

LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON THE HUMANE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS IN REGIONAL AND MUNICIPAL SHELTERS -

AUGUST 11, 2017

Minutes of the Legislative Task Force on the Humane Treatment of Animals in Regional and Municipal Shelters held at 2:00 p.m., Friday, August 11, 2017 at the State of Connecticut Legislative Office Building (LOB), 300 Capital Avenue, Room 1C, Hartford, CT 06106

Members Present: Michael J. Freda (Chairman), Mrs. Paula Poplawski, Dr. Gayle Block, Sargent Paula Keller, Mayor Edward O'Brien, Mr. Mark Bailey, Laura Burban, Sarah Colb sitting in for Cynthia Theran

Members Absent: Mr. Raymond Connors

Also Present: CCM, CT Humane Society

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Michael Freda at 2:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT RELATIVE TO THE AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC OVERVIEW OF TASK FORCE

Per Chairman Freda the task force was first commissioned in 2014, it was scheduled to be re-commissioned but it did not pass at the house level within recent years. Through efforts of Senators Martin Looney and Leonard Fasano and the recommendations of state representatives Fred Camillo and David Yaccarino it passed through senate bill 602. It is the goal of the Task Force to find a forever and loving home for every healthy and treatable animal in each municipal shelter in the state of Connecticut, and to improve shelters and to reduce euthanasia across the state of Connecticut.

MEMBER INTRODUCTION

Introductions were made.

A REVIEW OF OUR WORK PREVIOUSLY DONE

Chairman Freda asked for a recital and review of our work previously done. Sargent Keller stated that the animal control officer operating in a way that is feasible for the daily operations of animal control shall insure that all adoptable dogs and cats as a part of the adoption process are spayed or neutered before the new adopter takes possession of the dog or cat. Making use

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of use of animal population control program state voucher system as needed. Spay Nueter surgery may take place after the newly adopted dog or cat leaves the animal shelter but before the animal is in the permanent possession of the adopter. Animals that upon adoption that are too young or sick to undergo the sterilization procedure will be granted an extension until the appropriate time.

Mr. Bailey stated that the proposed bill that Sargent Keller had stated is the model that New Haven uses at their public shelter.

Mr. Bailey stated the second initiative in the proposed Bill is that no healthy or treatable animal in a public shelter awaiting adoption would be euthanized because of lack of space in that shelter.

Paula Poplawski reviewed that animal control officers shall ensure the following conditions are met before a dog or any other animal is euthanized. The holding period for the dog or any other animal required by this chapter has expired. There are no empty cages, kennels or other living environments in the shelter that are suitable for the dog or other animal. A foster home is not available, no other animal rescue organization or regional municipal shelter with whom the animal control officer has a trusted relationship is able to take the dog or other animal and the animal control officer certifies that the above conditions are met and such officer has no other reasonable alternative.

NEW BUSINESS

Develop a Follow up Plan & Review Future Meeting Dates

Future meeting dates were reviewed with the committee: September 8th, October 6th, November 3rd, December 8th, January 5th, February 2st, March 2st, April 6th, May 4th, and June 1st.

Ms. Burban shared the website of training ACO officers www.aco-acts.com.

OPEN FORUM

Discussion regarding laws on animal cruelty and animal abuse were discussed. An oversight committee will evaluate an animal to determine whether or not an animal should be euthanized.

Areas of discussion:

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- Development of a tracking system for individuals who have been convicted of animal cruelty and/ or abuse
- Review current laws for animal cruelty and abandonment
- Proposing that a committee shall oversee the decisions made to shelter animals rather than determined by an individual
- Standardized and improved training for animal control officers
- Socialized recreation for kenneled animals
- Reviewing duties of animals control officers and police officers
- Mandated notification to the local municipally once a kennel license has been issued within that municipality

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kathy Horsky, Legislative Aide for Senator Len Suzio, commented that the Meriden Shelter has been overrun with cats and wanted to know if they could get some relief. Ms. Burban stated that she attended the Best Friends National Conference and learned that the state of Maine has a shortage of cats. Laura Burban said she would share her resources regarding this matter. Chairman Freda also extended his help regarding this matter.

Gordon Willard, Executive Director of the Humane Society, offered training to ACOs and non-profits in municipal shelters and non-profits that is free of charge.

Joe Graybars, National ASPCA, commented about the standards of animal cruelty.

ADJORN

There being no further business to come before the task force, Mr. O'Brien moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 p.m. Seconded by, Mr. Bailey.

VOTE: All in favor.