

VOLUSIA COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL  
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
JUNE 11, 2019

PRESENT: CATHY DRIGGERS (conference call)  
KAREN K. CLARK  
BOB BELT  
ROBERT BAIRD  
PAT MIHALIC  
DEBBIE DARINO  
KENNETH MULLEN  
JEANNINE COLLETTI  
SUZANNE GRUBBS-VC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

ADAM LEATH, VCAS DIRECTOR  
SHARI WILLIAMS, VCAS OFFICE MANAGER  
DR. JENNIFER GREEN, VCAS VETERINARIAN

The meeting was called to order. Kara Keef, Debbie Darino and Suzanne Grubbs have an excused absence.

Motion by Pat Mihalic to approve minutes of the April 24, 2019 Board meeting.  
The motion was seconded by Bob Belt.  
Motion carried

Mr. Leath: Pat Mihalic has requested we discuss "New Business" earlier in the meeting. Mr. Leath introduces Dr. Green to the members.

He explains there have been a number of changes that have been implemented in the clinic, everything from scheduling to procedures to numbers of animals, the things we do on certain days. Is there an interest in having a meeting to discuss all of our processes and procedures regarding the clinic? What we do, you can actually see the location, and you can ask questions. I wanted to have a town-hall type meeting soon.

Discussion regarding who will be invited and the location of the meeting.

Mr. Belt: Pat and I have done many training programs, to train the care takers on how to be a responsible care-giver. We have numerous experiences of doing it all over the county. It's a really great thing because I think 99% of the time the people leave there with a lot more confidence and understanding of how the whole procedure works. It's a great idea to do it, of course it is. One of the things we do find is if we invite the general public we have to make sure we keep it to the area of care-giver responsibility and training only because you're going to have some naysayers there that are going to stand up and say "I don't believe in any of this". Sometimes you have to make sure you stay on point.

Mrs. Mihalic: You may want to have two different meetings. You may want to have one meeting to tell your basic services here. I would definitely invite government, your city commissioners plus the general public. Then I think you should have a meeting for TNR and return to field and get that population. With that, you need to have animal control departments, the city commissioners and stuff like that because a lot of them are clueless. I think it would be two different things. The general public who wants to see what you're doing here and is interested in their own animals is not going to be interested in TNR and return to field. They're not even going to get it. It's two different things.

Mrs. Driggers: My take on it is, we do have a very large county so it's a quick division between east and west but at the same time, it's a county program, even if the meeting is going to be such a large meeting, it might behoove us to have everyone in the same room at the same time to be on the same page.

Ms. Clark: We were at the Ag Center at the fairgrounds. The Ag Extension building in the front held 100 people.

Mrs. Mihalic: I agree with Cathy. I wouldn't have an east and a west meeting. I'd have two separate meeting, one to introduce your center and what you're planning on doing so the general public knows what you do and then I would have one for the TNR program.

Ms. Clark: There's the Hester building and a couple other buildings that are smaller at the fairgrounds.

Mr. Leath: I will explore options and dates and times and have some options for us via email. It will probably happen between now and the next meeting.

The Board agrees it should be in the evening.

Mr. Belt: I agree with what Pat said we keep it separate. The general public is not going to be interested in the details of TNR and Return to Field. The caregivers of course, are. I think we could have two different meetings, one very specific to caregivers and one very general.

Mrs. Mihalic: I would still invite the general public to that meeting but specifically head it that you're going to talk about your program, TNR and Return to Field. You want to draw the general public because there are people out there, when you say TNR, don't have a clue. If you say "if you have a cat issue, you want to draw them in also.

Ms. Clark asks for continued discussion on unaltered animal permit ordinance changes.

Mr. Leath refers to the newly revised draft ordinance.

