



**Animal Care & Control  
Advisory Board  
December 5, 2011**

**MINUTES**

**Attendees:** Kim Culbertson, Nancy Driver, Anne Johnson, Florence Brammer, Katie Grillaert, Maureen Haggerty, Cathy Menard, Dan Niziolek and Jeanette Wiedemeier Bower

Absent: Tracy Scherbert (excused)  
Shannon McKenzie, Anne Hendrickson,

Jeanette called the meeting to order at 2:05pm, and thanked the group for coming.

**1. Approval of the Minutes** – The group voted to approve the September minutes as printed.

**2. Committee Reports**

a. **Community Building & Revenue Enhancement Committee** – Florence, Kim, and Tracy

The subcommittee met and discussed ways to re-brand MACC. They expressed interest in highlighting MACC as an adoption source, and to focus on activities and ideas that would promote increased pet licensing. They considered options like staffing a table at dog parks and to have permanent wooden boxes at the parks to advertise pet licensing information. The committee collected information on different businesses that could create an attractive four-color banner for MACC. The full board offered a few additional resources to consider:

Halfpricebanners.com  
Banners To Go  
Kinkos

The subcommittee also suggested asking the MACC-approved rescue groups to distribute pet licensing applications to those adopters in Minneapolis.

Finally, the subcommittee talked about the possibility of having local artists design art for display at the animal shelter. Anne J. said that addressing compassion fatigue is a real concern for her staff, and that even changing the environment slightly to make it feel more “home-like” (less sterile) would deeply impact people and the staff’s daily work.

Example -- Denver Humane Society has had success in engaging the community while they changed their physical environment. They held a contest for the community to develop unique designs for the DHS’s cat room. Different local businesses and schools developed design options/murals and a winner was selected. The public was interested and came to the shelter to see the cat room, which brought more casual customers to the animal shelter. Denver Humane Society posted some of the submissions on their website which drew additional attention. Creating a competition created positive energy.

The full board thought that displaying art in the lobby was a unique and interesting idea. Nancy has a connection to someone in marketing and will follow up with him. Katie suggested using Valentine’s Day as a kick-off event, and Dan suggested contacting the folks at art-a-while in NE Minneapolis for suggested artists to approach.

Jeanette mentioned that in the future we are moving toward having volunteers serve as greeters for folks enter the lobby. This will help alleviate the stress of the front desk staff and decrease the chaos of people not knowing where to go when they arrive for the first time. Dan mentioned that we also want to have a MACC store in the future, so new pet owners can obtain the necessary items before they leave the building to make it easier on them. Anne J. mentioned that the Coon Rapids AHS sells between \$7,000 and \$8,000 per month at their store, and that there are seven or eight finite things that a new pet owner needs. She will forward that list to Jeanette.

**b. Animal Care & Socialization** – Shannon, Nancy, Katie and Anne H

The subcommittee met electronically via email since the last full board meeting, and is now ready to meet with MACC staff to get more information and clarification on their short and long-term plans. Katie also mentioned that she has a group of four folks who are interested in volunteering at MACC, and that she will forward their contact information to MACC.

**c. Responsible Pet Ownership** – Maureen, Cathy and Anne J.

The subcommittee met in person last month and came up with two concrete ideas to educate the public on lowering animal surrenders. The group wants to add content (hyperlinks) to the MACC website on the following topics:

**Considering a New Pet?** The purpose will be to educate the public on what to consider before a pet is brought into the home. For instance, consider your lifestyle (homebound or active lifestyle), puppy versus adult pet, what does it cost to own a pet (created last year at MACC), etc. The hope is to provide easy-to-access information to avoid poor choices by new pet owners. With regard to the cost of owning a pet, the full board suggested adding information for the public on low-cost options, including: Foster my Pet, The Pet Project, low-cost spay/neuter options, low-cost vaccination clinics, dog training options (i.e., Clicker training.com). Maureen mentioned that the intent is to create easy, simple options because if it's not easy, people won't read it.

