

**Lincoln County Animal Services**

**Advisory Board Meeting**

**September 5, 2017**

**Minutes**

**Attendees:**

Hannah Beaver, Animal Services Director

Dr. Ashley Oliphant, Chairman

Danielle Rudisill, Vice Chairman

Dr. Karen Miller, Secretary

Ms. Robin Franklin, Board Member

Diane Leatherman, Board Member

Doug Woods, Board Member

Tyler Moore, Animal Services Caretaker

**Guest Attendees:**

Barbara Becker

Josh Fisher

Nicole Kenney

Michelle Logan

Dr. Stephanie Lee

Chelsea Cooper, LCAS Vet Tech

Robin Byrd

Kate Cameron

Ron Simons

Anita McCall, County Commissioner

**Opening:**

Director Beaver handed out the agenda and the June 6, 2017 minutes. The guest speaker's board for the Trap Neuter Release Presentation consisted of Mrs. Becker, Mrs. Kenney, Dr. Lee, Mrs. Byrd, Mr. Simons, Mr. Fisher, and Mrs. Logan. Dr. Oliphant opened the meeting at 6:35pm and Mark Connolly was the only Advisory Board member not in attendance.

**1) Approval of Minutes:**

Dr. Oliphant asked if there were any suggestions or changes that were required of the June 6<sup>th</sup> minutes. After the board took a moment to look over the minutes, Danielle Rudisill motioned to accept last month's minutes and Doug Woods seconded. The minutes were passed unanimously.

## **2) Trap Neuter Release Presentation and Information**

Lucky Cats was established in 1998 and is a volunteer-based organization when they found a colony of feral cats (approximately 23) in Cornelius, NC. Abigail contacted animal control and animal control told her that they only have the option to euthanizing the cats if they were to come in. So, Abigail did some research and found out about TNR (trap-neuter-return). Community cats are what make-up the shelter population and the community cats are un-socialized, lost pets, and their offspring. Feral cat describes a behavior and can make up the community cat population alongside lost pets and offspring from the cats. Lucky Cats have community cat colonies throughout the area while dedicating a care-giver (that is trained) to the colony. They advocate lost-cost spay/neuter and will loan out traps to the public to facilitate spay/neuter. They partner with Animal Control, Police Officers, and local businesses. The advocacy starts with educating the public about community cats, TNR, and how the public can live beside the cats. Lucky Cats is a community service to solve the problem of over-population of cats in the local area. They mediate cat complaints by allowing the volunteers to speak to the complainers and Animal Control will coordinate with Lucky Cats about where there is a high intake of "stray" cats coming into the shelter.

Ashley Oliphant asked about the American Bar Association's point-of-view about community cats and Michelle Logan answer stated that it backed TNR. Danielle Rudisill asked about the "stray" cat that was spayed/neutered, vaccinated, etc. without the permission of the owner and the legal side of handling the situation. Robin Byrd stated that the law upheld the choice to TNR the animal without the permission due to the signs that state that cats live in this area and they are spayed/neutered consistently. Chelsea Cooper asked about what they do for cats that are unhealthy (malnourished, upper-respiratory, or wounds). Members of the board stated that they do make the decision to euthanize if it is in the best interest of the animal or if there is a caretaker that will hold onto the animal for treatment, Lucky Cats will treat the animal.

Michelle Logan works for Best Friends and they looked at the data about what states need to change the vast number of cat euthanasia. They push for TNR instead of trapping and euthanizing community (or feral) cats. There were 10 pilot cities that Best Friends put money towards to show that TNR was the best practice for reducing the population of community cats. Each of those cities went from approximately 40% live release rate up to the 90% live release rate. Best Friends also trains Animal Control Officers mitigating conversations about TNR as opposed to trapping and bringing them into the shelter system to be euthanized. By utilizing TNR you will eventually decrease the population of community cats, decrease the risk of rabies exposure, and increase positive moral toward community cats.

Nicole Kenney spoke about HATS TNR program in Lincoln County. This program asks Lincoln County Animal Services to send problem areas to the HATS TNR program to help with community cat problems. They speak to the public about their cats and will spay/neuter the cats in the area. The program partners with Spay/Neuter Charlotte for the cats and transport on certain days.

An example of TNR working through a county-ran shelter is to look at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Animal Control. They have created a TNR program by partnering with Humane Society of Charlotte, where they created a Community Cat Coordinator. Her position is to be the lead person that goes out and traps the cats, while also mitigating the conversation about calls coming in from the public. A couple years ago, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Animal Control stopped actively trapping cats and they did not have any programs to decrease the community cat programs in the public, which caused the nuisance calls to increase. Danielle Rudisill brought up the concern of public with the nuisance of having cats, such as her neighbor having approximately 20 plus cats on her property. Michelle Logan suggested that there are ways to mitigate that conversation with the public who places a nuisance call by loaning out and educating the individual about deterrents for keeping animals off of the unwelcoming neighbor's property. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Animal Control has taken some of the cost from the "outdated" cat program and redirected money towards purchasing cat deterrents to lend out to the public to help with nuisance mitigation toward the new cat policies and programs.

**3) Animal Services Updates**

Open House is coming up and we are still looking for animal-based vendors to participate. The date for Open House is October 7, 2017.

**4) Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting date is Tuesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30pm.

**5) Public Comments**

Anita McCall stated in the Trap Neuter Release Presentation that TNR has been in the works for many years. She was voted onto the Commissioners Board to move toward No Kill in Lincoln County, NC. Her question is there anything more that she needs to know to be able to help the county shelter to become No Kill. The TNR board suggested reminding the board that TNR is the only option to make the community safer and decreasing the population of community cats. Also, using the appeal about how much money could be saved by reallocating money in the budget to bettering programs in Animal Services. Kate Cameron thanked everyone for giving her hope for the future for Lincoln County animals.

**6) Motion to Adjourn**

Dr. Oliphant asked the board to end the meeting. Diane Leatherman motioned to adjourn with a second from Doug Woods and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 8:01p.m.