



Municipality of Anchorage
Animal Control Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2016



1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m. by Ms. Hamer. A quorum was not yet present.

Members Present: Kari Campbell; Kayla Epstein; Allegra Hamer, Chair; Jay Jackson; Christine Roalofs, DMD, Vice Chair

Members Absent: Jennifer Spencer; Sandy Traini

Staff Present: Melinda Freemon, Director, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS); DeeAnn Fetko, DHHS; Dr. Myra Wilson, DVM, Animal Licensing and Placement Services (ALPS), Laura Atwood, ALPS

2. **Minutes from the January 28, 2016 Meeting:** Motion to approve the minutes by Ms. Campbell and seconded by Ms. Jackson. The minutes were approved as written.

3. **Requested Presentations:** None.

4. **Persons to be Heard:**

Ms. Freemon thanked board members and animal care and control staff for their wonderful contributions. She expressed her appreciation for the outstanding efforts in serving citizens and animals in Anchorage resulting in an exceptional animal care and control program.

5. **Standing Reports:**

Anchorage Animal Care and Control (AACC) Monthly Report and Public Outreach
– Dr. Wilson reported on January and February 2016 activities. January of 2016 was fairly similar to January 2015. February 2016 was the first month where the total number of animals received was up. In 2016, 563 animals were received year-to-date compared to 546 in 2015. The number of cats received in February this year is 131 compared to 99 last year. Dogs received was 119 compared to 154 last year. The number of animals euthanized was slightly higher due to receiving neonatal kittens, trapped cats, feral cats, and an adult spayed female left with 5 babies that were not hers. AACC has euthanized 20 less animals this year compared to last. Percentages for animals claimed and adopted are holding strong. The total spays and neuters performed at AACC are down a little. This is based on the number of pets received that require spay/neuter surgery. AACC focuses on performing surgeries for cats and puppies under 35 lbs. This is in part due to limited surgical recovery space. Licenses sold are down a little, 880 in 2016 compared to 1,063 last year.

Dr. Wilson reported requests for services were 697 compared to 722 in 2015. AACC had 12 APD assists in February. These responses involved deceased individuals with animals in the home, people with pets in their vehicles when they were arrested for DUI, folks taken to the hospital, etc. Officers responded to about the same number of loose animal calls. There have only been 4 classified animals this year compared to 8 last year. Officers have issued 143 citations compared to 161 in 2015. AACC is in the process of training 3 new officers. Citations should increase once they are fully trained. AACC has been aggressive in recruiting employees and are now fully staffed. Full officer training is a 2-3 month process. Officers attend National Animal Control and Humane Officer (NACHO) training which provides 3-4 levels of training including animal behavior and capture, investigations, report writing, court appearances, animal cruelty, etc. The municipal contract requires a 40 hour training for all officers.

Dr. Wilson noted AACC received a media request from the Alaska Dispatch News regarding the low number dogs in the shelter. There was an assumption that AACC was euthanizing the dogs. Dr. Wilson reported euthanasia has decreased significantly. In 2015, 600 animals were euthanized compared to approximately 1,200 in 2013. The percentage of animals euthanized has decreased over the last 3 years. Staff is doing a really good job of getting pets adopted or rescued. Efforts to adopt medically and behaviorally challenged animals have increased. Hopefully the article will cover short length of time animals stay at the shelter due to claims, adoptions, and rescues and will assist in changing perceptions.

Ms. Atwood reported there was one school visit in January where she covered both cat and dog behavior. The students knew very little about cat behavior so she plans to incorporate cat information into future visits. She responded to KTUU regarding homeless people and pets but the story didn't run. After the New Year's Eve holiday, more pets were received due to fireworks. February is Pet Owner Responsibility Month and a press release was issued. The Senior Voice requested AACC submit a regular article and Ms. Atwood will be doing that on a quarterly basis. The first article was on indoor fun with canine companions. KTVB interviewed Ms. Atwood about the AACC World Spay Day promotion. Friends of Pets provides 50 spay/neuter coupons for discounted surgeries for the event. Ms. Atwood provided information for an Alaska Homes Magazine article on how to handle neighborhood barking dogs. She also conducted one shelter tour for a Girl Scout troop. The dog licensing campaign is getting underway and Ms. Atwood hopes to have something to present at the next board meeting. She is also working on an AACC brochure that covers answers to frequent questions that arise when working with the public. KTUU is no longer continuing the pet of the week segment so Ms. Atwood pitched a behind the scenes segment that would take place on a regular basis. Last week, they did a piece on volunteers that transport animals for spay/neuter surgeries. In 2015, they transported 116 animals! Today, there was another story on the Phoenix Fund paying for dental and grooming needs. Ms. Jackson asked if AACC expects to receive chicks and bunnies after Easter. Dr. Wilson said they recently received 14 guinea pigs and 7 rabbits. Local stores will be selling chicks again this year. If they come into AACC, chickens get adopted. However, roosters do not.

