

Policy Subcommittee Meeting January 12, 2012

Meeting was held at Georgia SPCA and started at 7:00 pm.

In attendance: Curtis Northrup, Jane Stewart, Donald Bush, Kelly Alder, Dr. Cathy Fish

Designated Chairman – Curtis Northrup

Designated Secretary -- Dr. Cathy Fish

We began our meeting discussing what our tasks are as the policy subcommittee. The areas of concern are such :

- a. Addressing Gwinnett County codes for animal welfare
- b. Issues of "proper" animal care for public
- c. Policy and Procedures up to the point of intake

*Clarification was made that the Program Subcommittee was responsible for procedures after intake of animals into Gwinnett County Animal Control.

*Agreed that we can be more restrictive in our recommendations, but cannot be less restrictive than state legislation (discussed current bills about animal legislation such as HB865).

It was determined that we needed to compare our codes and policies to other counties/facilities in the country to find strengths and weaknesses.

We discussed nuisance dogs and complaint that was brought before the Animal Task Force at last meeting. We agreed that we need to change the codes about nuisance animals and reporting them.

Assignments for next meeting:

1. Compare other facilities ordinances, codes, and policies.
2. Make our bucket list of concerns, changes we feel are necessary.
3. Generate one list/report of our committee's recommendations.

Kelly Alder – Boulder, CO

Curtis Northrup – Dekalb County

Dr. Cathy Fish – Cobb County

Jane Stewart – Fulton County and New Hampshire

Donald Bush – Charlotte/Mecklenburg County

Next, we discussed other concerns (broad) that we had individually.

1. Need for microchipping
2. Low officer numbers
3. Is there a policy to try to return lost pets out in the field?
4. Strays receive low priority for calls

Concluded the meeting with Curtis Northrup's list of concerns to look at with Gwinnett County ordinances, as follows:

1. Definitions
2. Animal Control budgetary concerns
3. Dangerous dog section
4. Restraint
5. Tethering (new code?)
6. Owners of vicious dogs
7. Adoptions/microchip
8. Dog bite vs. dog scratch
9. Disposition of animals
10. What is proper length of time before euthanasia?
11. Spay/abort pregnant animals
12. Bite/quarantine procedures
13. Wildlife/DNR
14. Deceased animal pick-up
15. Collars/tags, Rabies Registration
16. Breeders approved

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

accountable any backyard breeders.

We also had discussions about registering all animals. We agreed that there would be a differential registration fee if we did so. There would be one fee to register an animal and discount if that animal was altered. Jane is familiar with and will look at New Hampshire's registration laws and Kelly will look at Calgary's.

New Business:

Begin review of SOPs.

Discuss writing of reports for full Task Force review.

Discuss presentation for tomorrow night's full meeting.

Other items:

Members remarks.

Public remarks.

Adjournment:

Next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, February 1 at 7:00 PM at the SPCA.

Policy Subcommittee Meeting February 1, 2012

Meeting was held at Georgia SPCA and started at 7:00 pm.

In attendance:

Members: Curtis Northrup, Jane Stewart, Donald Bush, Kelly Alder, Dr. Cathy Fish

Visitors: Marian Morris, Jo Falber, Chris Wallace, Elizabeth Burgner

Agenda for tonight's meeting – Approved by all

Minutes from the last meeting – Approved by all

Old Business:

Donald Bush gave findings of Mecklenburg County – high kill rate, high animal intake, only have 8% owner reclaim rate, only have 3 day adoption period.

Dr. Cathy Fish gave findings for Cobb County – codes, ordinances, policies, and wording all very similar to Gwinnett. Appears to have a much larger Humane Society/rescue base to send to.

Jane Stewart talked about Fulton County being run by a non-profit (Barking Hound Society) through a contract situation. They provide great medical care of animals (all tested, vaccinated). Questions that arose – are animal control officers sworn officers, allowed to give citations? How do the officers get paid?

