

Animal Control Commission

November 13, 2023 at 5:30pm

Bloomington Animal Shelter

3410 South Walnut Street, Bloomington, IN 47401

MEMBERS

Sue Allmon –present in person
Sita Cohen – present in person
Chris Hazel – present in person
Valerie Pena – present in person
Nancy Riggert - present in person
Laura Soto – present in person

GUESTS

STAFF

Aleksandrina Pratt – present via zoom
Lisa Ritchel – present in person
Virgil Sauder – present in person

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Sita pointed out a few corrections in the minutes from **October 9, 2023**. In the second paragraph of the **Appeal of Neuter - Scooby**, in the last sentence, “*believe* Scooby has saved his life,” should be, “*believes* Scooby has saved his life.” In the second paragraph of the **Request to Declare Vicious – Bently**, the phrase, “confirming *there* decision,” should be, “confirming *their* decision.” In the second paragraph of the **Request to Declare Habitual Offender – Flynn**, the word “*the*” can be removed from the phrase, “conversations with *the* Mr. Flynn.” In the fourth paragraph of the same section, the phrase, “Virgil stated that *is* was the preference,” should read, “Virgil stated that *it* was the preference.” In last paragraph of this section, the word “*the*” can be removed from the phrase, “declare *the* Douglas and Carla Flynn.”

Valerie moved to approve the **October 9, 2023, minutes** with the stated changes.
Sue seconded.
Motion passes. 6-0-0.

II. NEW BUSINESS

i. Ticket Appeal – Conley

Mr. Conley was not present. Ticket stands.

ii. Pet Registration Ordinance

Virgil explained that he, Chris and Sita met to review some examples of pet registration ordinances. From that meeting he created a document of purposed ordinance language. He stated that he would like feedback on this proposal and he is also interested in hearing from the Kennel Club. The members then discussed the language and potential changes. Valerie noted some possible confusion with the wording in item 2, “can be used *in lieu* of the rabies tag.” Sita noted there may be a better way to say this and the members discussed a few possibilities. Laura was curious about what happens if the pet dies and if there is reimbursement. Virgil noted that was a good question and added that animals could also get rehomed.

Sita then asked what everyone thought about the rates. Sue shared that she is okay with them, but noted that she is concerned that the fees will be difficult for the unhoused population.

The members also discussed if pet registration is the best way to encourage spay neuter as that is listed as the primary purpose. Valerie suggested lowering the altered rate or increasing the non-altered rate so there is a reward to have altered pets. Sita suggested \$10 for altered and \$50 for unaltered. Laura then expressed some concern because in clinical practice, not MCHA, she does not recommend spay/neuter until six months of age. She added that she does not alter giant breed dogs until they are at least a year old. Laura felt that there should not be a repercussion for dog owners following the advice of their veterinarian. Chris asked about the reasoning and Laura explained that studies show that there is a decreased risk of osteosarcoma or cruciate tears if the spay neuter is done at an appropriate growth rate. Nancy then suggested a form for veterinarians to sign when people register large breed dogs. Nancy also asked what the incentive is for people getting their animals registered. Valerie shared that she brought this topic up because it has been so frustrating seeing the numbers of animals pouring into shelters and she wondered how to start to fix the problem. She recommends mandatory spay neuter which has been successful in places like New England. Sita questioned if pet registration was a factor in these communities. Virgil answered that most do have pet registration and added that the AVA encourages pet registration as part of responsible dog ownership. Sita offered to do some more research on mandatory spay neuter. Nancy wondered if they should go straight to that, rather than starting with pet registration. Chris pointed out that it is currently very difficult to get in to have your pets altered due to the veterinarian shortage. Even people who want to have it done are having difficulty. Valerie suggested that they do some more research on the communities that have mandatory spay neuter to see how they got there. Chris added that they need to decide what the purpose of the proposed pet registration is before going forward.

III. REPORTS

i. Animal Care and Control Report

Virgil shared that it is currently Adopt a Senior Month and the Home for the Holidays special started early and began today. Adoptions continue to go strong but Virgil expects next month to be challenging because Pets Alive drastically reduced spay neuter services for the month. Based on intake, the shelter would need fifty to fifty-five spay neuter slots a week to keep up. Currently the Foster to Adopt program is being utilized to send animals home into foster before their spay/neuter date, but currently only to in-County adopters. Virgil asked the members if we should start extending the FTA program to out of County adopters. The members discussed the FTA program and gave suggestions. Chris strongly agreed to extend the program to out of County adopters.

ii. MCHA update

Sue reported that a bookkeeper and an additional veterinary technician have been hired. Andrew has interviewed an extraordinary candidate for the volunteer coordinator position and has received resumes for development director. They plan to be fully staffed by the end of the year. Tails on the Town will be May 17, 2024, and the Run for the Animals will be October 6, 2024. Andrew continues to do an excellent job.

iii. Animal Management Commission update

Virgil reported that this month's meeting was cancelled. Valerie shared that they are working on creating a flow chart to go along with the new ordinances.

IV. Animal Control Commission Discussion

No further discussion.

V. Public Comment Period

No public comment.

VI. VI. ADJOURNMENT

Nancy moved to adjourn the meeting.

Chris seconded.

Motion passes, 6-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15pm.