

# Animal Control Advisory Board Minutes

July 20, 2016

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The Animal Control Advisory Board meeting was held at 4 p.m. at 777 E. Waterman, Wichita, KS 67202. Four Board members and six City staff were present.

## **Members Present**

Teresa Burks  
Chris Hagman  
Judy Handley  
John Stevens

## **Staff Present**

Capt. Doug Nolte – WPD  
Lt. Joe Schroeder - WPD  
Dennis Graves – WPD Animal Control  
Drew Bessey – WPD Animal Control  
Jan Jarman – Law Department  
Janet Johnson – City Manager’s Office

## **Members Absent**

Stephanie Fisk McCurdy

## **Guests**

Listed on last page

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**Pro Tem Teresa Burks** called the meeting to order. Meeting minutes from the June 1, 2016, meeting were approved 4-0.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Introduction of Lt. Joe Schroeder**

**Lt. Schroeder** introduced himself and shared information on some of his past assignments at the Wichita Police Department.

### **City Council Advisory Boards and Commissions Training**

**Janet Johnson, City Manager’s Office**, utilized a PowerPoint presentation to provide the Board with some basic training on how City Advisory Boards function. She said this training was necessary because the Board didn’t receive any training or direction when it was first formed and therefore, they had been minimally effective during the past year.

**Johnson** shared information on the six City Council Districts including population, general characteristics and primary animal issues/complaints. She reviewed City Council responsibilities and priorities.

The Wichita Animal Services Mission was reviewed in detail and Board members were encouraged to think about the Mission when making decisions. She stressed the importance of avoiding mission creep and sticking to issues that truly belong to the City/Animal Control and to avoid spending time on issues that are outside the City’s mission or influence.

She used the City’s pit bull ordinance as a good example of how neighborhoods, stakeholders and the City can work together to make positive improvements in the community. **Johnson** also suggested methods/questions the Board members could use when examining issues and she encouraged them to utilize data in their decision making as opposed to anecdotal information that

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can't always be verified. She used graphs to illustrate the example of pit bulls which is the number one breed coming into the animal shelter and the number one breed in terms of bites and attacks in Wichita neighborhoods.

Meeting protocol was also reviewed and the public was informed that yelling questions at staff or Board members in the middle of Board discussion is inappropriate and will no longer be tolerated.

## **Animal Control Operations**

**Dennis Graves, Animal Control Supervisor**, gave an educational presentation on Animal Control Operations. He explained the difference between the two buildings on the Murfin Animal Care Campus. The City Wichita Animal Shelter and the Kansas Humane Society work together, but have very different missions. **Graves** reviewed staffing levels, all of the various services provided, and how Animal Control prioritizes service requests. He also reviewed challenges faced by Animal Control which include being understaffed, and an ever expanding population and geographic area to cover along with increased responsibilities.

**John Stevens** wanted to know how much additional staffing Animal Control needs to operate efficiently. **Graves** said they haven't done an analysis for a while, but they could work on getting those numbers for the Board.

**Judy Handley** said she was wondering about why Albuquerque Animal Services had such a successful operation and she discovered that unlike Wichita, they have a huge budget.

## **Recommended By-law changes**

**Janet Johnson, City Manager's Office**, distributed changes recommended to the By-laws to bring them into compliance with City ordinances. This item could not be voted on until the next meeting.

## **Subcommittees**

**Janet Johnson, City Manager's Office**, provided the Board with three potential topics for subcommittees that were based on issues brought forward at previous meetings. These included:

- **Spay/Neuter Committee:** This committee will develop a community education plan to promote spaying/neutering of pets. The committee will also explore and make recommendations on how to target problem neighborhoods to decrease the number of unwanted animals entering the Wichita Animal Shelter. Committee members may be asked to lead or assist with the execution of any adopted recommendations.
- **Dangerous dog procedure:** This committee will work closely with City staff to thoroughly examine the City's current dangerous dog procedure including statistical, incident and anecdotal data. The committee will also conduct a peer city review of best practices. This committee will additionally look at how any recommendations might impact the City ordinance and if necessary, make recommended changes to the

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ordinance. Some committee meetings may require a representative from the Law Department to attend.

- **Data Analysis Committee:** This committee will work closely with City staff to identify what data needs to be compiled and analyzed in order to accurately reflect what is occurring with animals in the Wichita community. The committee will also identify what type of data would be the most beneficial to share with the community.

**Burks** said she would like the Board to discuss public education/outreach opportunities at the next meeting.

**Action Taken: Burks/Handley made a motion to create subcommittees for each topic. Motion passed 4-0.**

**Due to the late hour Handley/Hagman made a motion to move the Public Agenda up and move Staff Reports to the end of the agenda. Motion passed 4-0.**

## PUBLIC AGENDA

**Sarah Coffman, WAAL, and Katherine Christ, Hands Full Dog Training,** gave a presentation recommending that the City change its dangerous dog determination policy to include a committee that makes the determination and furthermore, the committee should use Dr. Ian Dunbar's Dog Bite Scale. They said that currently Dennis Graves is the only one making that determination and he isn't a professional and there is no consistency in the current process.

**Judy Handley** asked what it takes to become certified as a dog trainer. **Christ** said the industry currently isn't regulated. **Teresa Burks** said there are only two individuals in the State that can consider themselves animal behaviorists. There are no other qualifications to be a behaviorist other than to call yourself one.

**John Stevens** had distributed a handout to the Board that noted the cost to society as a result of dog bites. **Coffman** said his information wasn't correct and the source he used was from someone who was bitten and got mad and started the website. **Stevens** took offense and said the statement wasn't from a website, that it was something he wrote and he read it, requesting it become a part of the official record: *Dogs being maintained in the urban setting require much more stringent scrutiny than dogs maintained in the rural setting. Dog bites that require humans to obtain medical services creates lots of pain and suffering as well as very expensive medical bills. The loss of time for employees of the US Postal Service or the gas service company, water service company, UPS, or any other service company necessary to maintain urban neighborhood services, demands that we have adequate methods to curtail citizens from letting their vicious pets from interacting with neighbors or service personnel.*

**Cheryl Taskinen, Friends of Felines,** gave a presentation on the benefits of TNR in reducing the number of feral cats and outdoor community cats. She presented a document that included

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statistics, and a number of TNR studies done in various cities, some of which had outstanding successes.

**Judy Handley** wanted to know how to help neighbors who live near cat colonies and experience problems. **Taskinen** said there are a number of tools available and she could provide information on that to anyone who was interested.

One citizen wanted to share a story about her dog named Shiloh that was at the Animal Shelter for several days, labeled as a Whippet when in fact it was an Italian Greyhound. When she went to the shelter to see if her dog was there, she discovered it had been euthanized a couple of hours earlier as neither the Humane Society nor any rescues took it into their program. She had to leave the meeting early, but another citizen read the story on her behalf.

Several other citizens expressed an interest in speaking, but after being in session for 2 ½ hours, **Handley/Hagman** made a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Motion passed 4-0.**

## Adjourned

The next meeting will be held at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, August 17 at 777 E. Waterman, Wichita, KS 67202.

### Guests

Teddy Farias  
George Theoharis  
Janet Wiele  
Linda Constable  
Katherine Christ  
Sarah Coffman  
Amy Hegstad  
Randi Carter  
Brenda Penney  
Ellen Querner  
Lonny Wright  
Donna Wirth  
Diana Tedlock  
Jay Bailey  
Jessica Sherwood  
Tammy Johnson  
Judy Hill  
Mona France  
Cheryl Taskinen