**At Wits End?** The group suggests adding a tab to the website for folks who are nearing the end of their rope with problem pet issues. For example, house training puppies, introducing cats and dogs, families who are expecting a new baby, puppy training, and more. The hope is to provide a few easy tips for people in one-page articles. The goal is to use existing fact sheets from other sources so we don't have to recreate the wheel. Anne J. brought samples from AHS and will send us the link if we would like to use them.

Finally, Jeanette mentioned that the AHS Director of Training met with MACC and has offered MACC the option of allowing our new adopters to take a free class at AHS. The introductory class is free of charge and is an overall orientation; it is geared to dogs, but AHS has other classes for cats and other small animals. The group has a number of questions about the class objectives and content. Jeanette mentioned that she is going to sit through the class to observe.

Katie suggested that with three dog trainers on the MACC board and several MACC volunteers as dog trainers, we should be able to put together a monthly 90-minute class for new MACC adopters. . What to expect from your new dog (biting, digging, vomiting, poop, peeing, household manners, etc.). Maureen mentioned she offers a class for rescue groups, and that MACC might be able to ask one of our rescues if we might sit through it to learn more.

Finally, Anne J. mentioned that AHS has a behavior hotline for anyone who has questions about pet problems. It is a free service and anyone can use it.

Jeanette thanked each of the groups for their work since the last board meeting. It is clear that we are making some head-way on our interest areas and MACC is pleased with the leadership from the board.

### **New Business**

- 3. *Partnership with MN SNAP*** – Dan announced a new partnership between MACC and Minnesota Spay Neuter Assistance Program. We are very close to finalizing a contract to allow MN SNAP to perform surgeries

at MACC to offer low cost spay neutering for the community from our veterinary area. This will be a one year trial period, but the goal is for MN SNAP to begin operating out of MACC's shelter Tuesday through Friday beginning February 2012. MACC and MN SNAP co-wrote a grant to the PetSmart Charities Foundation earlier in 2011 and were granted \$67,500 grant to do low-cost spay/neuter surgeries for owned animals in Ward 5. Kim reported that an important goal for being at MACC would be to target the pets in this area of North Minneapolis. Currently, MN SNAP's waiting list is four months.

Cathy mentioned that targeted advertising in North Minneapolis would be important, and to think about contacting a radio DJ from KMOJ, for instance. The group talked briefly about different ways to reach out to folks in North Minneapolis, including distributing flyers door-to-door, working with the Park and Rec staff, beauty salons, community organization. Kim mentioned that they are planning to partner with ARLP and Pet Project Rescue.

#### **4. *Pet Licensing***

- a. *MACC Budget* – On December 14, the Minneapolis City Council will set the city's 2012 budget. Presently, there is a \$1.6 million proposed cut to Regulatory Services, within which MACC is housed. To make things more interesting, Regulatory Services has a new director (Greg Stubbs) who will start his new position later this week on Wednesday December 7. Mr. Stubbs' first task will be to propose a budget for the council's approval in one week.

The current budget proposal includes two position cuts to MACC:

- i. The Minneapolis Police Sergeant who is tasked to Animal Care & Control. In the past two years, we have gained a far greater ability to charge felony cases and charge cases of animal cruelty based on having this MPD Sergeant at MACC.
- ii. Front office staff person (currently vacant). Because this position has not been able to be filled, we have reduced the hours that MACC is open to the public by closing on Mondays and opening at 3pm Tuesday to Friday instead of at 2pm on these days.

A total of 90 positions are proposed to be cut across the city (40 of which are currently staffed versus vacant positions).

