

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COLLIER COUNTY DOMESTIC
ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Naples, Florida, July 21, 2009

LET IT BE REMEMBERED, that the Collier County Domestic Animal Services Advisory Committee in and for the County of Collier, having conducted business herein, met on this date at 6:30 PM in REGULAR SESSION at Domestic Animal Services Training Room, Davis Blvd., East Naples, Florida, with the following members present:

CHAIRMAN: Michele Antonia
Marcia Breithaupt
Dr. Ruth Eisele
Sergeant David Estes (absent)
Tom Kepp, Jr.
Sabina Musci
Jim Rich

ALSO PRESENT: Amanda Townsend, Director, DAS
Nan Gerhardt, Shelter Operations Mgr.
GeriLynn Waterbury, Operations Coordinator, DAS
Dr. Karen Brown, Veterinarian, DAS
Dana Alger, Animal Control Officer Supervisor
Hailey Alonso, Administrative Assistant, DAS

I. Call to Order

Chairman Michele Antonia called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM.

II. Attendance

Attendance was taken and a quorum established.

III. Approval of Agenda

Dr. Ruth Eisele moved to approve the agenda as amended. Second by Sabina Musci. Carried unanimously, 6-0.

IV. Approval of Minutes of June 16, 2009

Changes: Page 3-VI. A. New Business-change bulleted items 2, 3 and 4 are to read:

- *Number of positions that would have to be cut is 6, including Volunteer Coordinator position. Nine plus 1 already vacated are empty as a result of cuts over the past three years.*
- *A budget cut of \$390,000 – the general public adoption program, veterinary clinic and volunteer program would be eliminated*
- *Basically resulting in fewer adoption outcomes and more euthanized animals*

Page 5 Line 2 under Teri Lacastro's comments is to read:

"...successful animal court case on animal cruelty in Collier County."

(Underlined words indicate additions or replacements)

Sabina Musci moved to approve the minutes of June 16, 2009 as amended. Second by Jim Rich. Carried unanimously, 6-0.

V. Old Business

A. Directors Report

Amanda Townsend provided an update on DAS activity for the past month.

- Passing of the Budget with the lesser drastic cuts
- Employee evaluations completed
- Work plans for next year
- Ongoing investigation in Immokalee on "chicken hoarding" of 187 birds in deplorable conditions and five dogs, reported by an anonymous caller. Investigations involving both animal owner and property owner followed as well as a Veterinarian's assessment of the site. A warrant for search and seizure included granting of custody and authorization for humane disposition of the animals.

Service of the warrant will be handled through the Sheriff's Office.

Amanda introduced six of the seven office staffers of DAS. (Kathlene Drew, Volunteer Coordinator was away). She reported 32 people were on staff and spoke of their daily duties and assigned projects.

B. Departmental Statistics and Reports (handouts –attached – June 2009)

Statistics were reviewed and discussed. Summary as follows:

- Intake was down except for cats.
- A new report per the DASAB's request to show reasons for euthanasia

broken down and divided by dogs and cats.

- Spay & Neuter - 600 to date
- Revenue exceeded in licensing and will continue to exceed through 2009.
- Donation Trust Fund continues to fluctuate.

DASAB requested a different scanning method for more legible printouts of Statistics Reports.

C. Summer Schedule

Discussion ensued with the consensus being to meet on August 18, the regular meeting schedule.

D. Summary of LDC Regulations on Animals

Amanda Townsend requested this item and item VI. *Topic A. (Stronger Local Lemon Laws)* be discussed following item VI. *topic B.* in conjunction with the Departmental Projects for 2010 discussions.

VI. New Business

A. Stronger Local Lemon Laws

(Discussion deferred to follow item B.)

B. 2010 Potential Department Projects (handout)

Amanda Townsend prepared an extensive report of 2009 DAS accomplishments showing Five Key Results Areas which are items the whole County staff is individually critiqued on.

The Areas are:

- Strategic Planning
- Customer Focus
- Resource Management
- Effectiveness/Productivity
- Safety

A bulleted list of Progress/Results was shown for each Key Results Area of the integrated goals to meet the County's needs.

She explained that everything is related to the County's strategic plan and each department's balanced score card and is aligned to focus on the County's goals. She reviewed some of the individual accomplishments achieved in 2009.

Those projects still in progress will be rolled into the projects set up to move the department forward in 2010.

A second document handout was from a system adopted by the County using a "balanced score card". This contained four key concept areas for running a good business –

- Servicing the customer
- Managing financial resources
- Running an efficient business and
- Building team employees

Based on this concept, all County departmental projects are set up.

Questions arose on exploring behavioral testing.

Nan Gerhardt responded that on-line training is underway for general behavioral training with staff. More research on this controversial issue would need to be conducted such as methods, liabilities, legal ramifications, etc.

The third document presented was a compilation of projects and suggestions researched and received from many sources and from Public input.

All great suggestions, but not all appropriate for DAS. Many could be initiated and implemented by the community.

The DASAB will review these documents and create a prioritized list for discussion at the next meeting.

Jim Rich suggested setting half the next meeting aside for a workshop to set up a priority list.