Section 14-59 (page 62): There was a need for us to provide options for those that are showing, not breeding but showing their dogs and that those individuals shouldn't go under a Hobby Breeder, but rather they just want to be able to show and also not be altered. Many of them require their pets to be intact in order to do that. I changed it, rather than us referring to them as unaltered permits, that sort of says that we're allowing for an animal to have the ability to reproduce. That's not what this is for. I changed it to "Spay/Neuter Exemption". I feel that this really speaks to what we're trying to do. We're not saying that we're permitting your pets to be unaltered, we're saying that you have an exemption to spay/neuter.

People would apply for the Spay/Neuter Exemption with the form you see here (see attached), formally known as the unaltered animal permit application, now the Spay/Neuter Exemption application and the specifics of what we would allow. They can apply to Animal Services for an exemption, and the only exemptions we will allow is for show and competition, medical fitness, law enforcement, hunting and herding. Those are the only exemptions we will allow.

We will review each application, there would be an administrative fee to do that. It would only be for one calendar year.

Mrs. Driggers: what is the fee going to amount to that is going to be every year? It's one thing to have to apply every year, but to have to apply and pay a fee every year makes it hard on somebody who is just doing this as their hobby. Especially for these kids. What kind of fee are we looking at adding to these people? It's one thing if you're having to do it every year, but if now the parents have to pay on top of what they're already paying for this sport?

Mr. Leath: I did not come up with a dollar amount at all. That's in the external fee schedule and the fee/fine schedule. What I wanted to focus on was, we don't want unaltered pets in the community period. We really don't want there to be any exemptions period. But understand that there are specific situations that would

apply. What we're not wanting to do is encourage the use of this. We want to encourage the appropriate use of the exemption. I did not have a specific dollar amount in mind but we will be looking at it. The reality is we may not be approving all of the applications.

Mrs. Driggers: This could be a ten year career for most of the kids in our community. I pay for five kids to show dogs, all their travel, people whose families can't afford to do such things. And now there's going to be every year, an additional fee. It seems to me that we're still making it more difficult for the ones that are doing it for the right reasons. If we actually enforce this, when you're reviewing it, you should ask for a copy of an entry to some type of competition. It doesn't have to be a certain registry. You'll know they actually use the dog for competing which is the whole reason you're allowing the exemption. My concern is that somebody has three kids that show, now they have to pay three fees every year. Just keep that in mind when you start looking at the fees that you're not just affecting the ones that you're trying to prevent but now people who are doing it legitimately now have to pay an extra fee.

Mr. Leath: I want to respond to that. You bring up very valid points and I understand where you're coming from. The only other alternative that we had, was to do away with it all together. The middle ground, we're seeing a lot of these people utilizing this as a means of a way to escape the mandatory spay/neuter. While I know that doesn't apply to you, I'm not saying that it penalizes you more than it does anyone else.

Mrs. Driggers: I'm speaking on behalf of my kennel club and many other kennel clubs and other people out there.

Mr. Leath: The other thing to consider is all of those pets who are unaltered have the capability of reproducing. I need you to recognize that we are paying considerable funds each year. Thousands of dollars because people are breeding. They don't intend to, the animals don't know the difference. I'm just trying to strike a healthy balance between the need. There's a reason why the spay/neuter ordinance is there and why it's mandatory. If we're saying that it doesn't apply, we should be very, very specific, very narrow in our selection process because the overall problem is far bigger than our Hobby Breeders or our unaltered pets in the community. It's the entire community. That's why it is being proposed the way that it is.

Mrs. Driggers: There's a big difference between these people who responsibly own unaltered dogs because they're in competition. They're not running them with males and females together. Some of them only have one dog in their entire house. But they use it for competition. There's a difference between those people and the ones who are stirring up the problems. There is a difference between that. It's adding a fee to people who are already being responsible.

Continued discussion of the proof that would be required to get the permit.

