



CITY OF NORTH RICHLAND HILLS
ANIMAL ADOPTION AND RESCUE CENTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
7301 IRON HORSE BLVD
NORTH RICHLAND HILLS, TX 76180
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7TH, 2019

REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Director Stefanie Martinez called the meeting to order on Wednesday, August 7, 2019 at 10:02 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present:	Dr. Russell Johnson, DVM	Veterinarian
	Suzy Compton	Council Member
	Stefanie Martinez	Director, Neighborhood Services

Absent:	Jay Sabatucci	Executive Director, TACA
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Staff Members:	Keane Menefee	Animal Services Manager
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2. INTRODUCTION OF NEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER SUZY COMPTON

Ms. Compton introduced herself to the board. Ms. Compton is a City of North Richland Hills Council Member and stated she was excited to be on the AARC Advisory Committee.

3. INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS & CITY STAFF

Sandra Bitz, Panther City Feral Cats
Margaret Richie, Kim Leach, and Connie Stout, Mid-Cities Community Cats
Debbie McClendon, Friends of Arlington Animal Services
Stephen Cargill, Diamond Ridge Apartments

4. Approval of the Minutes of the November 1, 2018 Animal Adoption & Rescue Center Advisory Committee Meeting



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Dr. Johnson moved to approve the minutes of the November 1, 2018 Animal Adoption & Rescue Center Advisory Committee meeting. Council Member Compton seconded the motion.

Motion to approve carried 3 - 0.

5. REPORT OF ANIMAL SERVICES MANAGER

a) Fiscal Year 2019 year-to-date divisional statistics:

Animal Services Manager Menefee discussed FY19 year-to-date statistics with the committee. Menefee stated that other than animals released to rescue groups were in decline, other areas of importance to the operation of AARC were trending in positive results, especially in the areas of reduction of impounds, reduced euthanasia and increased live release rate. Menefee reviewed with the committee the AARC's new statistical tracking data sheet identifying key categories of importance. Menefee explained that he provided available statistics from FY11 to present for operational trends.

- i. FY19 YTD Impounds: 1,693
 - ii. FY19 YTD Adoptions: 767
 - iii. FY19 YTD Return to Owners: 312
 - iv. FY19 YTD Euthanasia: 227, a 24% decrease from FY18, 49% decrease from 2 years ago, and a 72% decrease from 4 years ago
 - v. FY19 YTD Transfers to Rescue Groups: 117
 - vi. FY19 YTD Live Release Rate: 88%, a 15% increase from 2 years ago and a 30% increase from 4 years ago
- b) Upcoming Clear the Shelter and Doggie Beach Bash:
- i. Clear the Shelter 2019 scheduled for Saturday, August 17th:



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Manager Menefee reviewed with the Committee the results from Clear the Shelter 2018. He stated that AARC adopted out 62 total animals- 22 dogs and 40 cats and AARC cleared the shelter. Beginning August 3rd AARC began providing NBC, weekly adoption results to coincide with the beginning of the Clear the Shelters advertising and marketing campaign. This year AARC will change how adoption paperwork will be handled to better streamline the process and reduce crowds waiting to complete the adoption process. Menefee advised the committee that AARC had been rewarded a 125-microchip grant from 24PetWatch. He stated that for every animal adopted the adopter could return with another pet to receive a free microchip.

- ii. Doggie Beach Bash 2019 scheduled for Saturday, September 28th:

Manager Menefee updated the committee on the upcoming date for Doggie Beach Bash. He reviewed with them the previous year's results from the event.

- c) Current and upcoming staffing vacancies:

Manager Menefee discussed with the committee previous, current, and upcoming staffing vacancies. He updated them that on May 24th Animal Services Officer Nora Garcia resigned due to relocation to California and that she was replaced by Venicia Brown, who came from California with 15 years previous ACO experience.

Menefee advised the committee that AARC currently has 2 vacant part-time kennel technician vacancies. He explained that one of the positions has been vacant since October 2018 and the other position recently became vacant. He advised that AARC was having difficulty filling the vacancies because they were part-time without benefits and that after several interviewing attempts the positions were still vacant.

Menefee explained that AARC was in need of a veterinary-technician position. He explained that currently 1 ½ days a week he is performing vet-tech type duties. He was hoping that there was a possibility to reclassify one



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of the part-time kennel technician positions and reallocation of the current funds dedicated for a vet-tech through the veterinarian services contract to help offset the creation of a full-time vet-tech position for AARC.