6. Committee Reports:

a. Off-Leash Dog Area Committee (Ms. Epstein, Chair) – Ms. Epstein did not have a report this month. Ms. Fetko reported the following information on Anchorage Parks and Recreation activities:

i. University Lake – The master plan went to the community council last month and they are expected to take action in April. The plan calls for small realignments of the trail to protect sensitive nesting areas and formal access to water in other areas in order to minimize erosion.

ii. South Anchorage Sports Park – There have not been any changes since the last meeting.

iii. Valley of the Moon – APR has done some work including removing the dugouts for safety purposes. They have some funding for additional improvements and the park will be included in the parks bond.

iv. Whisper Faith Kovach Park (off Lore in between Lake Otis and the Seward Hwy) – APR has been meeting with a small advisory group and will talk to the Abbott Loop Community Council next about fundraising. Once funds are identified, planning efforts will begin.

v. Muldoon Square Park – The master plan including a $\frac{3}{4}$ acre fenced off-leash dog area was approved by the community council and the, Parks and Recreation Commission and will go before the Planning and Zoning Commission in April followed by the Assembly.

b. Title 17 Review Committee (Ms. Campbell, Chair) – Ms. Campbell reported the committee met last week. The group focused on tackling the Assembly request to address barking first. The committee is considering adding different definitions for specific facilities such as “mushing facility” or “rescue facility” then applying the 20 minute barking exception to those limited facilities. This should address considerations such as providing for the right to mush, giving mushers the ability to have additional barking time for loading and unloading dogs. The committee plans to bring in representatives from those groups to get their input.

7. DHHS Staff Reports:

a. Emergency Pet Sheltering Plan – Ms. Fetko reported DHHS and ALPS continue to work on the emergency pet sheltering field operations guide. It is expected to be completed in April and will assist in the establishment of a pet shelter in the event of an emergency. The goal is to exercise the plan this summer.

b. Recent Safety Measures – Ms. Fetko reported recent safety upgrades to the facility include installation of eye wash stations, a hallway mirror for customer service, a personal duress/panic button system, and quarantine kennel enhanced security for

protection against biting animals. In the coming months, DHHS will be identifying 2016 safety needs and capital improvements and welcomes board input. Ms. Campbell asked if the shelter has an emergency evacuation plan. Dr. Wilson noted there is a shelter evacuation plan. It was recently exercised in coordination with use of the new personal duress buttons. In the event of a fire, staff is to evacuate first and once they have the all-clear to return, will go back into the facility to evacuate the animals. ALPS is also working on an active shooter plan.

8. New Business:

a. Operating Rules and Procedures – The board operating rules are reviewed on an annual basis in March to determine if changes are necessary. There were no suggestions for changes and the operating rules stand as written.

b. Disclosure of Present Economic Interest Form – Ms. Fetko requested board members complete the required Disclosure of Economic Interest form and return it to the Municipal Clerks Office. This form is required by the Municipal Ethics Code.

c. Title 17 Strict Liability Ordinance – Ms. Fetko distributed an updated draft Assembly Ordinance and associated Assembly Memorandum which clarifies that offenses under Title 17 are strict liability offenses. This means proof of the animal owner's state of mind is not required. Ms. Fetko noted the addition of Section 2 to the ordinance which amends the definition of secure enclosure to eliminate the word "reasonably". Members had no changes and affirmed the board resolution (2016-01) in support of the ordinance stands as written.

d. Nominating Committee – Ms. Hamer noted the board typically elects a Chair and Vice Chair in March. This was delayed to April since there was not a February meeting. Ms. Hamer asked for a volunteer and Ms. Epstein volunteered to be the committee. Ms. Hamer requested members contact Ms. Epstein before the April meeting with their requests to nominate or be nominated.

e. Animal Care and Control Staff – Ms. Jackson mentioned that she has been a cat volunteer, foster mom for kittens, and served on the ACAB. For all the years she has been involved with animals, she has never been at a facility with more caring people that go above and beyond. She noted Dr. Wilson is patient and takes time to explain everything to foster parents working with medically fragile animals. She added the customer service staff work compassionately with people that are upset over losing their pet or are going through the DOA book. Ms. Jackson said the Volunteer Coordinator does a wonderful job with volunteers. Owners, adoptees and any other person that walks through the door is provided wonderful, compassionate services and she is constantly impressed. These sentiments were seconded by Ms. Hamer. She has volunteered for many years as well and worked closely with ALPS staff. Ms. Freemon added that DHHS is very happy to have ALPS continue as an outstanding contractor providing top notch animal care and control services.

9. Informational Items:

a. Next Meeting – The next regular board meeting will be held Thursday, April 28, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the classroom at the Animal Care and Control Center located at 4711 Elmore Road.

b. Next Title 17 Committee Meeting – The next committee meeting will be held Thursday April 21, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. in the classroom at the Animal Care and Control Center. Ms. Epstein will attend. Dr. Roalofs will not attend but will pull together her thoughts for the committee.

10. Adjournment: Ms. Campbell made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Ms. Jackson. With no objections the meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.