

Animal Services Advisory Board

August 7, 2008

The Abilene Animal Services Advisory Board held a regular meeting on August 7, 2008 at the Finance 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, Tom Rigsby, Leah Herron and Stan Smith. Also present were Priscilla Templeton, Community Enhancement Director and Christy Frost, recording secretary.

The minutes of the April 10, 2008 meeting were presented as approved by the Chairman, Dr. Callan. There were no additions or corrections suggested. Mr. Rigsby made the motion to approve as mailed, seconded by Ms. Herron, approved by acclamation.

The Manager's report was the first item on the agenda. Alvin presented a comparison report between 2007 and 2008 numbers of animals handled at the shelter. He noted that most areas are currently showing a decrease in number.

Alvin reported that the shelter was back to full staff with the hiring of one ACO, one shelter attendant and one administrative clerk since the last meeting. Cole Edmondson and A.J. Garcia attended the Texas Animal Control Assoc. West Texas conference for continuing education. While at the conference, it was learned there is additional training needed for euthanasia certification, Cole and A.J. were able to receive this required training. All other staff will receive the additional training by Dec. 31, 2008 if possible. Jennifer Sharp, the new ACO, will receive Basic Animal Control Officer and firearms training. All other field ACO's will recertify on firearms and all ACO's will attend required continuing education to retain their certifications.

Dr. Lynn Lawhon submitted the low bid for the contract veterinary services and is now responsible for rabies quarantine observation. Dr. Lawhon has recruited Dr. Larry Dean to cover services when he is unable to do so. This is a three year contract.

Renovations and maintenance on the shelter has been under criticism the past few days. The current status of the project is the architects and engineers have almost completed the plans, the costs for these services are the only expenses incurred at this time. A contractor has been in to look at replacing the doors throughout the shelter. Some of these doors must be replaced in order to comply with state mandates in the quarantine area; other doors will be replaced due to normal wear and tear and the current deteriorated condition of the doors. Fiberglass doors will be used in the areas of high water usage, the rest will be metal. Alvin said he felt the Advisory Board had been kept informed of these proposed projects. Another critical issue being addressed with the proposal is the corner foundation of the building at the end of the wash bay is crumbling and must be repaired to prevent further damage to the building. Ms. Templeton stated that these renovations and repairs were not for cosmetic purposes, but much needed services required to keep the building functional. Additional office space is needed to allow one employee to move from a renovated closet and make room for additional storage for records. Dr. Callan stated it would be unreasonable to increase the number of pens for animals and neglect the rest of the facility, eventually rendering it useless. Ms. Herron stated all improvements requested need to be done, including new office space to

allow more area for customers and employees. Alvin also explained that the allegation of closing some pens for quarantine use was due to having some animals held for an extended period of time on "Dangerous Dog" investigations and required holding periods for the owners to comply with requirements. Dr. Callan stated he thought the plans sounded reasonable and there was no reason to change them at this time. Mr. Rigsby and Ms. Herron both agreed and commended the shelter for the work it does.

The 2008-09 budget was discussed. Alvin reported there were a couple of requested, but non-essential items that were not approved.

The newest replacement field truck has been delivered; the transport body has been ordered and will hopefully be in and installed with the next six to eight weeks.

Alvin reported that the shelter had switched to AT&T cell phones with "push to talk" radio capabilities when the Nextel contract had expired and the phones would no longer hold a charge. When AT&T was contacted, they assured us the phones had the services we required. After implementation of these phone/radios it was quickly discovered they could not deliver the required performance. The main problems with the phone/radios were when the radio had gone to standby mode an 8 to 10 second delay between when a call was placed and when it reached the receiving party was a severe safety hazard; the radio would also switch to a different line when two parties would attempt make a call at the same time, if only one radio was in operation for dispatch, the second caller would not know he had been switched and would not know the dispatcher was on a call with another person, they simply received no reply. AT&T was contacted about the problem, they agreed the radio could not perform as required and let the City out of the contract. Nextel was contacted, service was restored and they generously provided new phone/radios at no charge. Due to some limitations on the areas these radios can transmit, there may come a time when switching back to the two-way radios through the police and fire system will be needed. This would also allow the officer an immediate contact with police if needed.

With all items on the agenda discussed, Tom Rigsby made the motion to adjourn at 4:03 p.m., seconded by Leah Herron and adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Jack K. Callan, Chairman

Christy Frost, Recording Secretary

Date minutes approved: 12/11/2008