

UNOFFICIAL

Gwinnett Animal Advisory Council Minutes January 23,2014

MEMBERS PRESENT

Marcia Bumbalough
Sharon Cassidy
Solveig Evans
Gail La Berge
Curtis Northrup
Joseph Sternberg

MEMBERS ABSENT

Carla Brown

STAFF PRESENT

Chip Moore
Theresa Cox

I. Introductions and Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Chairman Curtis Northrup who welcomed council members, staff and audience.

II. A motion was made by Marcia Bumbalough, seconded by Gail LaBerge to approve and accept minutes from the December 18, 2013 meeting. The motion passed unanimously by the 6 members in attendance.

III. Council member comments

Item 3 on the agenda for council member comments brought comments from Gail LaBerge that the state legislature is considering Senate Bill 290 regarding "dangerous dog" definition and in the bill is wording that reduces the time a dog owner has to appeal the designation of "dangerous dog" from 15 days to 7 days.

Solveig Evans asked that council members and the public contact their county commissioner asking to increase shelter staff to capacity and consider salary increases and Curtis Northrup asked council members to be in contact with their appointing commissioners regarding this item.

Sharon Cassidy asked that shelter employees to a better job of identifying breeds/cross breeds of dogs posted on the county shelter website, that not every dog is a pit cross. This was responded to by Chip Moore who stated it

is better to err on the side of caution so the public does know what might be in the potentially adopted dog's breed lines so the dog is not returned should a private vet say "pit bull cross" and surprise the new owner. Also there are likely more pit crosses in the shelter than any other breed. Chip also stated that new methods were in work to help better determine a dog's breed or mix of breeds.

IV. Shelter Update by Shelter Manager

Chip handed printouts to council members of the proposed changes to increase current Animal Control fees and new wording for Section 34 Adoption. These will be sent through channels to the Police Dept who will then send them on to the Board of Commissioners.

Also handed out were the full year statistics of Animal Control stats showing 2013 totals as well as 2012 totals. Chip explained the large difference (\$15,634) of more collected in 2013 vs. 2012 due to Society of Friends funds now coming fully to the shelter as opposed to part to the Society and part to the shelter in 2012. The Society of Friends was completely taken over by Gwinnett Animal Control as of November 2013. One favorable item noted was in 2012 3238 animals were euthanized as opposed to 2467 animals euthanized for 2013. The shrinking numbers are very encouraging over the past 2 years considering back in 2011 the number of euthanized animals was a high of 9128.

Chip also noted the shelter has 5 open positions presently which when filled will bring the total staff number to 34. One thing being worked on is to have an in house (shelter) veterinarian who will be the Medical Director.

V. Discussion Items

A. Marcia Bumbalough addressed the Neutering by Injection as seen on Ch2 WSB this week by Clark Howard and asked Chip to discuss this later in the meeting and address why it is presently illegal in the county shelter.

B. Citizen Liaison for the Shelter

This item was tabled in a motion by Gail LaBerge, seconded by Joseph Sternberg til the next meeting as Carla Brown, presenter of this item, was absent. It was a unanimous 6-0 approval vote.

Chip then presented the video from Ark Science on ZEUTERIN, the injectable zinc based drug for male dogs to render them sterile. He stated this was discussed at a seminar with veterinarians and a member of Ark Science back in August 2013 at the Gwinnett Shelter. The drug reduces testosterone 50% but basically visibly leaves a male dog "in tact", may not reduce "wandering" or "aggression" or even the physical act of breeding. But no pregnancy will occur as the drug is 100% effective. One vial would cost a non profit, i.e

Shelters \$15, and could treat up to 3 dogs. A private practice vet would pay \$ 50 approximately for the same vial. In the opinion of Chip Moore and Solveig Evans this is not the "cure all, end all" to the issue of sterilizing male dogs but under various circumstances could and should be an alternative method for owners with religious objection to surgically neutering a dog, to owners of a dog who might be medically unable to withstand anesthesia or to economically challenged owners. It could be viable for instance of an animal control van went on a campaign to neuter in economically depressed areas at reasonable, affordable costs to the owner(s) of a male dog(S). This drug presently is FDA approved and is in use by private practice veterinarians in the country. A possible bill changing the wording/meaning/definition of STERILIZATION in the state law may make it to the Ga. state legislature during the next congressional session.

Under TITLE 4 ANIMALS. O.C.G.A. 4-14-2 definitions #5 it reads: "Sterilization" means the surgical removal of the reproductive organs of a dog or cat in order to render the animal unable to reproduce.

Section 4-14-3, item "a" reads:

a. Any public or private animal shelter, animal control agency operated by a political subdivision of this state, humane society, or public or private animal refuge shall make provisions for the sterilization of all dogs or cats from such shelter, agency, society or refuge by:

and there are many more items clarified i.e. b through d, that use the word "sterilization". Bottom line is injection is not surgical.

VI. Nomination and election of officers.

A. Chairman

Joseph Sternberg nominated current chairman Curtis Northrup to be reelected, seconded by Gail LaBerge. There were no other nominations.

Curtis was unanimously approved by the 6 council members in attendance.

B. Vice Chairman

Gail LaBerge nominated Marcia Bumbalough, seconded by Joseph Sternberg. There were no other nominations. Marcia was unanimously approved by the 6 council members in attendance.

C. Secretary

Marcia Bumbalough nominated Solveig Evans, seconded by Gail LaBerge. There were no other nominations. Solveig was unanimously approved by the 6 council members in attendance.

VII. Next meeting schedule

After little discussion it was voted and approved unanimously that Tuesday, April 15, 2014 would be the next meeting to be held at 7 p.m.

VIII. Citizen comments

JP Menese commented on a loose dog in his neighborhood that challenges residents meanly and aggressively and Chip responded that without proper forms filled out and turned in to Animal Control the county AC agents have no rights to pick up the dog or cite the owner. Mr. Menese also questioned whether a German Shepherd should be outside 24/7 in the extreme current cold weather and he was reassured the dog is likely happy and not suffering if it has food and shelter.

Other comments were made by Susan Ruelle and A. Gates (?) endorsing consideration of the use of Zeuterin in the future by the county animal control shelter. (again my apologies for the second name I'm unable to read on the citizen sign in sheet.) ((Printing the name would help!))

IX. Adjournment

Gail LaBerge motion to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. and it was seconded by Joseph Sternberg and voted in favor unanimously.