

ANIMAL COMMISSION MINUTES FOR MEETING HELD MONDAY, AUGUST 14, 2023

- A. **CALL TO ORDER** – the meeting was called to order at 5:24pm
- B. **ROLL CALL of Commissioners** – In attendance: Susan Stanek; Anna Accetta; Karen Dorney; Cathy Kamen; ACO Scott Ellingson; Lt. Luke Holder. Staff: Susan LaFond, Recording Secretary
Absent: Colby Collier; Cherie Aronson; Capt. Garon Delmonte
- C. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** - none
- D. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 7/10/23**
Motion to revise by Ms. Dorney to redact content regarding Ms. Ornell being dissatisfied with a delay in payment.
Approved unanimously. Ms. Stanek reminded the Commission to read the minutes prior to arrival so each member is ready to approve or request a change.
- E. **CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT** - none
- F. **TREASURER’S REPORT** – Ms. Accetta requested Commission feedback on whether the monthly account fund sheet should become part of the minutes. Ms. Kamen does not believe they belong in the minutes. Available balance of unallocated contingency is \$149,612.98. Mention of an allocation of \$2000 for a washer and dryer which have not been purchased and installed. ACO Ellingson reported Ocean State Job Lot donated a \$1500 gift card to Milford Animal Control, to be used for necessary supplies. He believes the primary uses would be cleaning supplies, paper towels, storage bins, food, etc. The gift card balance cannot be added to the Unallocated Contingency fund. Ms. Dorney asked if each member of the Commission can pick up the card and use it as appropriate. Ms. Stanek made a motion for ACO Ellingson use the gift card funds for appropriate supplies as needed by Animal Control with appropriate reporting to the Treasurer. Ms. Kamen seconded. Passed unanimously.
- G. **COMMITTEE REPORTS** - none
- H. **WARDEN’S REPORT** – Dogs: Spice, Reggie, Russell, Sasha, and Lazlo are at the shelter currently. All but Lazlo available for adoption. A grey poodle in ACO care has an adoption application pending. An Akita and a Cane Corso will become adoptable soon. Lazlo was walked too soon after his neuter surgery and is on veterinarian prescribed medication.
Cats: No pregnant females currently. A mother delivered six kittens June 23 and they will be ready for adoption within the next 2 weeks. Another female and 6 kittens were picked up on Munson Street; those kittens are approximately 4-5 weeks old. One black and white female kitten about 12 weeks is available for adoption; handleable but shy. Tommy Boy, the large gray male, is off quarantine and up for adoption. He is approximately 5 years old. Ms. Kamen would like to advertise him for adoption on Facebook; he is on some medication for an eye issue for another 7-10 days followed by a veterinarian revisit. Adoption advertising on hold pending outcome of that visit. The 2 people from the neighborhood where he was found have both reneged on adopting. There are 3 more adult cats pending adoptable status, from two owners who passed away. Relatives are not responding to ACO requests in either case. Monthly report distributed to Commission for review.

Ms. Stanek motioned to approve the report; Ms. Kamen seconded. Approved unanimously.

- I. **DEPARTMENT REPORT** – ACO Ellingson repaired one guillotine door and has put in a repair order for another.
- J. **CORRESPONDENCE** – Donation of \$1500 gift card from Ocean State Job Lot; \$50 in additional donations.
- K. **NEW BUSINESS** – Ms. Dorney asked Lt. Holder to explain the requirements of a Commission member shepherding an idea through the process. Lt. Holder described the steps of the process that are the Commission members’ responsibility and the necessary interface with ACO Ellingson. He explained this Commission is the only one to have their own budget, and that brings with it the added responsibility.

Ms. Kamen feels the Commission can only do so much with their limited available time. Ms. Stanek thanked Lt. Holder for his help and expertise in professionalizing the Commission. Ms. Kamen suggested we cease attempts to contact Ms. Ornell’s rescue group at this time.

