

GWINNETT COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
LAWRENCEVILLE, GEORGIA

RESOLUTION ENTITLED: **Gwinnett County Animal Task Force**

READING AND ADOPTION: **August 23, 2011**

At the regular meeting of the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners held in the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center, Auditorium, 75 Langley Drive, Lawrenceville, Georgia.

Name	Present	Vote
Charlotte J. Nash, Chairman	Yes	Yes
Shirley Lasseter, District 1	Yes	Yes
Lynette Howard, District 2	Yes	Yes
Mike Beaudreau, District 3	Yes	Yes
John Heard, District 4	Yes	Yes

On motion of **Beaudreau** which carried **5-0**, the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the following Resolution:

A RESOLUTION CREATING
THE GWINNETT COUNTY ANIMAL TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, Gwinnett County has experienced a high euthanasia rate among animals brought into the Gwinnett County Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center and an increase in the number of animal-related complaints to which officers respond; and

WHEREAS, over the past two years, the Animal Welfare and Enforcement Unit has been able to reduce the number of animals euthanized at the Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center; and

WHEREAS, like many local governments, Gwinnett County faces challenges to handle an increasing number of animals and complaints concerning animals with limited available funding; and

WHEREAS, the Animal Welfare and Enforcement Unit continually seeks to find ways to meet these challenges and meet the needs of Gwinnett County residents; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners seeks to further reduce euthanasia rates and strengthen the animal control services provided by Gwinnett County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Board of Commissioners hereby creates the Gwinnett County Animal Task Force as set forth in the Gwinnett County Animal Task Force Overview incorporated herein as Exhibit A.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force membership shall be as established in Exhibit A.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall be charged with accomplishing the objectives and work plan in accordance with Exhibit A.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall submit its written recommendations and findings to the County Administrator and the Board of Commissioners by December 31, 2011.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon submission of its final written recommendations and findings, the Task Force shall be dissolved.

THIS RESOLUTION is adopted this the 23rd day of August, 2011.

GWINNETT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BY: Charlotte J. Nash
CHARLOTTE J. NASH, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

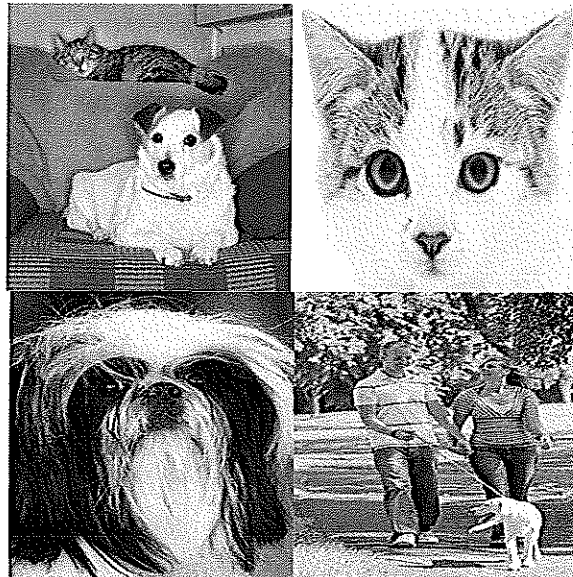
BY: Diane Kemp
DIANE KEMP, COUNTY CLERK



APPROVED AS TO FORM:

BY: Theresa Co
SENIOR ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY

Gwinnett County Animal Task Force Overview



8/23/2011

Contents

- 1.0 Purpose3
- 2.0 Objective.....3
- 2.1 Work Plan.....4
- 2.2 Outreach Activities4
- 2.3 Task Force Structure.....5
- 2.4 Project Timeline8
- 3.0 Deliverables9
- 3.1 Monthly Status Reports9
- 3.2 Identified Partnership Opportunities.....9
- 3.3 Recommendations for the Animal Advisory Council.....9
- 3.4 Final Report9

1.0 Purpose

Like many local governments over the past few years, Gwinnett County has experienced a high euthanasia rate among cats and dogs taken into the Gwinnett County Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center and an increase in the number of complaints to which officers respond. Over the past two years, the Animal Welfare and Enforcement Unit has worked diligently to reduce the number of animals euthanized and has been successful in reducing the number of animals euthanized. The Animal Welfare and Enforcement Unit also responded to more than 25,000 complaints in 2010 alone.