Mrs. Driggers: You can look at it as one of their rights being taken away. I certainly do. It's not going to stop it from happening but I certainly think of it as well now, just to be able to do what I want to do, now I have to pay a fee to be able to do that. You don't have to pay a fee if you want to go to a dog park or you want go do these other things with your dog. In competition yes, you do have to pay for that. And then there's people who, like these kids who I pay the fee, if they had to pay a fee, they'd be playing video games or out in the street doing whatever they do. This is just another fee. And it's an annual fee so you'll be paying it multiple times. Depending on how expensive this is going to be, you may actually lose people who aren't willing to pay the fee every year or can't take the extra fee on.

Mr. Leath: There are a lot of changes I've made to the draft copy of the ordinance. You had asked that the FVRCP be added to the protocol and requirements for colony caretakers. We've added that process in there. The other thing you asked about was for cruelty in regards to the vermin harboring debris in animal cruelty. I've added that in there as well.

I added some additional language to the tethering ordinance which is section 14-40 (page 18). The language is similar to what I was proposing last time except I did add in under section (L) some provisions that wouldn't

apply. So if a dog is tethered while receiving medical care or grooming. That wouldn't be a violation of our ordinance. (L) (b) (c) and (d) are also exclusions.

I also added 14-40 (f). The rest of the tethering is pretty much the same. We want to be able to have this and cite for this, but our implementation of this will not be that we want to immediately write a citation and remove a dog. That's not our intent.

Board members discuss cases involving Animal Services.

Ms. Clark requests wording be added referencing the weight of the chain cannot be more than 1/10 the weight of the dog.

Mr. Leath states he can definitely add that.

Mrs. Mihalic: Referring to when you said you don't want the animals ending up at the shelter: Some people will do it because they can't afford it. Why don't you start an auxiliary group that is a non-profit or work with one of the non-profits to do fundraisers for stuff that you could provide and it wouldn't have to come out of your budget? If you used your water bill for a donation and used that money.

Mr. Leath: That's a great point.

Mrs. Mihalic discusses birth control for cats. She states the City of Deltona and Daytona Beach use it. She states if the County wanted to buy it, it's a quick fix to stop the breeding, especially in situations where the animal is until they can get them in.

Mr. Leath states he needs to read more about it.

Ms. Clark discusses household pet dog and cat shows.

Mr. Leath: The only other subsections that are dramatically different is Section 14-66 (page 77). There is an additional add, referring to Prohibition of Pet Leasing and Pet Collateral Transactions. He states it does not apply to Animal Controls, Veterinarians, and non-profits.

Mr. Leath calls for any additional questions regarding the ordinance changes.

Members discuss how the conditions at the humane societies and rescues are regulated. Dr. Green and Mr. Belt share their experiences working at a shelter, explaining their processes for asking for donations from the public.

Ms. Clark calls for any new business.

Mrs. Colletti asks Dr. Green if she is doing anything differently with her surgeries.

Dr. Green: Yes. We are doing a lot of things differently. Our goal with the town hall meeting is to present all of that. Adam and I are planning on having photos and video of all the process we're going through and the science behind why we're doing our approach.

Mr. Baird discusses a cat that he thinks was killed by coyotes. He wants to know if anything is being done about coyotes.

Mr. Leath: We don't do anything with wildlife at all. That's FWC. There was a town hall regarding how we can co-exist with them. We are not reducing the number of coyotes or having any involvement in coyotes.

Mrs. Colletti discusses a cat that she took to Deland Animal Hospital. After testing it was discovered the cat had feline leukemia and had a growth preventing it from eating. Are the cats at the clinic tested for feline leukemia? Can we pay extra for the test?

