

Abilene Animal Control Advisory Committee

August 4, 2005

The Abilene Animal Control Advisory Committee held its second yearly meeting, August 4, 2004, at the Community Development conference room.

The Chairman, Dr. Jack Callan, called the meeting to order at 3:30 P.M.

Members present were Dr. Jack Callan, Alvin O'Dell, Leah Herron, Thaddeus Iwuji and Tom Rigsby. Guests included Lesli Andrews, Melissa O'Neil and Christy Frost, recording secretary.

The minutes of the May 5, 2005, meeting was approved as mailed.

The first item on the agenda was discussion on terminology in the ordinances concerning Animal Services. Mr. O'Dell said he would like to see the "\$10.00" fee for rabies vaccinations amended to "current applicable fee" and the number of animal allowed per "person" amended to "residence" or "dwelling". Mr. Iwuji will look into the proper legal terminology and advise Mr. O'Dell on the process of changing the ordinance. Mr. O'Dell also questioned if the word "poisonous" should be amended to "venomous" for reptiles, Dr. Callan said he felt both words are interchangeable.

The second item on the agenda discussed was Splash Day scheduled for Aug. 20, 2005. Splash Day is a cooperative effort with Animal Services and Parks Department in which dogs and owner are allowed in the Rose Park pool for fun and games.

Mr. O'Dell presented statistics for the Managers Report for May through July 2005. (See attached Operational Report)

A guideline for cooperative efforts between Animal Services, APD and the Sheriff's Office concerning loose and stray livestock was presented. (See attached)

Mr. O'Dell reported that thirty-three citations had been issued for residents not complying with rabies vaccinations ordinance and state law.

An email was presented by Mr. O'Dell stating the Texas Municipal League's resolution calling to amend Sec. 822.047 (2) of the Texas Health and Safety Code to allow cities to provide breed specific regulation of dogs. This amendment would allow cities to ban the adoptions and ownership of specific breeds of dogs.

The next item on the agenda discussed was the 1 yr. vs. 3yr. rabies vaccination. In 2003 the State of Texas amended the Health and Safety code to recognize two consecutive annual rabies vaccinations with 3 yr. vaccine will allow the second vaccination to be valid for a three year duration. Cities are allowed to make ordinances more stringent, therefore some cities are still requiring an annual vaccination, while others adhering to State recommendations. Abilene ordinance states an annual vaccination. There was some discussion on whether the ordinance should be changed.

Texas Department of State Health Services reports there were have been six confirmed cases of rabies in Taylor County in 2005, with three of those being inside the city limits of Abilene. All six cases have been the skunk strain of the virus.

A seminar for Investigation of Animal Welfare Issues was hosted by Abilene Animal Services on July 19, 2005. Detective Craig Griffis of the Taylor County Sheriff's Office presented the seminar which was attended by all Abilene ACO's and ACO's from Anson, Tye and Stamford. Leslie Andrews, Director for Community Enhancement and Thaddeus Iwuji from the city Legal Department were also in attendance.

The next item opened for discussion was on unrestrained dogs in vehicles. Some cities have reported problems with dogs jumping out of vehicles and mauling people or destroying property. It was a general consensus this was not a problem in Abilene and would be difficult to enforce.

A report on Lake Jackson, La. creating an ordinance banning the feeding of stray animals was presented and a discussion opened. It was a general belief among the committee that this might be something Abilene could look to in the future, but is not a widespread problem at this time.

The last item on the agenda was a policy change in the notification of owners on impounded animals. Previous policy included the ACO's making a second trip to notify the person at the residence and a certified letter to the owner's known or believed known address. This policy has been amended to a letter mailed by regular mail due to the costs involved with the officer's time and gas and the fact that most people would not accept or pick up a certified letter.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Jack K. Callan, Chairman  
Christy Frost, Recording Secretary

Date minutes approved: November 10, 2005 *if*