New Business:

In our report to the Animal Advisory Board, we decided to include complaints that have come up, areas we feel need to be addressed, and recommendations for changes in codes. We discussed our recommendations (up to this point) in the following areas:

1. Registration, Rabies Tags as a means of providing a data base
2. Microchipping all animals adopted through Animal Control
3. Barking /nuisance animals changes in codes
4. Vicious Dog Regulations

We tabled discussion on 1 and 4 until we could obtain more information.

For microchipping, we understand that it is being done currently, but recommend it be added to the wording that all animals adopted must be microchipped and registered by the adoptive owners.

For barking and nuisance animals, we want to add that two complaintants are required, but that a witness can validate complaint and that witness can be the animal control officer. We also want to increase the financial penalty for owners and mandate education on multiple offenses.

Business to address at next meeting:

The SOPs - Curtis Northrup pointed out SOPs that need addressed; 3-8, 4-5, 4-18, and 5-9. Other concerns that need to addressed were brought up by different members - standard period of time for rescues to be contacted, wording for euthanasia permission, trap-neuter-release program to be excluded from some codes and SOPs. It was decided to wait until after tomorrow night's meeting of the Program Committee to divide the SOPs. Kelly Alder will contact our committee members after that meeting via email.

Member Comments: Curtis will start to write our report and we will communicate via email about changes that need to be made.

Visitor Comments: Thank you for including them.

Next Meeting: February 15, 2012 at 7:00 pm to be held at the Georgia SPCA

Meeting Closed at 9:00 pm.

Policy Subcommittee Meeting February 22, 2012

Meeting was held at Georgia SPCA and started at 7:30 pm.

In attendance:

Members: Jane Stewart, Donald Bush, Kelly Alder, Dr. Cathy Fish

Visitors: None

Now Business:

At the beginning of our meeting, we discussed the concern that the SOPs we have been given are not the most current SOPs and that Lt. Respass is in the process of updating them. We felt that it was not the best use of our time to discuss SOPs that were outdated and possibly already corrected/changed to our recommendations. Specific items brought up were current times of adoptions, current address listing, and current prices. It was agreed to table these until we can obtain the most current SOPs available.

Old Business:

Rabics -- still have not obtained information about old way of registering and tagging Gwinnett County animals

Vicious Animals -- agreed to the following objectives:

1. Need to focus on punishment of the owners, not just the animals.
2. Need to address what is done with the animals and how they are temperament tested.
3. Need to look at education classes for offenders, similar to DUI school.
4. Need to determine a way to take it case by case and not have a blanket policy on handling aggressive dog incidents.

Next meeting time: No time was set until we find out more information about the SOPs.

Meeting closed at 8:40 pm.

Policy Subcommittee Meeting March 7, 2012

Meeting was held at Sugar Hill City Hall and started at 7:15 pm.

In attendance:

Members: Curtis Northrup, Jane Stewart, Donald Bush, Kelly Alder, Dr. Cathy Fish

Guest Speaker: Gail LaBerge of the Georgia Canine Coalition

Guest Speaker:

Gail LaBerge addressed the House Bill 685 (hb685) and the changes or effects it might have on local legislation. She discussed the need for educational programs for children to prevent dog bite incidents and training programs for owners. She said the bill will allow local governments to make stricter ordinances. She also said the bill removes "potentially dangerous" as a classification for pets. We discussed the possibility of adding a punishment to the owners above and beyond the bill's guidelines in the form of education.

Old Business:

Reviewed the Code Recommendations:

10-34 – approved changes

10-36 – approved changes

10-44 – will remove because of the Veterinary Practice Act

10-51b – approved with the following changes:

1) change to person or domestic animal

6) change from developed by to authorized by

10-52 – denied

New Business:

We decided to continue working on SOPs with the revised versions and the chart that Programs Committee made. We will meet with Programs Committee next week to go over all the SOPs as a group.

Next meeting time: Wednesday, March 14, 7 pm at Lawrenceville Police Department
And Monday, March 19, 7 pm at Sugar Hill City Hall

Meeting closed at 9:15 pm