

 **Shenandoah Valley
Animal Services Center**
**BOARD MEETING MINUTES
VIA ZOOM**

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021 AT 10:00 A.M.

PRESENT:

Board Members:

Michael G Hamp II, Chair, Waynesboro City Manager
Timothy Fitzgerald, Augusta County Administrator
Steven Rosenberg, Staunton City Manager

Staff:

Candy Hensley, Augusta County Deputy Administrator
Hannah Richardson, Shenandoah Valley Animal Services Center Manager
Tracey Meadows, Shenandoah Valley Animal Services Center
Shane Ayers, Staunton Animal Control Officer
Jennifer Anderson, Augusta County Animal Control Officer
Leslie Holsinger, Staunton Police Department
Julia Bortle, Recorder

Guest: Alice Burton, Associate Director of Animal Shelter and Animal Control Engagement,
Homeward Trails

Media: Chelsea Church, WHSV

ABSENT: None

CALL TO ORDER:

- The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., noting there is a public comment period at the end of the meeting.

OWNER SURRENDER INTAKE FEE PROPOSAL:

- Ms. Richardson is requesting Board approval for a policy change to expand the surrender intake fee to include healthy stray cats coming into the shelter. It is anticipated to add revenue to the shelter. Mr. Rosenberg asked about the current fee structure:
 - Currently \$10 for cat and \$15 for dog owner surrender intake fee;
 - Proposed intake fee for healthy stray cats as they tend to be feral;
 - No intake fee for “stray” dogs as they tend to have owners and are not actually stray.
- Mr. Fitzgerald perceives that the State Code does require the intake of stray cats. He is concerned about charging people who bring stray cats into the shelter when they are not the owner, as it may cause issues and compound the problem with the number of stray cats in the County.
- Mr. Hamp suggested scheduling a called meeting in approximately 30 days, allowing members to review the current fee schedule and consider the request for a stray cat intake fee after reviewing the State Code.

- Ms. Richardson is expecting to hear from Ms. Michelle Welsh at the Attorney General's Office for an interpretation of the State Code on the matter. Mr. Rosenberg asked that the Board receives an email on the results of the Attorney General Office's response.

TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN (TNR) PROGRAM PRESENTATION:

Ms. Burton made a presentation regarding the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program for stray cats. It included:

Understanding community cats and their behavior (also referred to as stray, feral, alley).

Community cats in shelters – most not adoptable; high rate of euthanasia.

TNR – Definition of Trap-Neuter-Return: Catching – spay or neuter – vaccinate – ear tipping – returning to outdoor home.

TNR Programs across the country.

Proposed legislation to be introduced in Richmond for the Trap-Neuter-Return Program.

Ineffective methods: feeding bans, remove to shelters, and doing nothing.

Positive impact on public and on stray cat population.

How Animal Control improved the TNR Program.

Best practices for colony care.

Addressing humane deterrents.

New law being proposed:

- raises the standard for trappers – only a healthy cat will be returned; verbal permission of landowner required;
- rabies incidents – papers will be available to animal control officer or health department or patrol officer;
- no trap should be left for more than an hour without being checked;
- includes an education component.

A brief question and answer period followed the presentation. Ms. Burton will provide the following, and she volunteered to help the locality institute a TNR program:

- more current TNR data for Arlington County after 2015 for the same period, either calendar or fiscal.
- examples of exemptions instituted for community cats when “run at large” ordinances are in place.
- examples from other Virginia jurisdictions and how they operate a TNR program in order to compare them to current regulations and programs.

POPULATION REPORT:

Currently 55 cats and 20 dogs in shelter and 2 guinea pigs

Some animals are in foster homes waiting for adoption

46 cats in adoptive homes pending paperwork

37 cats in regular foster homes

28 dogs in foster-to-adopt homes

5 dogs in regular foster homes

Mr. Rosenberg and Ms. Henley asked for future population reports include a comparison of previous reports to see how the population varies over time. The future reports should be broken down by locality and include a euthanasia total.

OPERATIONS REPORT:

- Ms. Richardson stated that a goal is to reduce length of stay for animals at the shelter. A software company is creating software where a report can be created to show the length of stay for animals in the system.
- Staffing:
 - Current six kennel attendant filled positions
 - Five open kennel attendant positions
- Addressing the heating concern for the two sides of the dog kennels.
- The floors must be addressed
- Working on a new phone system.

FINANCE REPORT:

- Mr. Hamp reviewed the finance report provided to the members prior to the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Policy and Procedure Update:

- One policy ready to be presented to the Board for approval.
- Several policies drafted and should be ready in the next few months.
- Mr. Hamp suggested including fees and revenues and the intake policy on the agenda for the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

With no one calling in to speak, the meeting continued.

ADJOURN:

With no further matters to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m. on a motion by Mr. Fitzgerald, seconded and adopted unanimously.

Michael G Hamp II, Chair