Ms. Kamen shared a meeting she had with members of Toby’s Dream Dog rescue. Facebook reported a dog roaming by the City dump last Sunday. Ms. Kamen saw the posting Monday when someone messaged her through Facebook. Milford Animal Control was contacted but did not respond as this was not a current sighting. Ms. Kamen went to the dump and found the

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dog. Some volunteers from Toby's Dream Dog rescue were onsite and took the dog because it needed immediate medical assistance. The dog has now been seen and given a clean bill of health. The dog was likely dumped, and injuries indicated probably caged, but still very friendly. The rescue already has someone interested in adopting. Ms. Kamen went on to read the description of this West Haven based rescue to the Commission. Ms. Kamen made a motion that the Commission create an adoption fund to cover the adoption fees for any dogs adopted through Toby's Dream rescue. ACO Ellingson said that no donation of funds is needed at this time as the City only receives \$5 per adoption, and the remaining fees go toward paying veterinary bills. He agreed to allow staff of Toby's Dream Dog rescue to adopt a dog free of charge, unless or until a financial shortfall is pending. He confirmed the rescue is taking the dogs as owners. Ms. Kamen asked if representatives should make an appointment to meet with ACO Ellingson, he would appreciate that opportunity to know which individuals from the rescue group will be allowed to visit the shelter and select a dog for adoption.

Lazlo's medical issues – Discussion regarding injury/infection after his neuter. Lazlo is on three medications, which he receives as needed, 7 days a week, per ACO Ellingson. Once he heals, he can be placed on the adoption list.

Ms. Kamen asked if dog walking sheets should be part of the monthly Warden Report package. Ms. Accetta did not believe they were necessary. ACO Ellingson reported the dogs are walked when ACO staffing allows. Mondays, ACO Ellingson is working alone so no dogs are walked that day. Currently, sufficient volunteers are available to walk the dogs.

Ms. Stanek asked how the Commission will move forward with facility improvements. She asked for input on having the next Commission meeting at the Milford Animal Control facility. This will allow Commission members to tour the building, and create a checklist of what needs repair, replacement or remodel/repurpose. Discussion about the need for a feline play area and adoption room. The final list will be presented to Public Works. Discussion regarding relocating storage to attic or high shelving to allow more floor space for needed updates. A subcommittee of Ms. Kamen and Ms. Stanek will manage the checklist. A courtesy invitation to the September Animal Commission meeting will be sent to Public Works Director Chris Saley. ACO Ellingson reported Mr. Saley said Public Works would be doing "something" with the kennel air conditioning in the fall. He reported that during the hot spell, an Alderman asked what was happening with the AC there. Discussion of whether the Animal Control facility should or will be elevated as recommended after the last major storm. Recording Secretary LaFond to research. Question regarding the disjointed building layout; ACO Ellingson said the facility began as a trailer and an outside kennel. An office was eventually built and attached to the kennel. He believes the kennel was completed in approximately 1996. Motion by Ms. Stanek to have the next Commission meeting at Milford Animal Control. Ms. Kamen seconded. Approved unanimously.

Two kittens were adopted at the Felines First event; Ms. Kamen distributed raffle tickets and Ms. Accetta assisted with adoptions. Ms. Accetta said she was allowed to use an exam room at the July adoption event to allow meet and greets with adoptable pets.

L. OLD BUSINESS

- 1) Pest Control – moths, ants – update – ACO Ellingson said a few pantry moths are still present, but ants are gone. Nothing new is being placed in the room until the moths are completely absent. New food is being stored in the kitchen area. Existing food will be either discarded or used based on findings after being inspected for moth damage. A bug zapper was placed in the room and has been working.
- 2) Hiring of Animal Control staff – The revised listing was finally posted on August 11, closing September 1, 2023. Lt. Holder advised that applicants to the first posting will also be part of the candidate pool. Requirement was added that the applicant must live within 15 miles of the City Hall for emergency response.
- 3) Improvement of quality of care and safety at Milford Animal Control – Commission and ACO Ellingson lists – Lt. Holder suggested the building subcommittee can work on a list since no submittals from individual Commissioners were made. Motion to purchase the AED device made by Ms. Kamen; Ms. Stanek Second. Approved unanimously. Ms. Kamen suggested at least one individual at Animal Control should be CPR certified. Mention that Mr. Farrar may be certified since he is a volunteer firefighter. If Assistant ACO Fiore or ACO Ellingson would like to be certified, a training could be scheduled. Lt. Holder said the American Heart Association offers training to classes of 8 people maximum; training lasts approximately 4 hours. Cost not known. Ms. Kamen will research and have options available for the next meeting. Milford Fire Department may offer the training for free.

M. ADJOURNMENT – meeting adjourned at 6:49pm.

New Business, not on the agenda, may be brought up by a two-thirds' vote of those Members present and voting. ANY INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY WHO NEEDS SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING SHOULD CONTACT THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, (203) 783-3230, FIVE DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING, IF POSSIBLE.