**By coincidence, a public hearing will be held at 1pm on Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> to set the 2012 pet license fees.** Last year, the city council asked MACC to explore different rate options (lowering pet license fees). MACC staff spent considerable time

talking with other jurisdictions about their pet licensing programs and analyzing the impact of a \$5 and \$10 cut to pet licensing tags would be on our overall program. Below is a simple worksheet of the impact of these changes:

**2011 Pet Licenses Worksheet**

**Data available through November 2011**

<u># of Pet Licensed</u>	<u>Current Fee S/N Pet \$30</u>	<u>\$5 Reduction in License Fee \$25</u>	<u>\$10 Reduction in License Fee \$20</u>
14,000	\$420,000	\$350,000	\$280,000
<u>10% increase</u> 1400			
15,400	\$462,000	\$385,000	\$308,000
<u>20% increase</u> 2800			
16,800	\$504,000	\$420,000	\$336,000
<u>30% increase</u> 4200			
18,200	\$546,000	\$455,000	\$364,000
20% of Mpls pets 48000	\$1,440,000	\$1,200,000	\$960,000
240,000			

As the table reflects, a \$5 fee reduction means that MACC must license 2,800 more pets in 2012 to maintain the same \$420,000 revenue stream we currently have in 2011 licensing 14,000 pets.

The suggested pet licensing proposal that MACC staff will present on December 14<sup>th</sup> will include the following:

1. Creation of a low-income pet license discount (similar to the senior discount) which is a \$15 discount per pet (up to three pets)
2. Elimination of the sibling pet license tag
3. Reduction in the pet license fee for spayed/neutered pets (from \$30/pet to \$25/pet)

4. The Lifetime license and the 3-year license will not be modified, and the fees for non-sterilized pets will not be modified
- b. **“I Love My Pet” Rewards Program** - MACC will roll out a new concept with regard to pet licensing on January 1, 2012. Every pet owner who licenses in 2012 will receive a reward card that looks like a credit card (as shown below). Jeanette is meeting with Minneapolis businesses to ask that businesses accept the card and offer special discounts to pet owners. Pet owners receive the card free of charge. Businesses offer discounts to customers who present the card; there is no charge for them to participate in the program. In the end, more dogs and cats benefit because they are licensed and a licensed pet is three times more likely to return home compared to an un-licensed pet. Win-Win!



Jeanette met with the Community Building & Revenue Enhancement subcommittee last month and the three members forwarded names of ten businesses (each) they thought would be receptive to this offer.

**Jeanette asked the full board to do the same and email the name and contact information of ten pet-friendly businesses in Minneapolis that might be interested in participating.**

Cathy suggested contacting Sidewalk Dogs (Ali Jarvis) for a list of dog-friendly businesses.

## 5. **MACC Updates**

- a. Resignation – Chris Asher submitted her resignation December 1<sup>st</sup>. She has a new job and cannot make the meetings. MACC will move forward to replace her position by the March meeting.

- b. Back-to-School Cat Adoption Promotion – MACC’s fall promotion received national attention by the ASPCA recently; they selected our design as their “best of” in 2011. Photography was donated by Bruce Silcox Photography and the graphic design was donated by Keisha Bigelow, a current MACC volunteer. The text was created by Jeanette.
- c. “I’m in the Dog House – As a recap, the October 22<sup>nd</sup> event was quite successful. We raised \$14,400 at the event, which allowed us to qualify for the \$10,000 from the Pohlad Family Foundation. Overall, we now have \$24,400 for use for animal care and/or responsible pet ownership.
- d. Donor Appeal letter – In early November, MACC mailed our first donor appeal letter and received \$5,215 from 127 donors. Again, these donations will be used for animal care and/or responsible pet ownership.
- e. Facebook page – Friends of Minneapolis Animal Care & Control has grown since we launched it in late August 2011. We now have 789 Likes, with 324 folks sharing posts.
- f. Volunteers – we’re up to 66 folks walking the dogs and cuddling the cats.

Jeanette adjourned the meeting shortly before 4pm and thanked everyone for their hard work.

**Upcoming Meetings:**

March 5, 2012

June 4, 2012

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