

Minutes of the Newtown Animal Control Advisory Board Meeting

Date: Friday, May 27th, 2016

Location: Newtown Municipal Town Building, 3 Primrose Street, Meeting Room 3

Attendance: Members: Adria Henderson, Chair, Frank McCloskey, Gene Rosen, Jane Hellman, Joy Brewster. Alternate: Laura Branchini. Also in attendance: ACO Carolee Mason, Asst. ACO Matt Schaub, First Selectman Pat Llodra, and Police Sgt. Aaron Bahamonde

Absent: Public Works Director Fred Hurley

Meeting began @ 10:10 am

There was no executive session, public participation, or correspondence

ACAB Board 4/4/16 minutes were approved with no changes

NEW BUSINESS:

Foster Program

Chairman Henderson noted a recent post on the Shelter Facebook page that fostering program was no longer available, but ACO Mason confirmed it was still active. ACO Mason will check with staff member Amy Sullivan, who is in charge of the Face Book page.

Photographing adoptable pets

Chairman Henderson noted Marlene Cafarelli, a local professional photographer, has volunteered her services to photograph the adoptable pets at the Shelter, for FB postings, etc.. First Selectman Llodra also noted that Cafarelli is doing an upcoming exhibit in the Town Hall for the Horse Guard and maybe can leverage it by including dogs & cats available for adoption at the shelter. ACO Mason said volunteer Cindy Joyce does the photography now, but will keep it in mind.

OLD BUSINESS

Adoption fees

ACO Mason confirmed new adoption fee have been posted on the Town website

Volunteer Walker Program

- o ACO Mason said the Walker Program is still suspended weekends.
- o FS Llodra noted that the walker program is valuable for the dogs at the Shelter, but the established rules have to be clear, training provided, and no exceptions made to printed rules or schedules.

o Chairman Henderson recommended scheduling the volunteers, especially on weekends. Shelter Staff member Amy Sullivan & Volunteer walker and Board member Laura Branchini are working on it, including developing a training program. ACAB members said having scheduled windows and limited public hours on weekdays would be good.

o Sgt. Bahamonde was still concerned about having walkers on weekends due to reduced staff and amount of workload, unless there's an additional resource. During the weekend, there's only one staff person and a kennel keeper for a short period. FS Llodra noted the Walker Program has to be organized, enforced, safe, and properly resourced. ACAB members felt the weekend walker program is needed. ACO Mason, who agreed, will develop a plan, including hiring a part-time resource on the weekend, and present it at the next Board meeting. Sgt. Bahamonde asked ACO Mason to also talk to Finance Director Tait on the budget for this part time position.

Play Yard

A new pathway designated by wood chips was created behind the Shelter on Town property, gravel has replaced the grass in the kennels in the play yard, and a drainage system was installed to properly sanitize the outdoor play yard kennels has been completed by Public Works. ACAB members visited the Shelter prior to the meeting to review and to discuss it with the ACO staff.

Chairman Henderson noted that the shelter staff had a few issues with the new projects.

Kennels - ACO mason said some of the dogs are having a hard time with the gravel, especially the older dogs. It was noted that larger gravel was used versus the smaller size gravel recommended by ACAB members. First Selectmen Llodra recommended we give the dogs some time to get used to it, but if it's still an issue, then to look into the possibility of replacing the existing stone with new, smaller stone.

Pathway - Chairman Henderson noted Director Hurley still wants to fix the entrance to the walkway for run off. ACAB members & ACO staff also noted: 1) portion of pathway runs along play yard fence and could cause fence fighting if other dog(s) are out in the play yard. Joy Brewster recommended putting up shade cloth along the outside bottom portion of fence. The staff said they will monitor first and see if any changes are needed, 2) need to put a sign up at bottom of new path where it's merges with the paved road so walkers turn right to stay on Town property. If they turn left, then they will enter State property where dogs aren't required to be on a leash. Chairman Henderson will talk to Deputy Land Use Director Rob Sibley to confirm property lines and put up any necessary signage.

Cat committee

Chair Henderson still needs to follow-up with Laura Branchini on all the cat-related issues (i.e. intake procedure & HVAC)

ACO staff recently attended a seminar on how to reduce stress for cats and put in a few new items (ie music, shelves) in the training room that is now used for cats.

Signs for outdoor kennels

Chairman Henderson still needs to follow-up with ACO Mason on wording so ACO Mason can order and have the signs installed per the 4/4/16 ACAB minutes.

Next Meeting – The Board will handle the scheduling via email.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15

These minutes are subject to approval by ACAB at the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Frank McCloskey