Menefee advised the committee that Rachelle Jones, the animal services technician responsible for working the front counter; processing adoptions, return to owners, city registration, answering AARC phones, and dispatching officers in the field would be retiring in September.

d) New Animal Services Vehicles:

Manager Menefee advised the committee that AARC had received 2 new vehicles in FY19.

- i. Received new Ford F-250, extended cab, deerskin box dog truck on January 16, 2019:
 1. 6 cages, separate DOA box, hydraulic lifts on DOA box and 1 cage compartment, stainless steel, a/c unit on transport cages
- ii. Received a new Ford F-150 pick-up truck to replace totaled vehicle 2 years ago. Vehicle used for food donation picks ups from area stores such as Walmart and Sam's Club.

No questions or requests for follow up from the committee regarding this agenda item.

6. UPDATE OF VETERINARIAN SERVICES FOR SHELTER PETS

Manager Menefee updated the committee on the progress of the new veterinarian services program added to Animal Services on January 19, 2018. Menefee advised the committee that as of July 30th Dr. Karen Barger would no longer be AARC's shelter veterinarian due to scheduling conflicts. Menefee stated that he is currently working with the veterinarian services contractor to find a replacement. Below are the FY19 year-to-date data for veterinarian services.

- a) Total Animals Provided Veterinarian Care: 745
- b) Dogs Spayed/Neutered: 235



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- c) Cats Spayed/Neutered: 328
- d) Animals Rabies Vaccinated: 644
- e) Animals Microchipped: 586
- f) Dogs Heartworm Tested: 227
- g) Animals Treated for Illness/Injury: 102

No questions or requests for follow up from the committee regarding this agenda item.

7. UPDATE OF PETPOINT DATA MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE IMPLEMENTATION

Manager Menefee updated the committee that Animal Services ceased using Chameleon software on May 1, 2018 and began using PetPoint. Menefee stated that all functions in PetPoint were currently active; including online licensing and lost/found/adoptable animals posted on the NRH website and on Petfinder, Petango, and Adopt-a-Pet for citizens looking for their pet or a new pet. He stated that staff was getting a firm grasp of the software's capabilities and processes and that it enabled the division to better obtain operational statistics, manage animal's medical records, and improve case management for officer investigations.

No questions or requests for follow up from the committee regarding this agenda item.

8. DISCUSSION ON ELIMINATING TRAPPING PROGRAM

Manager Menefee discussed that at the November 1, 2018 advisory committee meeting there was an agenda item discussing wildlife issues in the community. During that meeting there was discussion of reviewing current AARC practices of supplying and servicing traps to citizens for use on private property. The committee asked Menefee to provide research and a proposal for review and consideration at the next advisory meeting.



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At today's meeting Menefee outlined industry trends, AARC concerns regarding use and services of city resources for private property wildlife issues, and benefits of revising current AARC policies and practices regarding trapping.

Menefee advised that currently AARC requires a \$50 deposit for a trap, but actual trap replacement cost is closer to \$100.

Menefee stated that AARC traps have identification on them stating they are property of NRH-AARC. With this in mind the division is routinely servicing traps on private property, where the citizen has trapped an animal and failed to monitor the trap and an animal has died due to lack of food, water, and exposure to the elements. Menefee's concerns were that the traps are identified as city property and that this type of incident would reflect poorly on the city and not the citizen responsible for the trap when deceased animals were found. This could result in liability issues for the city if citizen's pets were to be trapped instead of wildlife and not removed in a timely manner, resulting in their pet's death; loss of support and confidence from the community on the services we provide; and public outcry with concerns of animal abuse, cruelty and inhumane treatment provided to captured animals.

Menefee advised that cities and shelters in the DFW area and around the nation are trending away from sponsoring or servicing wildlife trapping programs for private property; referring these citizen requests to local pest control and wildlife removal companies. Menefee stated that AARC does not provide rodent or insect control to private properties. These requests are referred to private pest control companies, but when a citizen has a nuisance wildlife issue the city is competing with private enterprise with use of tax dollars to provide trapping/removal services on private property.

Menefee stated that the public has a false sense of comfort in regards to wildlife trapping. He explained that the majority of wildlife trapped were relocated. This practice is the industry standard. The other available option is euthanasia but citizens are not in support of that method, preferring the relocation/release of the animals. The issue with the relocation/release method, is that studies have shown that more than 90% of wild animals relocated and released into new areas either died or were unable to be tracked within days of release. These animals are taken out of their established territory and placed in a new area with unknown food, water,



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and shelter sources; exposing them to the elements, territorial issues with that areas established wildlife, and increased risk of depredation from area predators due to the inability to quickly seek known safe havens of refuge.

