



Animal Care & Control
Community Advisory Board
March 5, 2012

MINUTES

Attendees: Nancy Driver, Florence Brammer, Maureen Haggerty, Mike O'Dell, Shannon McKenzie, Tracy Schubert (by telephone), Anne Hendrickson, Dan Niziolek and Jeanette Wiedemeier Bower

Excused: Dr. Kim Culbertson, Katie Grillaert, Anne Johnson

Jeanette called the meeting to order at 2:05pm, and thanked the group for coming. She introduced and welcomed Mike O'Dell (Lucky Dog Pet Care) and asked the group to do a roundtable introduction.

1. **Approval of the Minutes** – The group voted to approve the December minutes as printed.
2. **Committee Reports**
 - a. **Community Building & Revenue Enhancement Committee** – Florence, Kim, and Tracy

Florence reported that the committee recommends the following:

- I Love My Pet Rewards Program – the committee members forwarded Jeanette lists of potential businesses to participate in the I Love My Pet Rewards Program, and recommended that Jeanette follow up with these pet-friendly businesses. (NOTE: We have approached several of the businesses, but others have not been contacted due to time-constraints)
- Animal Rescue Groups – The committee also recommends sending pet licensing information to each of the animal rescue groups that pull animals from MACC. Florence offered to assist with the administrative part of the project.
- Community Events / Park Board – The committee recommends staffing the MACC tent at various community events, and approaching the Park

Board to affix a permanent wooden information box at the dog parks to educate the public about pet licensing.

- Jeanette reported that she recently developed a spring/summer/fall calendar of events for MACC to attend. The committee members offered to participate in these events, and Jeanette will forward the tentative calendar to the entire board in hopes that others might want to “staff” the table and talk to the public about the importance of pet licensing.

Anne H. also suggested having MACC participate in the PRIDE events this coming summer (June 23/24). Anne H. will provide Jeanette additional details, as Downtown Dogs is helping to coordinate the pet events in participate with the PRIDE committee.

There was some discussion about the fear that the public may have when they see the Animal Care & Control van at a dog park...they may run because their pet is not licensed. Jeanette mentioned that MACC has already thought of this and will create “Amnesty” signage so the public will know that they will not be ticketed at the event; and that we are just providing information.

The goal is to license pets on the spot! If we simply give them a brochure, they likely won’t follow through. But, if we have license tags and can give them the park permit and the pet license, we can provide better customer service.

- Banner – The committee recommends purchasing a banner as a display outside the Animal Shelter. There is a lot of traffic off I-94 and we can let the public know about adoptable pets, etc.
 - Jeanette reported that she received permission from Regulatory Services to purchase the banner.
 - The task at hand is for the committee to determine the message and suggest language for the banner. We can work collaboratively to get bids and determine the text of the banner. It would be fabulous to have the banner by the June meeting.

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

- Dog Reward Program – Anne H. and the committee want to create a “dog reward” initiative to encourage good behavior for dogs in the kennels. She distributed laminated signage that Downtown Dogs uses to encourage dogs to come to the front of the kennel, to behave calmly, etc.

In essence, containers of small kibble hang on the kennel doors. Signage asks anyone who passes the kennel to toss in a small treat if the dog is calm, sitting, or displaying other “good” behaviors, and to ignore poor doggie behavior. Good behaviors mean that dogs are more likely to be adopted. The initiative is easy to roll-out, and is a low resource program.

- Anne H. is going to forward Jeanette an electronic version of the signage, and a link to the type of hardware that attach the bowls to the kennels (we want it high enough so that children cannot easily reach the food)
- Posters – Anne H. donated four dog behavior posters to MACC at the end of 2011. Jeanette asked a volunteer to laminate the posters and they are now hanging in the MACC Volunteer Room.
- Training for MACC Volunteers – Nancy reported that the committee met last month at MACC with Jeanette and discussed training for MACC Volunteers, and talked a great deal about the new MACC program for Bully Breed Volunteers. The full board had a healthy conversation about the roll-out of the new program, and had many questions about developing training for ALL dog walking volunteers – not only for those working with the pit bulls in the Kennel Holding area of the animal shelter.

Nancy reported that she was part of the February 23rd kick-off training for the Bully Breed Brigade by providing an introduction on clicker training to the group. Most of the current MACC volunteers already had some level of experience with clicker training.

