

DENTON ANIMAL SHELTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes from June 19, 2019

I. **Present:** Diana Leggett, Anne Sullivan, Kathleen Duffy, Charles Hunter, Dr. Angie Paben, Randi Weinberg

Guests: Tiffany Thomson, Julien Peralta, Gayla Nelsen, Chief Dixon, Ryan Adams, Julie Cassidy, Stacy Romo

Absent: None

II. **Called to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM by Chair Diana Leggett

III. **Approval of February 13, 2018 minutes:** A motion was made by Anne Sullivan, seconded by Kathleen Duffy to approve the minutes as reviewed.

IV. **Discussion of Raccoon Incident with Denton Police Department:** Chief Dixon discussed the recent raccoon incident. Advised there were no signs of injuries on the raccoon reported and it was released back to the wild after observations. Explains that by definition with Denton County, a raccoon is not defined as “animal”. Due to this definition along with feedback from multiple specialist (2 game wardens, 1 prosecutor) and Texas Penal Codes, Chief Dixon made the decision not to press charges or to ticket in this situation because he did not feel it met required criteria. The couple involved showed remorse when situation was addressed. Another raccoon was captured by the couple after this incident, and the couple immediately contacted Animal Control to release.

Julie Cassidy commented that she feels the raccoon should have never been released and should have been rehabbed. Tiffany Thomson replied that an Animal Control Officer went on site and picked up raccoon. She observed raccoon for over an hour to ensure it was able to eat and drink. Raccoon showed no signs of distress or struggle and was then released.

Anne Sullivan questioned if a wildlife specialist was contacted. Tiffany Thomson replied that a specialist is contacted if the animal shows signs of distress.

Diana Leggett expressed her concerns about lack of training on animal code. She believes Police and Animal Control Officers should have a specialist for wildlife animals. States there is a training course available that focuses on wildlife and becoming a Certified Cruelty Investigators. She will forward that information along with letter from Humane Society of the United States to both Chief Dixon and Tiffany Thomson.

Anne Sullivan suggested training for community regarding rules and guidelines for situations similar to this. Communication with public on how to handle raccoons without killing it.

Dr. Angie Paben wants to ensure public is aware to contact professionals due to rabies and other health issues.

There is a hotline available that provides council on how to respond to wildlife activity in a positive way. It also counsels Animal Control Officers on when an animal should be caught or released. Hours are 7am – 10pm.

V. Denton Animal Shelter Reports

A. Shelter Statistics Totals FY18/19:

Adoption 1,920, Return to Owner 530, Transfers 197, Euthanized 465, Intakes 3,217, FeLV & FIV 673, Live Release Rate 88%.

Successful FELV & FIV Testing includes two hoarding situations. Most recent collected 92 cats and which 21 were EU's and 36 went to rescue. FeLv and FIV testing started in November.

“Other” includes but not limited to rabbits and guinea pigs.

Anne Sullivan asked if she can get a breakdown of EUs in comparison with last year. Also if the EU count for “other” is high? Randi Weinberg replied she will look into this request and get the information together for Anne Sullivan.

B. Shelter Enhancements:

Currently the Animal Shelter is working with contractors on a permanent shade source for outside yards. In the meantime, temporary shades have been installed.

Large Cat Towers have been ordered which include comfort, play and food stations.

Meet and greet areas have new benches with storage to hold toys and treats.

Volunteer/Foster Program Update:

The Volunteer program has been revamped. The volunteer software, Volgistics, holds up to 500 people and it was full, however, there were not that many volunteers coming to the shelter. So each person was reached out to and status

updated. Currently there are 218 volunteers which includes the fosterers. There are 81 animals in foster care at this time. There is a new merit system being used for the volunteers. Green level for new comers (less than 100 hours). Blue level once 100 hours are reached (includes a t-shirt). Gold level for 200 or more hours. Gold level volunteers become mentors and help train the new comers. Volunteer of the month automatically becomes a Gold level. There are also monthly newsletters sent out and even training seminars such as “How to read a dog’s body language.”

C. Rebranding:

Rebranding updates, including new logo, is in process. The logo was voted on by over 900 people. Logo is posted on website and Facebook page. Animal Shelter is also working with other City Departments to get the dogs out. With the help of the Parks department, there was a successful Movies in the Park event. Looking to have more events coming up soon.

D. Petco Foundation Partnership

Application has been submitted to join the Petco Foundation Partnership. This will allow offsite adoptions at the Petco on University as well as Grant opportunities.

E. RSVP:

RSVP Vet Services now has 2 new permanent Vet Techs and a full time Veterinarian, Tracy Crawford. Transition was made as of May 6, 2019. Kathleen Duffy said the new vet staff is outstanding.

F. Tethering Ordinance Review:

Staff is proposing changes on the tethering ordinance. Animal Control Officers review yields that tethering is one of the most challenging processes. Other surrounding cities have been contacted regarding their tethering ordinance. Some have no tethering while others allow tethering up to certain restrictions. City of Denton Animal Shelter is reviewing a no tethering process. Staff is seeking direction and input from the committee before this item is reviewed by legal. Next meeting will recap everyone’s input.

VI. Concluding Items:

Randi Weinberg presented a gift to Kathleen Duffy for her last meeting on the advisory board. Kathleen Duffy says she has seen so many changes over the time she has been on the advisory committee and is ending her term on such a positive note. She will continue to serve as a volunteer.

Anne Sullivan brought up a call from the previous day about a dog left in a vehicle. She said neither the police nor the owner knew the exact ordinance regarding this matter. Julien Peralta referred to section 6:12 of ordinance which covers this. Anne Sullivan questioned if this type of call is for the Police or for Animal Control. Tiffany Thomson suggested to contact Animal Control as the primary contact, however, depending on the situation, Police may also be contacted.

Randi Weinberg made a post on Animal Shelter Facebook page about the heat advisory and also referenced section 6:12. She will go back and add to contact Animal Control with any concerns.

Anne Sullivan questioned about budget request updates. Tiffany Thomson said the Animal Shelter is requesting 2 Animal Control Officers and a Volunteer Coordinator for the next fiscal year. Aside from that, DASF has covered the cost for the outdoor shades, AC brackets are already approved and in the works to install and staff is working with the Parks department on the potential of new additional dog yards. The budget presentation is scheduled with council for July 16, 2019.

Diana Leggett advised of some art opportunities with Susan Davis and the UNT Art department. She will send an introductory email to Susan, Tiffany and Randi to schedule meeting about art work to be donated to Animal Shelter.

Dr. Angie Paben questioned if the City of Denton has a feral cat program. She offered to do training classes on feral cats or to help any way possible. Tiffany Thomson said there are specific ordinances regarding feral cats. Staff does have ideas on the direction and is seeking feedback from the committee.

Anne Sullivan asked about online registrations. Staff responded that this is an item for continued research. Present challenges include the pet owner having to come in person to register and pick up the tag

VII. Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 PM by Diana Leggett seconded by Kathleen Duffy.