Dr. Green: The biggest changes we're doing is taking the clinic to the way it was originally conceived. It was conceived to be a high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter clinic. And that is what we're going towards now. Our surgical numbers, our goal is to be doing thirty surgeries per day with the staffing that we have. Down the road, if we can extend that to forty or great per day, that would be fantastic. The reason for that is, the more animals we can get it and still practice quality medicine, we're going to make that impact on the pet population that we're trying to get, including our TNRs and all of our cat colonies. That's one of the biggest changes we've done, moving towards the volume the clinic should be doing which is the purpose of founding the clinic. With your questions specifically of disease monitoring, I agree with Adam. I like to take everything back to research. I will tell you that a lot of the research on feline leukemia virus actually comes out and is not as contagious as we once thought and it's not as debilitating as we once thought the disease was. Yes, you're still going to have some cats that may have some other conditions going on and they may suffer the complications of feline leukemia virus much more severely than in other cats, but research is actually showing that the life-span of a feline leukemia positive cat is the same as a non-feline leukemia positive cat. That's some really exciting research. In terms of offering testing, Adam and I are actively working into revamping everything the clinic offers; wanting to, down the road, this is in the planning stages, to offer preventative health care with the spay and neuter and to try to help the animals as we're seeing them getting as much of a leg up in terms of health care prevention that we can. I have, what I hope is going to be a really exciting package for our TNR cats. My personal opinion on feral cats is that this may be their only time to see a veterinarian. As much care as I can give them when they come in to see me for spay/neuter, I want to do that. I want to give that cat the best chance it can to live a healthiest life as possible out in the community. That's kind of my approach with that and once we have all of that, we'll share with you. My goal is down the road to offer the combo testing to do the feline leukemia vaccine, all of that. It's just a matter of anytime we add something on, we've got to go through all the proper steps and look at the impact of that. We need to research on the back end to be able to offer it.

Mrs. Colletti: So in your opinion, I've had vets say to put it down if it had feline leukemia.

Dr. Green: If the cat is symptomatic of feline leukemia and suffering because of the disease, then that would be. As you know it's immunocompromised.

Mrs. Mihalic discusses her experience with feline leukemia positive cats and the feline leukemia test.

Ms. Clark questions the drop off times for the clinic.

Dr. Green: Monday through Friday we are operating at our posted business hours of 8:00-5:00. Mondays are our new bus days. This allows us to balance schedules later in the week. We start taking in at 9:00 on the bus. We do not do feral cats on the mobile unit because of space and safety for staff and other animals.

Mr. Leath informs the board that he is open to other bus locations if there is a need.

Mr. Leath: I just got approved in next year's budget to buy another mobile hospital. We will be actually be creating this to be multi-use. Not just TNR, not just spay/neuter but also when we have victims of cruelty and we're going to a crime scene and we need to triage them and provide emergency care as well as transport during disaster.

Dr. Green: Tuesdays and Wednesdays are our traditional clinic days for owned pets. This is for the month of June. I know that everything we're trying right now, we're kind of in a learning phase. We're trying to set something, get some data back, adjust, what worked well, what didn't work well. We're having drop off for dogs from 8:00-8:30 and cats from 8:30-9:00. With our lobby space, I don't want a dog next to a cat, stressing that cat out. TNR is on Thursday and Friday. That drop off is 8:00-9:00 but we are asking people to get in between 8:00-8:30. Our goal is to be in surgery every day at 10:00am.

Mr. Baird discusses why these drop off times do not work for him.

Mrs. Colletti and Mr. Belt discuss how they make it work.

Ms. Clark states she can't get a human being to answer the phone at Animal Control.

Mr. Leath. Sure you can. 248-1790 option 2 and you get a live person.

Ms. Clark calls for public participation.

There is none.

Mr. Leath: After this meeting, I will make the changes we talked about and then it goes directly to our County Legal Department. It will take quite some time for them to review, draft and go through back and forth making edits, changes, and suggestions and then it becomes part of a public hearing and then it would sit in front of Council and then Council will ultimately vote. You can email me directly on your specific suggestions. I don't want to take this document and put it in an email.

Date and time for the next meeting: We will send out a Survey Monkey in order to come up with the next meeting date/time.

Meeting Adjourned