

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONAL CENTER FOR ANIMAL CARE AND PROTECTION HELD AT 11:00 A.M. ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2015, IN THE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC) ROOM LOCATED AT THE NOEL C. TAYLOR MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 215 CHURCH AVENUE, ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan O'Donnell
Christopher Lawrence
Kathleen Guzi

MEMBERS ABSENT: Christopher Morrill
Christopher Perkins

OTHERS PRESENT: David Flagler
Anne Marie Green
Barry Thompson
Andrea Trent
Tony Zerrilla
Bryan Townsend, Roanoke City Assistant Manager
Tim Jones, Roanoke City Deputy Police Chief

Mr. Townsend called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. and Ms. Trent called the roll.

Mr. Townsend called for a motion approving the minutes of the July 9, 2015 meeting. Mr. O'Donnell made a motion to approve the minutes; the motion was seconded by Mr. Jones and carried by a voice vote, all members present voting in favor.

The next item on the agenda was the operations update. Mr. Flagler commented that during the July, August and September the number of intakes traditionally declined with an average of a 90% live release rate for dogs and a 50% live release rate for cats. There were about 70 adoptions each month during that three-month period.

Under general operations Mr. Flagler reported that the shelter had purchased metal cabinets to store the large supply of donated food to help with the rodent problem. They also have replenished supplies in preparation for any potential flooding in the Roanoke Valley. They have hired a new customer service supervisor, Amanda Markley, who will be running the front counter, and the rescue volunteer coordinator has left to take another position.

Mr. Flagler next gave an update on the volunteer hours for the three-month period for the volunteers who work in the shelter and those who work from home. An additional 20 hours should be added to the September figure because some hours were reported after the information was sent for the agenda package.

With regard to marketing initiatives, signage has been placed in front of the Center to indicate that it is an adoption facility. In July there was an adoption event where 27 animals were adopted and on a Sunday in August, the shelter was open and four dogs and five cats were adopted. In September they participated in the Roanoke Home Show where about 12 animals were adopted and they continue to work with RVTV to produce videos highlighting the adoption program.

The Operations Committee met on September 16th and Mr. Flagler commented on the meeting notes that were included with the agenda. The next meeting is scheduled for November 18th.

Ms. Trent commented that a report of the Fiscal and Administrative Operations Committee was included in the agenda package and the Committee will make a formal presentation in January.

With regard to the financial report, Mr. Zerrilla commented on the first two months of the quarterly report. Expenses are at 16% in all areas with the exception of materials and supplies. The reason for the overage in that line item was a volume purchase of some janitorial supplies to secure preferred pricing.

Under unfinished business, Mr. Flagler commented that the construction for the separation with the SPCA is now complete; however, they are still waiting on receipt of the payment for the SPCA's portion. He has made contact with them and they have an issue with the purchase of the tractor because they do not feel that it is a separation cost. He suggested that they disallow that item, but still meet the cap. Then they responded that they would then need to buy a tractor. He explained to them that the Board will have to approve the purchase. In response to a question, Mr. Flagler responded that the current tractor cost approximately \$10,000 and is a combination mower, front-end loader and digger. He has requested a copy of the original receipt along with information regarding what funds were used for the purchase. With regard to the reimbursement from the SPCA, a question was asked if that amount would be a receivable to the operating budget or go back to the reserve fund. Ms. Trent responded that it was looked at as a receivable last year and the agreement specified that the SCPA pay a certain percentage up to \$30,000.

The next item under unfinished business related to the veterinarian services contract. Mr. Flagler commented that they are in the process of hiring Dr. Rogers who has a mobile veterinarian clinic in the area. He has submitted an RFP and the Roanoke County attorney is in the process of drawing up a contract with him. Ms. Trent commented that Dr. Rogers has some equipment on his mobile unit that would potentially save some costs to the Center in the future.

Under new business, Mr. Flagler commented on the proposal in the agenda package for the replacement of the roof and staff's recommendation of the TPO system at a projected cost of \$164,000.00 with the addition of skylights at a cost of \$13,345.00. After further comments and discussion, Ms. Guzi made a motion that this purchase be approved using the reserve fund; the motion was seconded by Mr. O'Donnell and carried by a voice vote, all members present voting in favor.

Mr. Flagler next requested the Executive Committee to approve the obtaining of cost estimates for the replacement of the HVAC systems which he will report back to the Committee for budget purposes. The report in the agenda package sets out the priority of the replacing of the three units over the next several years. Mr. O'Donnell made a motion that staff be authorized to obtain cost estimates for the replacement of the HVAC systems; the motion was seconded by Mr. Lawrence and carried by a voice vote, all members present voting in favor.