The Board of Commissioners recognizes the difficult mission placed upon the Animal Welfare and Enforcement Unit to reduce euthanasia rates, provide outstanding animal services to the citizens, and balance animal welfare and human safety during difficult economic times. The Board also recognizes the dedication and hard work of the officers and employees of the Unit in carrying out this mission. In order to provide support for the efforts and the work of the Animal Welfare and Enforcement Unit, Gwinnett County has instituted a process to identify short and long-term strategies that can be implemented in difficult economic times that will increase adoption rates, improve animal welfare and protect human safety.

Strategies will include programs which promote good behavior from pet owners; evaluation of the structure and policies of the Gwinnett County Animal Welfare and Enforcement Unit; promotion of collaboration between local agencies, non-profit organizations and citizens; and strengthening current enforcement tools and practices.

2.0 Objective

The Gwinnett Animal Services Task Force is created as part of an effort designed to develop and implement ideas and strategies which will promote animal welfare and promote responsible pet owner practices. Objectives of the Task Force include:

- Developing an Existing Conditions Report which will review all services Gwinnett County currently provides or promotes that address the care of animals as well as safety in human and animal interactions. This should include a review of Gwinnett County versus comparable peer agencies in the areas of operations, administrative activities, animal care, adoption rates, the investigation rates of animal neglect or cruelty, and the investigation and response to aggressive or biting animals;
- Developing a Best Practices Report consisting of recommendations based, in part, on the Existing Conditions Report. Recommendations will discuss organizational structure and service offerings that promote lifesaving programs including adoptions, fees, spay/neuter services, pet-retention, and responsible pet ownership;
- Developing recommendations on how to provide care to animals in the future that are currently, or which may become, the responsibility of the Gwinnett County Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center. Recommendations may explore opportunities for efficiencies, which include, but are not limited to, partnerships, programs, recommended policies or other methods as identified in the Best Practices Report;

- Creating a public relations campaign to encourage animal rescue, adoption, spay/neuter programs, and responsible pet ownership;
- Recommending changes in current code and policies used to promote preservation of life, humane treatment of animals, responsible pet ownership, and human safety. During this process, issues determined to be long-term or outside the scope of this Task Force will be identified for further study; and
- Recommending changes in the current organizational structure and/or mission of the Gwinnett County Animal Advisory Council, if any, to strengthen the Council's effectiveness as well as increase the support the Council provides to the Animal Welfare and Enforcement Unit.
- Developing recommendations concerning the management of the Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center, including potential partnerships with private organizations or entities.

It is anticipated that during this approximately four-month period that Task Force members will develop recommendations concerning modifications to the Gwinnett County Code of Ordinances and policies concerning animals, modifications to the organizational structure and activities for the Gwinnett County Animal Welfare and Enforcement Unit, changes to current operating procedures, modifications to the organizational structure and activities of the Gwinnett County Animal Advisory Council, and recommendations for relationships determined to have an immediate impact on animal issues in Gwinnett County.

2.1 ATF Work Plan

In order to accomplish the intended goals within the specified timeframe, it is critical that the Animal Task Force have a clear process to monitor progress and manage activities as well as is inclusive of the appropriate audiences throughout Gwinnett County. Based on these objectives, the work plan is broken into the following areas:

- Outreach Activities
- Task Force Membership and Structure
- Project Timeline

2.2 Outreach Activities

Successful outreach requires allowing individuals, elected officials, and other stakeholders to help identify challenges, prioritize needs, and assist in development of solutions. Therefore, it is critical to engage these groups in the discussion early, before the assessment of the current challenges is completed and before solutions are proposed. The following activities will be implemented to address these groups:

ATF Web Page: A web page will be housed on the Gwinnett County Website. The purpose of this page is to provide the general public the following information throughout the study:

- An opportunity to participate by filling out a survey on the needs of the community relative to animals;

- Provide event information to the general public, including timeline, public meeting notices and other presentations directed toward the public; and
- Provide documentation developed through the efforts of this Task Force, including study reports, best practices and meeting minutes.

