

Memphis Animal Shelter Advisory Board

Work Session

February 13, 2013

Present: Dr. Stephen Tower, Chairman; Jill Madajczyk, member; John Cox, member; Jeanne Chancellor, member; Angela Wicks, member; Robert Ratton, City Attorney's Office; James Rogers, Administrator Memphis Animal Services; Guest Dr. Rebecca Coleman, Veterinary Director Memphis Animal Services; Dr. Dr. Shanna Wall, Veterinarian Memphis Animal Services

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Stephen Tower.

Angela Wicks, the newest Board member, was introduced to the other members of the Board. She received a warm welcome from all the Board members.

The minutes from the January meeting were presented. Jill Madajczyk made a motion to approve the minutes, with a second by John Cox. The minutes were approved.

Jill Madajczyk asked if the minutes could be mailed ahead to the members.

Mr. Rogers presented the numbers from year to date. There were 860 animals unaccounted for in the numbers presented. Mr. Rogers said they would double check and see where the problem was. He said some would be animals euthanized at the Animal Emergency Vet. It was brought up that would just be a few of the unaccounted for animals. Dr. Tower asked that the number be got to zero with no unknown outcomes. The rest of the Board agreed.

Mr. Rogers reported that 16 people attended the Euthanasia Training Class held at the Shelter January 19 and 20. Mr. Rogers attended himself. The attendees were from Shelby County, Fayette County, Tipton County and Humphries County. Staff members from the Memphis Shelter who are not certified attended the training.

The Memphis Fire Department helping train the dispatchers at the Shelter was discussed again. Jill Madajczyk reported that it will take some time to get the training done due to the schedules of the Fire Department, but it can be done. Dr. Tower suggested in house training for the dispatchers.

Dr. Tower asked for the GPS logs, euthanization logs, and inmate logs for the next meeting.

It was discussed that retired dispatchers from the Fire Department might be able to help dispatch. It was suggested that Director Janet Hooks meet with Benson at the Fire Department to see if training could be worked out. Dr. Tower suggested we give a month before pursuing further.

Dr. Rebecca Coleman, Veterinarian Director and Dr. Wall, Shelter veterinarian were present at the meeting to help answer questions the Board has about the veterinary clinic at the Shelter.

Dr. Coleman reported that the x-ray machine was now working and being used on animals that come into the shelter injured. The missing component has been installed, and animals are now able to be x-rayed when needed.

Dr. Coleman corrected us that there are 4 surgery tables not 5 available at the Shelter.

The microscope is now working in the clinic. There had been a burned out bulb that has made it inoperable. There was trouble procuring the correct bulb, but it is now working.

The subject of spaying and neutering heartworm positive dogs was brought up. At the present time dogs with heartworms are not spayed/neutered at the shelter. If an owner's dog is found to have heartworms, there is no choice other than paying the \$200.00 fertile fee on top of the impound fees if the owner wishes to claim their pet.

Dr. Coleman said that it is not best practice medicine to spay/neuter heartworm positive dogs. She stated that even with a low infestation there can be heavy inflammation. A compromised heart presents an anesthesia risk. The heavier the burden of heartworms, the greater the risk. She stated that many of the owned animals are not in great condition, suffer from good nutrition which are negative factors going into surgery. The dogs also often lack any vaccinations. She stated that people don't deserve their animals back because they have failed to keep their dogs from getting heartworms.

Dr. Coleman stated that the clinic at the shelter operates under best practice medicine, and spaying and neutering heartworm positive dogs is not best practice according to the American Heartworm Society.

The liability issue came up in spaying and neutering heartworm dogs and the risk owners face. Jill Madajczyk said the liability would not be an issue with the proper forms. Jeanne Chancellor stated that many vets in Memphis do spay/neuter heartworm positive dogs, and recommend that it be performed before heartworm treatment begins. Dr. Tower agreed, and he stated he had just neutered a heartworm positive dog that day. Dr. Tower said that to him best practice medicine was doing a chest film, through exam, and any other testing before doing the surgery. The shelter does have all the diagnostic equipment now to do all the testing that would need to be done before doing surgery on a heartworm positive dog. Dr. Towers stated that there are animals who should not have the surgery due to heartworms, but testing should be done to determine whether a candidate for surgery. Animals at the shelter are being euthanized due to the owner not being able to pay the impound fees and the fertile fee when their pets test positive for heartworms.

Jill Madajczyk said there may be a way to waive the fertile fee in these cases. She will report at the next meeting.

A motion was made by John Cox and seconded by Jill Madajczyk. The motion states that the Advisory Board of The Memphis Animal Shelter recommends that each case of surgery on a heartworm positive dog at The Memphis Animal Shelter be evaluated on its own merit. The motion passed.

John Cox asked Dr. Wall how many of the surgeries done at the Shelter she had completed in the last two weeks. She stated that she did not know. Dr. Tower asked for the surgery logs for the next meeting.

Animal Control Officer logs were reviewed, and they appear to be improving. All vehicles had stayed in the City limits Mr. Rogers reported.

Mr. Rogers announced that a new Field Supervisor has been hired, and she would be starting soon. The new supervisor has supervision and operational experience, and she has a military background.

Mr. Rogers also reported that an Operations Manager was being hired as soon as all the paperwork was processed.

The board discussed the Shelter have a survey for shelter visitors which would indicate why they did not choose to adopt an animal on that visit. This survey could be used to improve adoptions.

The subject of pet licensing was briefly discussed.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jeanne Chancellor and seconded by Jill Madajczyk. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeanne Chancellor

Secretary