

Animal Care & Control



AD HOC TASK FORCE

PROCESS & SERVICE SUBCOMMITTEE

January 21, 2015 from 3:45 pm – 5:15 pm

The Chair opened the meeting and began with having Dr. Rodrigo Silva update the members on preliminary information from staff related to the list of developing recommendations.

1. Implement "OFF HOLD" cards.
 - a. In process, staff is evaluating cost of replacing kennel cards.
2. Establish isolation ward at East Shelter.
 - a. In process, as part of remodeling of East Shelter.

A member asked when will the remodeling be completed? Dr. Silva said that they are still in the process of finalizing the plans for remodeling a space next to the existing clinic to house sick animals. Construction should take about 90 days from start to finish.

Can the public view the sick animals? No, viewing animals in this area would be under special circumstances and only upon request. Pictures of the stray animals housed in quarantine will be available at the front counter.

3. Add a wing for adoptable animals at East Shelter. Staff said that this was possible but it would be very costly (approximately \$2 million) and no funding was available.

A member asked what square footage was used to calculate the \$2 million. Dr. Silva did not know. The Chair asked for more details on how the \$2 million was determined.

ACTION ITEM: Dr. Silva will provide details on how the \$2 million estimate was calculated at the next meeting.

4. Evaluate timing and frequency of feedings. Dr. Silva said that this recommendation was completed. Feeding schedules for each animal are based on recommendations from the veterinarians.

A member asked, "What is done for an animal that comes in underweight, pregnant or arrives after the last meal of the day has been served?" Dr. Silva stated each supervisory staff has the authority (without veterinarian approval) to feed an animal at point of intake if the staff person feels it is necessary. Another member was concerned that staff may not feed the animal even if they have the authority to do so. The member suggested that a written policy is needed. The policy should state that the all animals are fed at intake.

The committee had a lengthy discussion surrounding the pros and cons of feeding all animals at intake. Several members expressed concern that dogs may get injured due to fights over the food. New dogs are often placed in kennels with other dogs. A member suggested that new arrivals should be housed in an isolation kennel. Another member said that he has seen empty kennels at both the east and west shelters. Dr. Silva said per a



study by the ASPCA that both the east and west shelters are 80% above capacity on a typical day. On average the shelters receive 100 animals per day. Kennels may be empty for a short period of time until a truck arrives. The last truck of the day comes in at 9 PM. Trucks have a capacity for 60 dogs.

ACTION ITEM: The committee decided to modify the recommendation to read: All underweight, underage, geriatric, injured and pregnant or nursing animals are given first priority to be kenneled individually and are fed upon arrival or are allowed “free feeding” if appropriate.

ACTION ITEM: The committee also decided to add a recommendation to use Chameleon to print kennel cards at time of impound. Feeding frequency can be specified in Chameleon and the recommended feeding schedule prints out automatically on the Chameleon-created kennel card.

5. Evaluate the size of feeding bowls. Larger feeding bowls for puppies were implemented at both shelters.
6. Look into using inmate help at West Shelter.
 - a. Staff is in contact with the Department of Corrections.

The HALO President expressed the preference is not use male inmates at the West Shelter due to safety and being untrained to handle animals. Dr. Silva and Mr. Aguinaga explained only female inmates would be utilized through the Department of Corrections. The inmates need to apply to the program, it viewed as a privilege and those selected are trained in animal handling skills. A guard supervises and it is typically the same group or team. A member asked if the inmates could be available on weekends. Dr. Silva explained that inmates are only available to work Monday through Friday before the facility opens since they are not allowed contact with the public or AC&C staff.

7. Post notes associated with BEHAV-Other for each animal on the E-List.
 - a. Under review.

ACTION ITEM: The committee wanted to modify the recommendation to state that all notes about the animal – behavioral, medical, and notes generated from both HALO’s evaluation and AC&C’s evaluation – be posted for each animal on the E-list.

