



## Forsyth County Animal Services Advisory Board

**November 19, 2020**

6:00 - 7:30 PM  
5570 Sturmer Park Circle  
Winston-Salem, NC 27105

**Mitch Cromer, Chair**  
**Priscilla Ivester, Vice Chair**  
**Terry Jessup**  
**Amy Pugh, DVM**  
**Cristina Griffin**  
**P.J. Lofland**  
**Joseph Chrobak**  
**Chad Griffin**  
**Erin Turner**  
**Michelle Connelly**

### **Members Present**

P.J. Lofland	Erin Turner	Michelle Connelly	Rick Borucki
Amy Pugh	Cristina Griffin	Chad Griffin	
Mitch Cromer	Priscilla Ivester	Joseph Chrobak	

### **Staff Present**

Capt. V. Loveland  
Tonya Ward

### **CALL TO ORDER**

- The Advisory Board meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mitch Cromer. The meeting was held virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. Staff introduced new member Rick Borucki who was appointed to the Non-Pet Owner position.
- Approval of meeting minutes September 17, 2020  
MOTION: Chad Griffin made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Michelle Connelly and the minutes were approved unanimously.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Former Board Chair Bill Cowan was present and stated he would like to commend Animal Services for holding multiple rabies clinics in 2020. He said he was present to continue the discussion begun during his tenure on the Board regarding changing rabies vaccination laws and allowing CRVs to give 3 year vaccines. He said his concern is the risk from over-vaccinating animals rather than any adverse effects from the vaccine itself.

## OLD BUSINESS

- ***Rabies Requirements and Laws in NC***

After Bill Cowan broached the topic the Board continued discussion. Captain Loveland stated he understands the concern regarding over-vaccinating animals but it is more important to ensure that all animals are vaccinated. He suggested getting other counties involved in the attempt to change state law and Forsyth lead the initiative. Chad Griffin asked Dr. Pugh what her opinion is since she is a veterinarian. Dr. Pugh replied that she would support allowing CRVs to give 3 year vaccines. Priscilla Ivester said she understands it may take some time but feels starting sooner is better. Mitch Cromer said he agreed with Bill on over-vaccination being a problem and that he feels most veterinarians don't evaluate animals thoroughly when they give a vaccine anyway. There was further discussion of how rabies clinics help low-income citizens who aren't generally able to go to a veterinarian and how it could assist with registration and violations of county code by providing incentive (via cost). All state laws would still apply and the owner would have to show proof of previous vaccination prior to a 3 year being given. Priscilla Ivester recommended that the Board go to the County Commissioners about the next steps for changing state law. This could possibly be done online. Deputy County Manager Damon Sanders-Pratt was present and he discussed the process. Any change requests would have to be submitted via the County Attorney's office. He stated if the Advisory Board would bring a written document of their requests to him he would begin the process. The law was reviewed in 2018 and there were no objections at that time. The current code likely still has advocates. Priscilla Ivester asked for a motion to move forward with the process, motion was made by Rick Boruki and seconded by Cristina Griffin. It passed unanimously.

- ***Rabies Reporting by Veterinarians***

Captain Loveland discussed the current code. There was discussion of the best way to handle the process. A monthly report would be best but the pet owner is also responsible for providing information. Mitch Cromer asked if Animal Services could contact veterinarians and Captain Loveland replied that we can. Dr. Pugh suggested contacting the Veterinary Board to obtain a list of all veterinarians in the county. The issue will be discussed again in six months.

- ***PDD/DD Preventative Measures Pending Appeal***

Captain Loveland stated he wished to discuss some of the language in the document the Board had provided regarding their thoughts on amending the County Code. He pointed out that the document referenced Sec. 6-59 but really should reference Sec. 6-57. He explained that 6-59 only references the actual PDD or DD declaration whereas 6-57 address the appeal process. Chad Griffin asked how it could be changed. Damon Sanders-Pratt said the Board could suggest language to amend the County Code. He said there could still be some liability issues – for example, a citizen spending money for a required fence when the PDD/DD was later dismissed on appeal. There was discussion of the new PDD/DD procedures which have been implemented by Animal Services, especially the fact that now more investigation is required resulting in fewer declarations being issued. Mitch Cromer asked if the Board wished to make a motion to change the language in the Code. Chad Griffin made a motion to change the wording and it was seconded by Michelle Connelly. Priscilla Ivester and PJ Lofland objected and stated they think the Board should wait and discuss the issue further. The vote was 8 in favor and 2 opposed. Mitch Cromer asked if the issue could be placed on the agenda to be discussed again in January.

- ***Repealing Differential Licensing***

Priscilla Ivester asked Damon Sanders-Pratt if he had information on the County Commissioners' opinions on whether licensing should continue. He replied that his recollection is that Commissioners Linville, Whisenhunt, and Plyer were serving at the time licensing was passed but he did not know how they felt regarding licensing currently. He also said he was unsure of the feelings of the 4 recently elected Commissioners. There was discussion amongst the Board of how licensing negatively affects lower income residents. Captain Loveland stated that rabies vaccination is most important. It was pointed out that some citizens may avoid having their pet vaccinated so they are not required to obtain a license. Captain Loveland said originally Animal Services planned to ask for licensing to end but after the COVID-19 pandemic began earlier this year decided to wait. Damon Sanders-Pratt said that the County Manager was not opposed to doing away with pet licensing. He pointed out that it was popular when implemented but not as much currently. There was discussion of the low compliance rate. This was followed by discussion of licensing as a form of identification vs microchips. Microchips are very helpful but the information must be updated by the pet owner and this does not always happen. Priscilla Ivester said she thinks the Board should make a statement, she said she liked the wording that Damon Sander-Pratt used was good. Chad Griffin said he feels there is more downside then benefit to licensing. Mitch Cromer said he would like to see the addition of language about the cost to low income residents plus safety concerns. There was discussion of rabies vaccinations being more important than licensing. Priscilla Ivester made a motion to accept the proposal as written by Damon Sanders-Pratt (which stemmed from his meeting with previous chair Bill Cowan and reflected the Board's views) but add the wording suggested. Chad Griffin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Captain Loveland reminded the Board that they would need to write the formal statement, approve it by vote, and then submit it to the County Commissioners.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- ***Hearing Tribunals***

The docket and members for the Tribunal Hearings scheduled for December 17th were discussed. Amy Pugh, Cristina Griffin, and Erin Turner said they were available to serve. New member Rick Borucki stated he would attend to observe.

- ***Rabies Clinics***

Staff stated that the drive up clinics held in 2020 had worked very well and the plan is to continue this method.

## **ADJOURN**

MOTION: With no further business Mitch Cromer asked for a motion to adjourn. Cristina Griffin made the motion, which was seconded by Rick Borucki. Mitch Cromer adjourned the meeting at 7:17 pm.