Michele Antonia reported on the status and accomplishments of the Cat Coalition who have finally received their tax-free status and is now a 501(c) 3 corporation.

Amanda Townsend spoke about the Calgary program as a good model to emulate. She has support from the County Manager to focus on improvement of the licensing program

Discussion followed on licensing programs with significant input from **Dr. Karen Brown and Dr. Ruth Eisele.**

Items slated for discussion at this time were tabled and will be encompassed in the 2010 Potential Projects, which will come back in the August meeting.

C. Responsible Pet Ownership – Linda Stevens

Ms Stevens was not able to be present. Her letter regarding pet behavior and obedience classes was presented and briefly discussed. This topic will be put on the Agenda for next month as requested by Ms Stevens.

D. Micro Chipping – Jim Rich

Jim Rich requested information regarding scanning for Micro chips at DAS.

- He requested a 3-month trial program, for strays and surrendered animals, using a record-keeping spreadsheet and efforts to track true ownership.
- Adopters and Adoption and Rescue Groups be required to microchip and register pets with penalty attached.

Amanda Townsend explained the DAS uses pre-registered microchips. All strays and surrendered animals are scanned. If they are micro- chipped and the person allows DAS to photocopy their driver license and signs a surrender form, they are deemed to be the owner of the pet. No further search is conducted.

Lengthy discussion followed.

Amanda Townsend will write a policy for educational purpose for the DASAB.

VII. Public Comment

Tom Breithaupt questioned the following:

1. Income Revenue breakdown –what is approx income via licensing
2. Qpdf.com - suggested it be used for printout of statistics
3. Lemon Law questioned wording –(*Answer -Pet Lemon Law pertains to pet shops and retailers*)
4. RE: Euthanasia stats –50% of adoptable healthy animals were euthanized?
Answer-Yes

He spoke at length on the following points:

5. He contacted DAS facilities in 4 states, reporting on their successes
6. Engaging veterinarians -Issue 1 or 3 yr licenses - Problems with over-vaccinations
1-yr & 3-yr tag (\$10 & \$30) for license/rabies - color coded
7. 3 topics -1.DAS Citizen Support
 2. DAS Mission Statement
 3. DAS 5-yr Success Plan
 - He cited other cities' records with licensing, euthanasia, and enforcement resulting in higher levels of revenue and lower euthanasia statistics.
 - Education – Scouting groups, boys & girls clubs church groups - some pay for the learning experience
 - Financial- cost reduction through enforcement
 - Enforcement - brings veterinarians business; meet with them; enforce the law.

Daniel Scarisbrick requested the DASAB to re-consider adoption being put into the Mission Statement. DAS was commended for their work but to avoid a situation such as a recent court case, adoption should be made part of the Mission Statement. He stated, if it is not, the public should be told-why not.

Stephen Wright spoke about:

- The micro chip/owner identification issue. He noted you cannot buy or sell a car or house (your property) unless you can prove ownership. It should be no different for an animal (your property).
- The Key Results Area document under Effectiveness/Productivity: “Working with County Attorney’s office to develop alternatives to mass impounds”. He questioned, “What alternatives?” Could it mean Mass euthanasia?
(Amanda the meaning of “mass impounds” in the context it was used)
- Regarding Temperament testing - It was not proven reliable and doesn’t solve everything, from what he’s read.
- Commended the positive things done by DAS, but disappointed in the lack of support for adoptions by DASAB by their vote against adding adoptions to the Mission Statement. He feared that adoptions could be ended at any time.
- He provided a sign up sheet for those DASAB members willing to speak one on one with him.

An active discussion followed.

VIII. Advisory Board Member Comments

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Sabina Musci asked how DAS determines temperament testing of dogs being adopted who might be returned for behavioral problems.

Nan Gerhardt cited DAS staff training and experience in observation of pet behavior was utilized to determine suitability for adoption.

Sabina noted an owner's responsibility to put pets in a safe place when on vacation.

Jim Rich spoke about the difference in opinion of what is important. Since County Commissioners gave a mandate and money to save the adoption program; the number of adoption continues to fall, why not put it in the Mission Statement.

Marcia Breithaupt inquired about a counselor to work with adoptive owners. *Amanda Townsend responded she has been looking for a volunteer to train for that. Staff also will take a counseling approach with adoptees.*

Marcia stated she also would like to see a public park, public beach and training in obedience opportunities on the projects list.

Dr. Ruth Eisele commended DAS on all they do. Though she took no position one way or the other, she stated the stated general impression was that the adoption issue was used to accomplish monetary goals, which would not have been the case if it was in the Mission Statement and thus unable to be cut.

Regarding behavioral testing, her advice was not to worry about it.

Nan Gerhardt stated the decisions concerning euthanasia were tough on staff, and it was good to see it generating a lot of discussion.

Public Request was made to put DAS Mission Statement on the next Agenda.

Next Advisory Board Meeting is scheduled for August 18, 2009 at the Domestic Animal Training Room, Davis Blvd., Naples, Florida

There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was adjourned by the order of the Chair at 8:52 PM.

COLLIER COUNTY DOMESTIC ANIMAL SERVICES

Chairman Michele Antonia

These minutes approved by Board/Committee on _____ as presented _____ or as amended _____.