

# Animal Care & Control



## AD HOC TASK FORCE

### OUTREACH & MARKETING SUBCOMMITTEE

**December 10, 2014 from 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm**

The Vice-Chair lead the meeting as the Chair was unable to attend due to a scheduling conflict.

The meeting notes from November 24, 2014 were accepted.

Melissa Gable, Public Information Officer, presented to the members and spoke to a "Wish List" as was requested by the members. Ms. Gable explained as she considered the request, she focused on conservative and realistic items for the list.

Debra Wood-LaFave, Volunteer Coordinator, presented an overview of the program, observations, and where opportunity exists to make this component more successful. Below are some of the questions raised by members.

Q. How old do you have to be to volunteer at MCACC?

A. 15 years is the minimum age.

Q. How many hours do volunteers need to put in at the shelter?

A. Eight hours per month (average is 10 hours per month).

Q. What do most of the volunteers do at the shelter?

A. Most are Kennel Assistants, who clean kennels, walk dogs, etc. The seconds most popular is adoption counseling.

Q. Why do volunteers stop volunteering?

A. The most common reason is that they never complete their training. If they don't complete the training, then they are unable to log volunteer hours during the first three months.

Q. How many volunteer applications does MCACC receive each month?

A. More than 100, but only half of those applicants will attend orientation. After which, only half of those will actually finish training. Of those who finish training, fewer than half will log any hours after three months of service.

Q. What is the total number of hours needed to be fully trained?

A. Approximately 8.

Q. Are there home visits?

A. No, the shelter operates on "open" adoptions. The adoption counselors are trained to stimulate conversation to better determine and assess whether there is a "good fit."

There is a great deal of customer service skills involved in the training as this should a good experience.

Q. What if someone wants to foster? Do they need to attend the regular volunteer training?

A. Foster training is much quicker and there is usually one foster orientation class each month.

Q. Why can't MCACC employees foster?

A. Some MCACC employees can and do foster. Hourly employees who have animal handling in their job description cannot foster. The reason is due to compensation. Since fostering of shelter animals includes animal handling, it is viewed as a continuation of their duties and would mean that these hourly employees would need to be compensated for their time.

**ACTION ITEM:** Dr. Silva will provide additional information to the interested member in understanding the basis for the decision.

The Vice-Chair related a situation where two Golden Retriever pups were in an auction with a highly reputable charitable organization. Staff explained they do not offer animals for fundraising auctions as this is often an impulse decision on the bidders. The Vice-Chair explained he was using this as example as a public relations, promotional tool.

The Vice-Chair encouraged the members to list ideas that can be put into a marketing plan strategy for each of the goals that were previously agreed upon.

1. Promote Adoptions
2. Stop Pet Homelessness
3. Attract Volunteers & Fosters
4. Educate the Community on MCACC and its Services.

Below are the items captured:

- I. Establish a Speakers' Bureau
- II. Promote Other Offsite Events
  - a. PACC911
  - b. Petsmart
- III. Rescue Wagon – Relocation of breeds in high demand in other areas
- IV. Better, friendlier service at the shelter – Have "Ambassadors of Good Will"
  - a. It was commented that it may be better to pay Department of Correction staff for expanded kennel cleaning service so volunteers can focus on assisting visitors.
  - b. There needs to be a more sales oriented approach.
  - c. A member expressed having to wait on the phone for 35 minutes. For someone interested in asking about adoptions, this is way too long.
- V. Increase networking with local businesses and corporate sponsors for advertising space.

- a. Maybe more than one animal should be taken to the Board of Supervisors' meetings as it is free advertising.
  - b. Need to explore Public Service Announcements on the radio.
  - c. There may be digital billboard space available at different times.
    - i. Bari Mears is to forward contact information to Melissa Gable.
  - d. Develop heartfelt adoption stories.
- VI. Create education programs with schools.
- a. Some schools have a community service requirement where credits are earned.

**Next / Follow-up Action Items:**

From the 11/12/2014 meeting:

- Gather information from other organizations to consider what programs are working – review the statistics – *Pending*

From the 12/10/2014 meeting:

- Dr. Silva will provide additional information to the interested member in understanding the basis for the decision – *Completed 12/15/14*
- Post the presentation from the Volunteer Coordinator to CitizensForPets portal – *Completed*