The next item related to grant activity. Mr. Flagler commented that Roanoke County has asked that the minutes reflect the Executive Committee's approval of the acceptance of two grants from PetSmart Charities. The first grant was for a six-month supply of flea/tick preventative for dogs for a total of \$15,750.00. The second grant was for \$21,683.16 to construct a new cat isolation room which included the installation of a sink and four cage suites. Mr. O'Donnell made a motion to accept the grants; the motion was seconded by Ms. Guzi and carried by a voice vote, all members present voting in favor. Mr. Townsend next commented on the request for a joint resolution from all localities noting appreciation for funding from PetSmart. It was requested that a resolution be drafted and forwarded to the respective localities for approval.

Mr. Flagler next commented that the sealing off of the corridor between the RCACP and the SPCA created a new space in the hallway with windows on each side. The staff is recommending converting this area to a community cat room, but the floor needs to be leveled at a cost of \$2,000.00. In response to a question of the size, Mr. Flagler commented that the space was approximately 10 feet by 25 feet. Ms. Trent commented that this would be a capital expense

unless they come in under budget. Ms. Guzi made a motion to approve the recommendation; the motion was seconded by Mr. Lawrence and carried by a voice vote, all members present voting in favor.

With regard to exotic animals, Mr. Flagler commented that the Center has been open to the animals coming into their facility. However, there are species that could potentially be delivered to the Center that they are unprepared to be able to handle. He requested the Executive Committee to support him in any decision he might make to refuse an animal that might come into the Center which represents a real and present danger to staff. Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the recommendation. Mr. Lawrence asked if there was anything in the City Code with regard to exotic animals and Mr. Townsend responded no. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lawrence and carried by a voice vote, all members present voting in favor.

The next item related to the fee schedule. Mr. Flagler commented that there have been a number of animals received at the Center that have fallen outside the current fee schedule. The proposed new fee schedule has an "other" category to deal with these animals and the fee would be one-half the market value as determined by the average selling price of the animal at local pet shops. If the fee schedule is approved by the Committee, it will be presented to the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors for their approval. Ms. Guzi made a motion to approve the new fee schedule; the motion was seconded by Mr. O'Donnell and carried by a voice vote, all members present voting in favor.

Under old business, Mr. Flagler gave a foster program update. Up until now, the program has been limited to active volunteers, but that does not provide a sufficient pool of volunteers to meet the needs of cats in the Center. He asked permission to move the foster program to the next phase to begin allowing general citizens of the jurisdictions to foster cats. He would also like approval to include dogs if the need should arise in the future. The Executive Committee gave their consensus to proceed with the program. Mr. O'Donnell asked if records would still be kept since those individuals will not be regular volunteers and Mr. Flagler responded that anytime a foster occurs, a foster agreement is signed and kept on record.

Under public comments:

Vickie Akers commented that she is currently volunteering at the Center and many individuals do not know the difference between the SPCA and the Center. She suggested advertising on a billboard or through other means. She would also like to see more events to get dogs out in the public and would like to see dogs being allowed to be fostered outside the volunteers. Mr. Flagler commented that they have not budgeted for advertising, but they do take advantage of every opportunity they have to advertise the Center. As the pool of volunteers increases, they can attend more events. They have also negotiated with Fox News to starting having animals appear on their morning program.

Etna Parker commented on the health risks that can develop due to the extensive moisture at the Center specifically mold that can affect the staff, volunteers and the animals. Mr. Flagler responded that the Center has sufficient drains and there is no standing water. They are also removing any wet panels from the roof.

Sarah Martin commented that she was told that 122 cats were euthanized in July and she was surprised that the Center is not moving toward more "no kill" when other communities are able to do that. She was also told that they go out and actively trap cats and then euthanize them rather than trap, neuter and release. Mr. Flagler commented that he agreed the euthanizing of those animals is tragic. Those animals become nuisances in the community and usually Animal Control

traps them because someone has complained about them. When an animal is trapped, many times it has behavior problems that makes it unfit for adoption.

Mr. Flagler continued by commenting that the trap, neuter and release program is not supported in our area and is not being used except for private organizations. In Virginia, there is some question as to whether or not trap, neuter and release programs are humane because many people view this as trap, neuter and re-abandon. The belief is that if an animal is going to receive adequate care, it needs to have a caregiver, access to shelter, food, water and medical attention and many of the animals that are being trapped have none of those. Mr. Jones also commented that they do not practice placing traps for population control only on a complaint basis.

Marion Jordan asked if the funding could be increased for a foster coordinator. Mr. Flagler responded that he could present that during the budget deliberations.

Mr. Flagler commented that the volunteers have expressed an interest in doing a fundraiser for a puppy play yard to be constructed on the outside of the Center. He is requesting permission from the Executive Committee and the Committee gave their consensus.

Mr. Townsend expressed thanks for Ms. Guzi for her service on the Executive Committee.

With no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry W. Thompson
Recording Secretary

Attachments