Menefee advised the committee that if AARC were to eliminate offering and servicing traps on private property, the division would still provide wildlife trapping for known human or pet exposure through bites or scratches from high risk rabies carriers (skunks, coyotes, bats, raccoons, foxes); respond to complaints of injured/sick wildlife in distress; calls of services where a wild animal is creating an immediate and dangerous public health or safety risk; and to citizens that the division feels will not accept the new policies and practices without further escalating their complaints to city hall.

The committee after hearing the issues presented by Menefee advised that AARC cease the practice of providing and servicing traps on private property. That citizens requesting this service be referred to area pest control and wildlife removal companies.

The committee requested Menefee to prepare a memo outlining the trapping challenges and have his proposal reviewed by the Neighborhood Services director and the deputy city manager for their consideration and implementation of the committee's recommendation.

9. DISCUSSION ON FERAL CATS AND TRAP-NEUTER-RELEASE PROGRAMS

Manager Menefee was requested by the committee to look into current AARC practices regarding feral cats in the community and update them at this meeting.

At today's meeting there were 15 private citizens present in support of NRH beginning a TNR program. Organizations represented by these citizens at the meeting were Mid-Cities Community Cats, Panther City Feral Cats, Friends of Arlington Animal Services, and the Diamond Ridge Apartments located in NRH.

Menefee advised the committee that in the DFW area there were at least 11 municipalities providing or allowing TNR programs, including the City of Fort Worth,



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City of Hurst, City of Richland Hills, City of Arlington, City of Irving, and the City of Dallas.

Menefee stated that through years of research, numerous studies had shown that TNR not only saved cats lives, but also saved those participating municipalities money.

He advised the committee that currently in FY19, AARC had euthanized 122 cats of which 78 cats or 64% of them had been identified as feral.

Menefee stated that benefits to AARC would include reduced housing for cats, reduced euthanasia of cats, increased live release rate for the agency, and reduction in costs of having to provide for the sheltering and care of these impounded animals.

After Menefee updated the committee on current policies, practices and statistics regarding feral cats the committee opened the meeting to the citizens in attendance for public comment.

The following citizens spoke regarding their support of TNR:

Sandra Bitz- Panther City Feral Cats: stated that the time had come for TNR in all communities, including NRH. Stated that the city would see benefits of reduced euthanasia, sheltering costs, and public appreciation.

Stephen Cargill- Diamond Ridge Apartments: stated that he is the service supervisor for the Diamond Ridge Apartments and that they had participated in TNR. He explained that once the apartments began TNR they saw a drastic reduction in cats and kittens in the complex.

Margaret Richie, Kim Leach and Connie Stout- Mid-Cities Community Cats: These ladies stated that through their experience TNR has shown an ability to reduce feral cat populations, they read a letter from an NRH citizen supporting TNR, and told the committee that TNR is a better solution than traditional trap and kill programs addressing feral cats.

Debbie McClendon- Friends of Arlington Animal Services: stated that she helped Arlington Animal Services begin their current TNR program. She has become the agencies liaison that works directly with citizens complaints regarding feral cats.



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She stated that Arlington Animal Services has been able to obtain grants from agencies like Maddie's Fund and Best Friends Animals Society for TNR programs.

Ashley Gambino: Grapevine resident that stated the City of Grapevine doesn't provide TNR services but that the city had a good ordinance defining feral cats and she read the ordinance to the committee.

Catherine Kunkler: Advised the committee that she worked with fostering and socializing feral cats and kittens and supported TNR.

At the conclusion of the citizens' presentations Menefee asked the Mid-Cities Community Cats if they had a proposal of services they would provide or assist NRH with on implementing a TNR program. The group stated that they would educate citizens on the importance and benefits of TNR, they would loan the citizens traps, they would spay/neuter the feral cats trapped at organizations like TCAP, and they would return the cats. They asked if NRH would support this initiative, refer citizens with feral cat problems to their organization for assistance, and for the city to actively research and apply for grants regarding TNR to help offset program costs.

The committee after hearing AARC staff and the citizens' presentations requested Menefee to work with Mid-Cities Community Cats, Panther City Feral Cats, and Friends of Arlington Animal Services to put together a TNR program proposal for review by the committee and city executive staff for consideration. The committee thanked the citizens for their passion and commitment to the feral cats in our community and that we would be in touch.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Compton called the meeting to adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:52 a.m.



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ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keane Monfefe", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "A" and a long horizontal stroke.

Keane Monfefe, Animal Services Manager