8. Post pricing menu in lobby. Dr. Silva said two six-foot letter board signs would cost \$1200.

The Chair suggested that AC&C purchase an electronic board that can be updated via computer. Dr. Silva indicated he would find out if there is an approved County vendor.

9. Add directional signage on walls and walkways.
 - a. In progress for the West Shelter and will be part of the remodel for the East Shelter.
10. Create signage and handouts to assist visitors.

- a. Dr. Silva said that staff is looking into installing “You are Here” signs similar to signs that are used in malls.
- b. Dr. Silva said they are in the process of consulting with Chameleon to see if changes can be made to the kennel cards.

A member asked, “What do the blue Mylar collars mean at West Shelter?” Dr. Silva said that it means that the animal is up for adoption through AC&C, not through HALO. There are green Mylar collars that indicate the animal has been sterilized and yellow to indicate the animal has been adopted, but not ready to leave.

11. Post Lost and Found board in lobby.
 - a. In process.

The Chair asked for Dr. Silva to provide a picture of the sign to the committee once it is installed.

12. Increase hold-time for owner-surrenders to 72-hours.
 - a. Dr. Silva said that staff evaluated this recommendation and determined that the 72-hour hold time would increase the risk of the animal getting sick. In addition, the shelter does not have the kennel capacity to hold owner-surrenders for 72-hours.

The committee discussed at length their thought process behind this recommendation. The reason is that the 72-hour hold allows more time for rescues to take the dogs. Members expressed concern that some owner-surrendered animals are euthanized immediately upon intake. Dr. Silva stated that doesn’t happen – the only animals that are euthanized shortly following intake are animals that are very vicious or are severely injured or ill. The euthanasia rate for owner surrenders is very low. Dr. Silva also pointed out an owner cannot request AC&C to euthanize their animal. AC&C staff makes all the euthanasia decisions.

Another reason for making the recommendation is that the committee was concerned that animals were being surrendered by people who were not their owners. If the dog was euthanized or adopted immediately the real owner would not have time to reclaim their dog from the shelter. This includes people who found the dog as a stray and then kept the dog for over a week before turning the dog into the shelter. According to state law, a person is considered the legal owner of an animal if he/she has the animal for one week / 6 days.

ACTION ITEM: The committee decided to modify the recommendation to state that dogs, surrendered by people who have had the dog for less than 30 days (after finding the dog as a stray), should be held for 72 hours. AC&C staff should categorize the dog as stray in Chameleon as opposed to “owner-surrender-stray.”

13. List owner-surrendered animals on Pet Harbor.
 - a. In process.

14. Photos for all animals on E-List.
 - a. Dr. Silva said that the file size of the photos is too large to email.
 - b. Valerie Beckett suggested that a file sharing site could be used to ensure access to these large files containing photos.



15. Recruit volunteers to help with marketing animals.
 - a. The Marketing and Outreach Committee is working on this.

16. Post a sign about payment options in the lobby.
 - a. Dr. Silva explained that staff works with customers on a case-by-case basis. One of the main reasons for not openly promoting payment options is that once the animal is released, most do not fulfill the agreement.
 - b. Staff currently works with a customer to waive part or the entire fee if the customer agrees to sterilize their pet. Typically the sterilization becomes the issue.
 - c. The committee agreed that this was a good practice and that it addressed the recommendation. Management should be sure that all the staff working with the customers are aware of the options.

The Chair noted that it was 5:15 pm and that the meeting was over. The Chair suggested – and the committee agreed – that at the next meeting they would devote 30 minutes to reviewing the remaining recommendations; 30 minutes to review the recommendations of the Behavioral sub-group and 30 minutes for the Medical Triage sub-group. The committee agreed to keep their comments brief in order to complete all agenda items at the next meeting.

The Chair asked about the source of the additional recommendations that appeared on the list. Ms. Beckett explained that the recommendations were added at the request of the County Manager for the subcommittee to consider. Members may choose to reject, modify or endorse any of the items forwarded to the County Manager's Office through other interested parties.

Next meeting: Thursday, Feb. 4, 2015