

## ANIMAL COMMISSION MINUTES FOR MEETING HELD MONDAY, MAY 15, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 5:28 pm.

**A. ROLL CALL:**

**Members Present:** Colby Collier (via phone), Susan Stanek, Anna Accetta, Cherie Aronson, Karen Dorney, Cathy Kamen, Capt. Garon Delmonte, Lt. Luke Holder, ACO Scott Ellingson. **Staff:** Susan LaFond, Recording Secretary

- B. PUBLIC COMMENTS** – Gina from VCA Baybrook spoke. She advised the Commission the event to raise Milford Animal Control awareness would be on a Saturday in July from 2:30 pm to 6 pm. She explained VCA Baybrook would offer a Healthy Start Certificate to each person adopting a cat from Milford Animal Control. The certificate is good for a first exam (\$117 value) and \$250 services to use within the first 14 days (FIV, FELV, Rabies, Distemper vaccines for example) for all animals adopted from Milford Animal Control. Representatives from Zoetis for Solensia, Hills (who may provide a feline vet), and Royal Canin would be present. ACO Ellingson would need to be present as the Assistant ACO will be working at the Animal Control facility that day. Request for volunteers from the commission was presented. Ms. Stanek cannot volunteer on Saturdays. VCA Baybrook can provide cat cages if needed. Ms. Kamen questioned validation of onsite adoption. Gina suggested we allow adoption pending testing and vaccines. ACO Ellingson only has one cat currently for adoption; however, a feral from Popes Island Road looks to have had her kittens in the past several weeks and volunteers are searching for them. Gina said another alternative is to bring a picture board of adoptable cats and have adoption applications on hand. They can come to Milford Animal Control and meet the cat in person. This is planned as an outdoor event. Dr. Colette Chadick, who specializes in felines, will be there. A vendor will bring food and refreshments. July 15<sup>th</sup> was confirmed as our event date. Advertising via social media; Sarah Cody will list it on “8 Things to Do” segment on Channel 8 News. Gina has also contacted Channel 12 and left a message for Raven on Star99 radio. Ms. Dorney asked for a blurb each commissioner can share on individual social media pages; Gina will provide one. Gina said the program is effective; they have seen a 16% increase in cat vet appointments since starting it. Lt. Holder will promote the event on Milford PD social media as well.

- C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – 4/10/2023 Motion to accept minutes by Vice Chair Stanek, second by Ms. Kamen. No vote taken.

- D. WARDEN’S REPORT** – submitted to commission. Ms. Dorney motioned for approval; Vice Chair Stanek seconded. No vote taken.

- E. DEPARTMENT REPORT** – ACO Ellingson reports four dogs are currently in ACO care; Spice, Eli (who has Lyme disease), Russell (who has someone interested), and a boxer mix which may be available soon.

Barney and Chloe have been adopted.

Two dog surrenders from a woman going into a nursing home were taken in by MAC. One was a Beagle/Boston Terrier mix, and the other a Yorkie. Both were adopted but the Yorkie was returned. Neither dog was housebroken. The Yorkie was then adopted by Dan Fiore, Assistant ACO. Mr. Fiore also adopted the long-haired black cat. The mama cat has been adopted, and another stray was reunited with its owner, a trucker from Alabama.

Four cats are currently in MAC care. All kittens were adopted. Tommy is under quarantine until August. A black cat was dumped on MAC steps; he was a male and is now neutered. A female calico is in quarantine for biting. A spayed calico female is up for the adoption after being spayed.

Public Works has painted the ramp and some doors, painted exterior of kennel. ACO Ellingson explained the central air for the offices is not working because the unit has broken down. Even when working, there was heat only provided to the kennel. Ms. Kamen would like Pat Devine to determine whether there is air conditioning available for the kennels. Sean Bennett from DPW came out with a private contractor to inspect the central air unit; a quote was generated. No action yet. ACO Ellingson indicated it is possible that a new unit will move some AC into the kennel, but it is not certain it is connected to the system. Capt. Delmonte will speak to Sean Bennett.

ACO Ellingson reported Mayor Blake cancelled payment the Commission approved for the recent rabbit spay. Request for payment has been resubmitted. Capt. Delmonte advised it may not be paid until after July 1 due to spending freeze.

- F. CORRESPONDENCE** - none

- G. DONATIONS** – Donations reported as follows:

April 2023 Donations: \$120

- H. COMMISSION REPORT** – none

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### I. NEW BUSINESS

- 1) **New Kennel windows** – Board of Aldermen also inquired about the windows. ACO Ellingson explained that they are an open-air kennel. Ms. Kamen asked why the windows were taken down. ACO Ellingson explained they come down seasonally, in May, every year. He said unfortunately it is a guessing game when to remove them with unpredictable New England weather. Ms. Kamen reached out to Pat Devine, and ACO Ellingson advised Mr. Devine wants the windows to be installed as well. The ideal is to have windows which staff can open and close based on the weather. Funds for the windows come out of the DPW budget. Ms. Kamen questioned the delay. Capt. Delmonte explained there is a very limited staff in DPW.
- 2) **Rules of Procedure for the Animal Shelter Commission** – Lt. Holder spoke. It is required by ordinance that all commissions in the City have rules of procedure. It adds an officer position to the commission, which is the office of Treasurer. That Treasurer may be the person to approach the City's Finance Director when the Commission desires to use their funds. Ms. Kamen thanked Lt. Holder for his hard work. The Commission wants another few weeks to review them and discuss them at the next Commission meeting.

