



Wichita Animal Control Advisory Board

Minutes

Date- April 6, 2016

Attendees- Teresa Burks, Chris Hagman, Judy Handley, Sara Guengerich, Traci Gehrke

Absent- John Stevens, Stephanie Fisk McCurdy, Danelle Brewer (KHS)

City Staff- Captain Nolte, Dennis Graves, Drew Bessey, Robin Bradley, Jan Jarman

Actions

Call to order at: 4:02 pm by co-chairperson, Teresa Burks

Approval of minutes from March 2 meeting: 5-0 to accept the minutes without changes.

Board Discussion-current business (spay neuter education)

- Board was informed that the current breed specific legislation (BSL) which exists in the City of Wichita, was the reason behind denying a grant request for KHS.(Animal Farm Foundation in Bangall, NY, was the foundation denying the grant funds) The board took no action but may want to review this topic in the future.
- Board inquired about updating the city website to include contact information for the board members, that citizens currently have no way to obtain the email addresses for board members. Staff stated that the issue was with the vendor, Granicus, which hosts the sites for all city advisory boards. Staff will seek an estimated date for resolving the problem.
- Board began discussion on the proposed proclamation to have a spay-neuter education week in the city. Several members questioned the timing of this and wondered if a meaningful campaign could be created by the proposed date of April 19.
- Suggestion was made that February is spay-neuter month and that a campaign in cooperation with local vets and rescue groups might have more impact. Delaying this effort might provide additional time to ensure that resources are available for an effective campaign. Staff assured the board that an effective social media strategy can be implemented in time for this proposed date.

Board Decisions

Approved 5-0, requesting that the City of Wichita declare the week of May 8-14, "Spay and Neuter Education Week". The board agreed that this is only an initial step in creating awareness and that additional education and partnerships will be needed in order to make an impact on the number of animals that are spayed and neutered.

New business discussion

- The new police chief would like to explore a lifetime pet license, fee to be determined. This would only be available to spayed-neutered pets. (Licensing is priority #5, as determined by board vote on February 3, 2016).

Public comments

- George Theoharis thanked board for their work to date and presented members with token of appreciation
- Wichita Animal Action League and Spay Neuter Kansas would like to help with distribution of flyer that provides information on low cost option for spay and neuter services. It was suggested that going door to door has been more effective than using an insert in water bills.
- Current ordinances requiring spay-neuter of pit bulls over 6 months of age has not been effective; there are still many cases of breeding for profit. This is a difficult ordinance to enforce, which creates frustration for concerned animal advocates. (Per Captain Nolte, this issue may fall into next topic of animal neglect and abuse & board will be sure to consider this when they move forward)
- Low income families care about their pets and want to be responsible owners. They value the ability to pay a reduced fee for vet services such as spay-neuter.
- Lifetime licensing might be too expensive for lower income pet owners –would there still be an option for an annual license?
- What funding sources are available for vouchers for lower income citizens to use for critical vet services? Can license fee be increased in order to create a fund to use for these vouchers? (per Dennis Graves, the license fees go into the city general fund, not into an animal control fund)
- Should fees be increased, and by how much, for unaltered pets?
- What is current percentage of owners who purchase a license and declare that pet is altered? Board has also asked about this and city staff is unsure that a true number is available.
- Stakeholders are not given advance notice of agenda topics and have no ability to prepare for the discussion. Even a few hours advance notice would help.

Actions Required

Submit proclamation to Mayor and schedule on City Council calendar- Robin Bradley

Develop social media blitz messages to provide education on spay-neuter –Robin Bradley (with assistance from Megan Lovely, City Council Communications)

Ensure that stakeholders receive adequate notice of agenda in order to be prepared with comments- Robin Bradley and Captain Nolte

Contact Branden Hall about license numbers for altered pets- Robin Bradley

Inquire about alternate methods for providing the public with the email addresses for board members- Robin Bradley

Contact local veterinarians to gain support for proclamation and future education endeavors- Teresa Burks

Next Meeting

Continue spay neuter education discussion, create a subcommittee for a more extensive campaign, possibly in February 2017

Begin discussion on animal neglect and abuse and what more can be done to ensure the safety of animals

May 4, 2016, 4pm-5:15pm

777 E Waterman (Wichita Transit Center Administration Building)

Meeting adjourned at 5:23 pm