Elected Official Questionnaire: A short survey will be emailed to elected figures in the County that are responsible for administering programs involving companion animals. This questionnaire will be similar to the survey found on the website.

Public Meetings

All meetings of the Gwinnett County Animal Task Force will be open to the public. Two public meetings will be scheduled to receive input at key milestones in the process. These meetings are:

- **Kick-Off Meeting.** The purpose of this meeting is to obtain information from a wide sample of Gwinnett County to better understand community and stakeholder issues; refine guiding principles; solicit and inform the public of the purpose of this process; and identify any additional key resources to include in this study.
- **Preliminary Findings Meeting.** This meeting will occur near the end of the study. The purpose is to review preliminary results, provide best practices and preliminary recommendations and next steps.

2.3 Task Force Structure

This Task Force is designed to have a diverse group of organizations, agencies and citizens represented so that it may collectively identify and implement strategies and policies tailored to the needs of Gwinnett County. The Task Force will be made up of 17 members appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The Board shall appoint 3 members who represent Not-for-Profit Rescue Groups (1 representative each from cat, dog, and large animal rescue), 1 member who is a veterinarian, 1 member engaged in agricultural activities, 1 member engaged in an animal-related business, and 1 member representing the Gwinnett Municipal Association. The remaining 10 members shall be private citizens with each Commissioner having two appointments. Task Force members shall not be individuals serving on the Gwinnett County Animal Advisory Council.

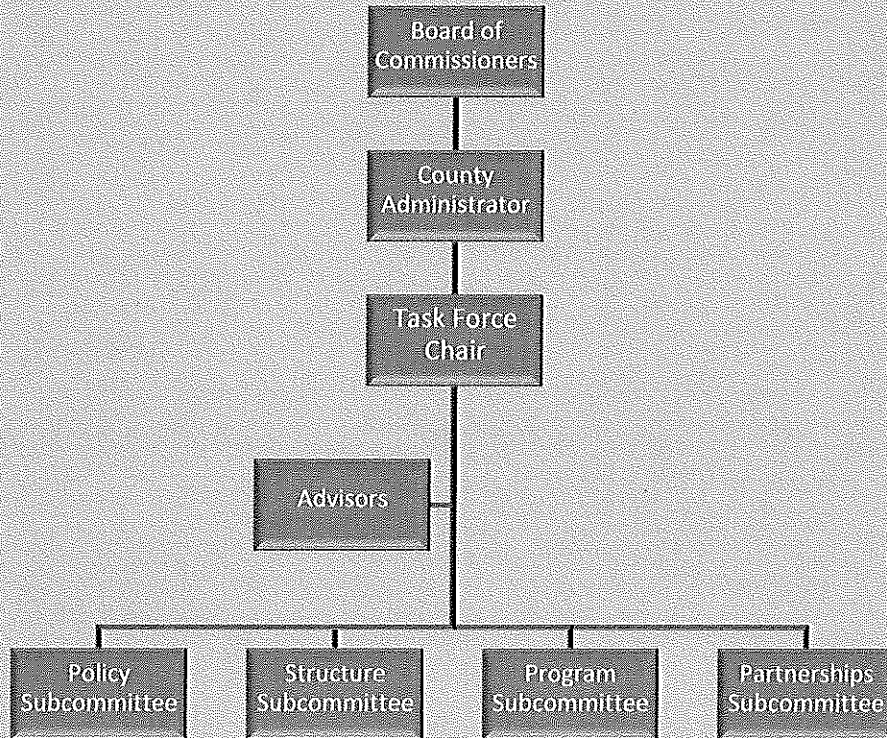
The ATF will utilize subcommittees and advisors to operate efficiently and effectively. Research and the development of recommendations will be conducted through subcommittees and presented to the entire Task Force for consideration. The Task Force will present its final written recommendations to the County Administrator and the Board of Commissioners. Each member of the Task Force will serve on at least one committee. The following provides a description of how the ATF will be structured and function:

- The **Chair**, appointed by the Board of Commissioners, will be responsible for the overall direction and work progress of the Task Force which includes serving as a member of each committee; ensuring use of quality assurance/quality control practices and

procedures; assignment of ASTF members to subcommittees and committees; facilitating the use of advisors; and providing updates to the County Administrator as necessary.