#### General discussion by Commission members ensued:

Preventative Treatments for Dogs: Ms. Kamen believes all dogs in MAC Care will get a tick bite. Chairman Collier purchases Frontline Plus for his dogs at a retail store. ACO Ellingson reported currently, dogs are given Capstar at the vet, to kill anything biting the dog. ACO Ellingson is considering a different option. He is looking at NexGard, and indicated his experience is that ticks have become resistant to Frontline Plus. He needs to purchase preventive treatments through a vendor already in the City's system and will discuss options with Snowflake, including pricing and availability. ACO Ellingson said we should also consider Heartgard under preventative treatments; that requires vet visit and a negative heartworm test to obtain. Chairman Collier uses a Milford veterinary office that performs house calls; perhaps they would do a shelter call? ACO Ellingson explained the MAC uses Snowflake because they are willing to accept delayed payment for their services and many offices will not accept those terms. Also, they are good in that they do not charge an appointment fee. Ms. Kamen will add Frontline Plus and Advantix to our Amazon wish list as they can be purchased for us by the public in the interim. Lt. Holder suggested the commission work toward a longer-term budget funded solution as well. Chairman Collier feels preventive treatments are an emergency and should not require budgeting or waiting for approval. Capt. Delmonte explained all funds sit under a City department to better that department so the City, not the Commission, has final say in how funds are spent. ACO Ellingson explained he must get preapproval to transfer funds into a particular budget line item. Lt. Holder suggested Chairman Collier form a subcommittee for preventive care, to report back at the next meeting with the proposed budget and what would be purchased. Then the full Commission can vote on the plan. Chairman Collier asked what a subcommittee is. Lt. Holder explained it is two or three members of the Commission who would perform the research and create the list of supplies needed and their costs for this annual budget item addition. Currently, all departments are under a spending freeze until July 1, 2023, the new fiscal year. Having the proposed budget in place and submitting it as soon as possible would present a chance for the individual expense to possibly be approved now as an exception and if not, we would have our plan in place to submit again July 1<sup>st</sup>. ACO Ellingson explained any donations must be moved into a specific fund before they can be spent. To do that, the Finance Director, Peter Erodici, needs to see a subcommittee proposal, budget, and vote for fund use. Chairman Collier pushed to allocate funds asap via motion. Lt. Holder again recommended a subcommittee to hammer out the necessary details – account, dollar amount, sourcing of items and visits, and costs thereof. Chairman Collier motioned we allocate funds from whatever account everyone sees fit to make preventive measures happen for all animals. Capt. Delmonte reiterated we need a person or person to obtain the costs of medication, costs of appointments and dollar value to be allocated, for presentation to Finance. Chairman Collier stated he does not trust ACO Ellingson to obtain the information. Lt. Holder reiterated the Chair must form a subcommittee and firm up all details to get this to happen. Lt. Holder reiterated if the Commission wishes to do this, the Commission needs to do the work and find the funds. Capt. Delmonte explained that while emergency care will be covered, preventative care is a long-term plan; the numbers must be created by the Subcommittee. Another benefit will be that these funds can be allocated as an annual line-item expense to be funded. Lt. Holder said the next Commission meeting is approximately 3 weeks away, but a Special Meeting could be held next week if all numbers and details to be presented to Finance are collected immediately. Capt. Delmonte reiterated the process the Subcommittee must take to create a proposal and have it voted upon by the full Committee.

Chairman Collier made a motion to create a Subcommittee of Vice Chair Stanek, Ms. Dorney and Ms. Kamen to create a plan. Ms. Accetta seconded. Approved unanimously.

### J. OLD BUSINESS

- 1) Volunteer coordination update – Ms. Dorney advised there has been no action yet. Chairman Collier reiterated Jon Berchem, City Attorney, still must approve the volunteer waiver. ACO Ellingson handed out information packets with scheduling for volunteers created by ACO staff for use once approval is received. Chairman Collier to submit the waiver in his possession to the City Attorney's office for approval.

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- 2) Date for VCA Baybrook partnership event – Saturday July 8, 15, 22 or 29 – July 15 was selected. Commission volunteers needed.

**J. ADJOURNMENT** – Chairman Collier moved to adjourn. Ms. Kamen seconded. The meeting adjourned 7:36 pm.