reclaim them. Now they can come over to the West Volusia Humane Society and reclaim them. The animals that are aggressive we have one of our animal control officers transport them to the east side humane societies. This is all done by an agreement. They are not charging us anything. What's in it for them? They can adopt some of these animals out and keep the adoption fees. This is being worked out by our legal department. They're also going to provide us an area out there so our veterinarian can do spay and neuter surgeries, not only for West Volusia Humane Society animals but for the public. The bus that we've used for over 10 years is on a downslide. It has a lot of mileage and we were told if anything major goes wrong with that vehicle, not to repair it. We need some other place to do these surgeries on the west side of the county. With the help of West Volusia Humane Society, we hope to see that happen.

Ms. Clark: It's been renovated. Over \$100,000 renovation in one of the areas. The building you guys are going to work from is next on the list. It looks fast-tracked. Gary Thomas is now running it and because he was animal control, he has the licenses for a lot of things that wasn't there before. Plus he knows the laws inside and out, which helps.

Mr. Pacheco: We have a great relationship with Gary and we hope to keep it. I'm really excited about this. I want to see this take off before I retire. We'll see what happens.

Mr. Baird: The day that comes when the bus crashes, could it be parked at West Volusia since it's already equipped as a surgical center?

Mr. Pacheco: We were going to use it while it's still functioning. Just park it out there one, possibly two days a week. But the problem with that is that the people who use the bus down in New Smyrna Beach area, it's very difficult for them to drive here. That's something we have to tackle down the line. We thought about that, about parking it there. If we're going to have a nice size room, it's easier for the staff to do spay and neuters comfortably in a room instead of the close quarters of the bus.

Like I said, we've spent \$36,000 so far this year as opposed to last year at this time we had spent \$53,000 in humane society fees. So the trend is going down which is great.

That's all I have, is there any new business?

Mrs. Ferguson: I can't understand how the West Volusia Humane Society is going to handle spaying and neutering there. I can't see a building big enough.

Mr. Pacheco: The building that we're going to use, we were out there, and Gary showed us the room that he wants to set aside.

Ms. Clark: The building is a 20 foot by 40 foot building. It already has water, everything is already there. It just needs to be gutted and configured to specs.

Mr. Pacheco: It's a pretty good space. It's more room than the bus. Gary stated to me that hopefully by the end of this fiscal year that all the renovations should be done on the property.

Mrs. Driggers: Does anyone else have any new business?

Mr. Baird: I have a question. I've followed animal cruelty cases though the years, which is a felony. When you go to felony court, the judge doesn't want to hear it. It seems like they don't want to hear these cases. A man kept coming in, and they kept postponing the case. They said no contest, then time served, and that was that night in jail and he walked out. How serious are they getting about animal cruelty? I know, near the lighthouse area a man viciously beat a dog to death last month. He's an uptown guy and it seemed like nothing is going to happen to this guy now. I don't know all the particulars of it.

Mr. Penalta: it's a case by case basis. My brother was a prosecutor in Volusia County for a few years and I know the FBI has taken federal jurisdiction over some forms of animal abuse. I think it's definitely been elevated. We, as members of the Florida Bar, are always monitoring the laws, on the local stage and the federal levels, and it's an area that's growing. It's getting more serious. I think it's going toward a good place in terms of enforcement.

Mr. Baird: What's the maximum? One year and a \$10,000 fine?

Mr. Penalta: I think with the federal it's going to be a lot more than that. Depending on if they're engaged in crossing state lines it's going to be a more severe penalty.

Ms. Clark discusses another animal cruelty case.

Mr. Penalta questions how often the board meets.

Mr. Pacheco: We normally meet four times a year. However when we were supposed to meet last year it was during the storm so we cancelled that meeting. We then had new County Council members come on board and they pushed back the appointments of the new board members. We usually have four meetings, and sometimes more if there is a need.

Mrs. Driggers: We do need to try to have our 4 meetings this year.

Mr. Pacheco: We've been working on a contract with the city of Oak Hill. As of October 1st, we'll be taking animal control over for the city of Oak Hill. That puts more work on our staff.

Mrs. Colletti: You can only spread yourself so far.

Mr. Pacheco: We have officers assigned, they have their own zones. The officers that's normally handling the New Smyrna Beach and Edgewater area will handle Oak Hill. It's a small city and we don't anticipating a lot of complaints coming in, but you never know.

Mrs. Driggers: I had heard some talk about Lake Helen. Have you heard anything about Volusia County doing anything there?

Mr. Pacheco: I haven't heard anything.