- A group of **Advisors** will serve as support to the Animal Task Force. The Animal Welfare and Enforcement Unit Manager or her designee will facilitate the meetings and work of the Task Force. Advisors may be staff, individuals, committees, or institutions that bring important knowledge or expertise and will assist the Task Force in the successful development and/or implementation of this study's findings. Members of the current Animal Advisory Council may serve, at their pleasure and in the discretion of the Task Force, as advisors.
- The **Policy Subcommittee** will make recommendations on how Gwinnett County should modify current code and policies used to preserve and enhance the quality of life of animals.
- The **Structure Committee** will be tasked with identifying and making recommendations on the future structure of the Gwinnett County Animal Welfare and Enforcement Unit and developing recommendations for the priorities and structure of the Gwinnett County Animal Advisory Council.
- The **Program Subcommittee** will address how to modify current County policy and practices to better promote good health and well-being for animals that have been received by the Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center; facilitate adoption; encourage visitors to the Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center; encourage and increase volunteers at the Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center, and review and make recommendations for modifications to the fees charged for animal services provided by Gwinnett County.
- The **Partnerships Subcommittee** will identify and create strategies which promote key intra/inter-governmental relationships to facilitate effectiveness and efficiency and determine how to best connect with key agencies and organizations in order to promote the health and well-being of companion animals.

Gwinnett County Animal Task Force Structure



2.4 Project Timeline

This Task Force is to meet for approximately four months. The following chart represents a general timeline of events:

Animal Services Task Force Timeline					
Month	August	September	October	November	December
Public Meetings					
Outreach Activities					
Existing Conditions					
Preliminary Recommendations					
Final Recommendations					
ASTF Meetings					

Calendar of Events

August/September

Kick-Off Meeting
 Committee Assignments
 Committee Meetings
 Launch Web Page
 Public Meeting
 Committee Work
 Existing Conditions Review

October

Task Force Full Meeting
 Existing Conditions Review
 Begin work on Preliminary Recommendations
 Committee Work

November

Preliminary Recommendations Presented
 Public Meeting
 Task Force Full Meeting

December

Final Recommendations Presented
 Task Force Full Meeting
 Final Report submitted to County Administrator/BOC

3.0 Deliverables

The Task Force is expected to provide the following documentation:

3.1 Monthly Status Reports

Details of Task Force efforts will be provided to the County Administrator to include Task Force activities to date, technical support needs, attendance, and next steps.

3.2 Identified Partnership Opportunities

A strategy will be developed to identify and cultivate potential partnerships with governments and nonprofit agencies in and around Gwinnett County and beyond its jurisdictional boundaries. The purpose is to share resources, information on trends, best practices, and funding opportunities.

3.3 Recommendations for the Animal Advisory Council

Issues identified by the Task Force outside of the core issues will be provided to the Animal Advisory Council. In addition, recommendations will be made for the following topics:

- Animal Advisory Council governance structure, if any;
- Prioritized list of needs; and
- Prioritized list of long-term issues.

3.4 Final Report

The Final Report will be used as a map to implement short and long-term strategies which maximize the organizational effectiveness of the Gwinnett County Animal Welfare and Enforcement Unit and the Animal Advisory Council; promote the quality of life for animals; propose approaches to reduce the rate of euthanized healthy or treatable animals; and promote responsible pet ownership. The following items will be included in this document:

1. Executive Summary
2. Review of Existing Conditions
3. Best Practices Review
4. Animal Welfare and Enforcement Unit Structure Recommendations
5. Animal Advisory Council Structure Recommendations
6. Marketing Strategy
7. Prioritized Short-Term Work Plan
8. Prioritized Long-Term Work Plan
9. Compiled Monthly Status Reports

Implementation requirements, time frame, and estimated costs will be provided for each issue identified.