

## Task Force for the Humane Treatment of Animals

Minutes from November 4, 2015 Meeting

Members in attendance: Co-chair Michael Freda, Co-chair Diane Collette, Paula Poplawski, Cindy Theran, Mark Bailey, Edward O'Brien, Raymond Connors.

### Task-force on Humane Treatment of animals

Chairman Freda convened the meeting at 2:20pm

Michael Freda began with introductions and then moved onto thank the public in attendance

He then asked for comments on the meeting minutes from last meeting there were none so a motion to accept the meeting minutes was made, seconded and passed.

Chairman Freda stated that the task-force was nearing its statute assigned deadline with pending legislative recommendations due in January of next year that meant only two more meetings.

He gave a brief overview of the task-force process and the four initiatives the task-force would be proceeding with. He also stated that the goal was to complete the research and language of these initiatives so they could be provided as complete recommendations for future legislation.

Chairman Freda stated these Task-force initiatives/subcommittees.

1. euthanasia in municipal shelters/mandatory spay and neuter  
Headed by Mark Bailey
2. Breeder Licenses  
Headed by Sargent Keller
3. Volunteer model  
Headed by Paula Poplawski
4. Registry for convicted animal abuse offenders  
Headed by Cynthia Theran

As well as extend the termination date of the Humane Treatment of Animals in Municipal Shelters Task-Force.

Chairman Freda opened up the floor to Mark Bailey talking about state laws regarding animal euthanasia. He handed out two different draft versions of the of potential legislative recommendations for euthanasia in municipal shelters.

Cynthia Theran stated that they used Delaware as the primary template for the draft language of the recommendation.

Mark stated that there was a precedent in Delaware for a registry. The two different recommendations differed on this as one included the registry mandate and one did not.

Diane Collette stated support for the draft language.

Ray made a suggestion for the language in the draft language, to change shelters to animal control officers.

Chairman Freda asked for the rationale for leaving out the registry from the primary language.

Mark Bailey stated that this was a draft bill they did not include the word registry because he believed the word would detract from the initiative the bill was attempting to address. He stated that he did not want the focus of the legislation to be on the registry rather than it be on the welfare of the animals in these shelters.

Cynthia reiterated that in Delaware there was a precedent for the registry in Delaware that Connecticut does not have.

Cynthia stated that she could read aloud the language of the recommended draft bill.

Ray Connors thanked Cynthia for the work she had done. He stated that there may be a regulation violation between the current statutes and the proposed law.

Cynthia asked if it would be easier to include amendments to the current law in the recommendation.

Ray Connors agreed that they could do that.

Chairman Freda stated that the subcommittee should proceed with the suggested amendments to the recommendation.

Paula Poplawski stated that if the last resort was in consideration then the animal should be urgently put down.

Mark Bailey stated that he saw the value of that suggestion.

Cynthia stated that she could add that, and that their current language was stated to prevent any sort of discretionary euthanasia.

Mike Freda added that this initiative was very close to a complete draft recommendation.

Mark Bailey stated that he also had mandatory spay and neuter draft language.

He stated that he had whittled down the language since his last presentation in October and fashioned a recommendation for mandatory spay and neuter of adoptable pets in shelters.

Ray stated that they should indeed include cats.

Mark agreed that cats were a population problem in Connecticut.

Paula stated that she liked the language.

Chairman Freda asked for comments on the language. He stated that Ray should take a look at the language for content but that the recommendation as is looked very good and put the task-force on track for the January deadline.

Chairman Diana Collette agreed.

Chairman Freda then moved onto subcommittee 2. Breeders license language.

Chairman Freda stated that Sargent Keller could not be there but put her recommendations in writing. Sargent Keller in a cover letter made a recommendation. She also put together draft language, which Chairman Freda read aloud.

She stated in her letter that she made the restrictions less restrictive but articulated the language to not overlap with the current kennel license law.

Diana stated that they should change the word city to municipality.

Ray said he would withhold comments until Sargent Keller returned and addressed how this ordinance works in her city.

Cynthia stated that she would like to hear from Sgt. Keller about her intention with having the lenient requirements of the license.

Paula stated that she believed that Sgt. Keller's intention was to have the breeders' license cover the areas not covered by the kennel license.

Cynthia wanted to compare and contrast the existing kennel license law and the new breeder license law so to make sure there were no redundancies in the law as well as no holes either.

Chairman Freda moved on to item 3. The Volunteer model.

Paula Poplawski stated that her recommendation was the presentation that she made last meeting.

She also stated that originally she believed that this should not be mandated on a municipality but she had changed her mind because the recommendation itself was very lenient and a volunteer model is so important to a shelter. So there would be something of a state law implemented to require municipalities to adapt the standards of the volunteer model.

Chairman Freda stated that whether it was a mandate or a recommendation they had most of the model put together and that there were a few municipalities trial running this volunteer model.

Cynthia Theran stated that she too believed that there should be a mandate but suggested that the mandate be phased in.

Mark Bailey also voiced his support of a mandate reiterating the importance of volunteers in the shelters, he also agreed with the phased in roll out of a model mandate.

Ray voiced doubts that any fiscal note on the legislation for this law would kill the bill before it had a chance to become law.

Diana Collette stated that in her experience volunteers are a necessity in any functional shelter.

Cynthia Theran stated that there may be a way of collecting data on what the expense would be for mandating a volunteer program.

Paula Poplawski asked if there was a possibility that once the data was in from the pilot programs in the participating municipalities then is there a way to change the recommendation later or is the recommendation set in stone?

Mike Freda stated that he agreed that the mandate made sense however that there would be strong resistance from the mayors across the state. He also agreed with Cynthia previous suggestion of a roll out approach.

Mark Bailey stated that he did not foresee any cost for implementing a volunteer program as these shelters were considered to have 501c3 status.

Chairman Freda moved onto member feedback and discussion

Ray Connors stated that he had received statistical data for pets that were imported into the state last year the number was 19,994 animals imported into the state, this data came from the licenced animal importers.

Chairman Freda clarified that this was a controversial issue as many of these animals would be considered rescue animals but on the local level hundreds of companion animals a year were being put down in municipal shelters.

Ray Connors pointed out that many of these animals could be from many different locations and there are no current laws for tracking these animals.

Cynthia Theran stated that another concern with not know where these animals come from is that they carry diseases.

Ray Connors stated that this was indeed an issue and that animal control officers were reporting seeing animals that were afflicted by diseases and parasites that they didn't usually have to deal with as a result of the importation of companion animals from other states.

Chairman Freda moved onto comments from the members.

19,994 animals imported to CT for adoption.

Ray Connors stated that mandatory micro chipping maybe something the task-force would wish to look into.

Diana Collette asked if there was a way to stop importation of pet animals.

Ray Connors stated that he believed that they could not stop the importation but rather had to further regulate it.

Chairman Freda moved onto public comment he stated that the currently absent members would be present to articulate their progress at the next meeting.

Mark Bailey congratulated Chairman Freda for his recent reelection to Mayor of the city of North Haven.

Amy with CT votes for animals stated that she was in full support for the volunteer model.

Joe Greybars Gallows and Roberson representing APCA he made suggested that the volunteer model should have phasing for the law.