Dr. Rehme: I brought something to pass around. I summarized a lot of the animal bite information that we've been seeing for the last three years (see attached). We investigate about 1,000 bites a year so we do see quite a few. It's good that we're getting a lot of these coming through our office, we didn't always used to. It allows us to make a true rabies risk assessment and make sure people get treated as needed. I did summarize our demographic data, you can see whose getting bitten. You can see that the rates are pretty much the same everywhere. Women tend to get bitten more than men, we don't know if that's because they're the ones who go to the doctor or they actually are bitten more. The only age group in which males are bitten more than females are the young kids 0-9. We didn't really see kids getting bitten more often than adults, which is what other people have seen. We did look at bites in terms of the county geography, where you are seeing more. We really did not see any differences, they are pretty much spread out everywhere. We looked at seasonal variation of places that reported they see more in the summer, we don't see that here probably because of the weather up north. One of the things that was concerning for us is that half of the head/neck wounds we get were in kids and these tend to be the worst bites. We want to look at how we can maybe provide people better education because they tend to not worry about their dogs with their kids and the kids do things like grab the food and the tail and the ears. 2/3 of the bites were to an upper limb, not unexpected, hand and arms etc. We did see that Pitbulls are named way more often than anyone else but you have to take that with caution. If people see a dog that looks remotely like a Pitbull, it's automatically labeled as a Pitbull. We did not make any attempt to verify, we just took what was on the report. Unrestrained animals accounted for about 1/3 of the bites, which was not unexpected. Cat bites pretty much stayed the same. We get about 8 bites from non-pets a month and that's stayed the same over the last three years. Cats were more likely to be strays than dogs.

We looked at how we used PEP, rabies prophylaxis, this year, because it did seem like we were using it a lot, and we were. We used it 56 times last year and we've already used it 31 this year. So we have seen an uptake on the use of it. I put on the chart what animals we used it for.

There was a misprint, we had 55 raccoons in the last 15 years that were rabid, not 15. Luckily we haven't had any so far this year.

Ms. Clark: I don't know what a prophylaxis is.

Dr. Rehme: It's the injection you get to prevent them from getting rabies if you have a potential rabies exposure. You can also get pre-exposure prophylaxis.

Mrs. Colletti discusses her experience with getting pre-exposure shots.

Dr. Rehme discusses the cost of the rabies prophylaxis series.

Dr. Rehme: The other thing we try and impress on people, even raccoons that have neurological disorders are probably not rabid because they can get canine distemper.

Mrs. Ferguson discusses the problem with rats she has been hearing about.

Ms. Clark discusses the vets turning in their rabies certificates.

Ms. Clark: Has that improved regarding the number of vets turning in their rabies certificates? Wouldn't that help you? (speaking to Dr. Rehme)

Dr. Rehme: Yes, do you know how we could get access to that? We don't have access now. It would definitely help us.

Mr. Pacheco: This has been an issue for years. Many of the vets do not want to share their patient information with animal control. Some of the vets understand that it is a law and they turn it in. It's always been a problem.

Mrs. Driggers: Any other new business? (none)

The next date and time for the next meeting is set for July 12, 2017 at 9am.

Ms. Clark: On animals that are on tie-outs that are in distress. Do you get called a lot for that in our county?

Mr. Pacheco: Not really

Mrs. Driggers: I don't even see as many of those anymore. I hear from some of the cities. Even driving around you don't see it near as much.

Mr. Pacheco: We don't get as many. When we do, we send an officer out there.

Mrs. Colletti: Any animal that is confined, to tie an animal anywhere for any length of time in Florida, the lightning and heat capitol of the world. My feeling is that animal has no way to defend itself. It is a target for anything. An animal does feel. It does think, it

does get thirsty. To me it's abuse, and abuse is neglect. I've seen people with beautiful yards, and the dog is tied 24/7. Why have a dog if you're going to tie it out there? Some people say it's property, I don't agree. I'd like to see that eliminated somehow, however long it's going to take. I personally feel it's inhumane. Maybe down the line, things can change a little at a time.

Ms. Clark: It has to come from the state down. Unfortunately we can't do that.

Mrs. Driggers: No, that's not right.

Officer Ferguson: It would be an ordinance change.

Mrs. Colletti: I would love to see that change.

Mr. Penalta: What is our primary mission here? Is it to advice and put forth recommendations to the county council?

Mr. Pacheco: Correct

Mrs. Driggers: We do have a couple of things that are in the works that we'll be bringing back to work on. One of them was an issue with the wording in zoning where animal control issues that we're wanting to take out of zoning. We'll be bringing that back around. The person we needed to review it in zoning, had changed personnel. So we need to get that going to.

Mr. Penalta: How do these recommendations get passed on to county council?

Mr. Pacheco: When we get the recommendation here, I bring it to our bosses. If it's something legal, it goes to our legal department. We then present it to County Council.

Mr. Penalta: Is there a county attorney assigned to animal law?

Mr. Pacheco: Yes, Michael Rodriguez.

Mr. Baird: One of the big ones was the TNR program. It's magnificent.

Mrs. Driggers: Do you have those numbers with you? If not, we can get them at the next meeting. The differences of the years prior. We're seeing those numbers drop, with the return to field program also.

Mrs. Ferguson: If you show a decrease in the cost, could you use that money to hire more people?

Mr. Pacheco: We would also have to show an increase in more work.

Mrs. Driggers adjourns the meeting.