Jeanette mentioned that she would like to expand the training for MACC volunteers to include in-service trainings – on-going trainings on topics such as: reading dog emotions, body language, bite prevention, and many other topics.

Jeanette also explained that we are using an assessment check-list with the Bully Breed Volunteers to help the volunteers better assess when to open the doors to the kennels – to be safe and not get injured or bitten. Maureen cautioned that MACC should not have breed-specific training for volunteers simply working with the pit bulls and other bully breeds.

Dan agreed, and stated that the dogs in KH receive less social interaction and currently do not receive the socialization that the dogs in KS and KL receive. MACC is going to take every precaution to make certain that our staff and volunteers are safe, and the assessment is designed to do that. We do not want to perpetuate the myth that pit bulls are bad dogs or are somehow in need of specialized handling. We simply want our volunteers to be safe. Jeanette added that the assessment is intended to be used

first with the KH dogs, but in time staff will roll out the same tool for use in other kennels at the animal shelter (i.e., all dogs will be treated similarly).

The group had a lengthy conversation about the appropriate collar to use with the dogs in the Bully Breed Brigade. Gentle Leaders, pinch collars, and others. A passionate conversation ensued. Nancy suggested looking at other animal shelters to determine best practices. Maureen and Anne H. agreed that we need to look at dog behavior as opposed to making assumptions based on where the dog came from, the breed, etc. Shannon reminded the group that the dogs that come to MACC are different than the dogs out in the community, those whose pet owners are boarding at doggie daycare or paying for training. These dogs haven't lived as "loved" pets previously. Mike and Maureen agreed that we should not "profile" pit bulls.

While there was a lot of emotion in the room, Anne H. reminded the group that just a few years ago we would not have had this type of discussion; and that she was encouraged that we were even having the conversation.

c. Responsible Pet Ownership – Maureen and Anne J.

Maureen reported that the committee did not have a specific to-do list for the meeting. However, they have at least two different types of articles they want added to the MACC website – one related to selecting the right pet to adopt, and the second related to a pet owner being at their 'whit's end' with their pet's behavior...and wanting to surrender their pets.

At the last subcommittee meeting, Anne J. passed out several AHS articles related to both subjects.

- o Jeanette suggested that an e-version of the articles would be easier for her to use when updating MACC's website – we could simply link to the articles.

New Business

- 3. Partnership with MN SNAP** – Dan reported that MACC has moved forward with a contract with Minnesota Spay Neuter Assistance Program (MNSNAP) to do spay/neuter surgeries inside the MACC facility (Tuesday to Friday). Last week at World Spay Day (February 28, 2012) MNSNAP completed 25 male cat surgeries in the MACC vet area. MNSNAP will begin work as soon as the renovations to the physical building are completed. MACC and MNSNAP co-wrote a grant funded by PetSmart Charities to complete 1,350 spay/neuter surgeries over the next 2 years in Ward 5 (an area of North Minneapolis that contributes 21 percent of MACC's total animal intake). We believe this will be a strong partnership

aimed at decreasing unwanted pets in the City of Minneapolis – a good thing for our community! And at least two of MACC’s animals will be altered every week!

4. MACC Updates

- a. **Staffing** – Dan reported that MACC has not been at full strength for the last 18 months and that the lack of staffing has created great stress for our entire staff. Fortunately, we were given permission to hire two new Animal Care & Control officers in the last month – those positions vacated during summer/fall 2011. The two new officers are currently in St. Louis, MO taking a week-long training at the National Animal Control Association conference. We expect these folks to be trained and “road ready” by May 20th when our summer busy season begins. Also, we have asked for four interns for the summer 2012 – two high school interns, and two college interns (from university vet tech programs). These individuals help greatly with cleaning and feeding the animals, and the college interns administer animal vaccinations; this allows our officers to spend more time on the road serving and protecting the public.

In addition, we have a new Director of Regulatory Services. Director Gregory Stubbs started late in 2011 and he sees a great need to increase staffing at the animal shelter. The Police Sergeant position that was cut during the recent budget cycle will be filled with funding from the Police Department (not MACC’s budget). This position starts in May and has been instrumental in allowing MACC to charge more abuse and cruelty cases. We also expect to fill the open Public Information position (front desk/customer service staff position) with what we call “roll over dollars” from the unspent overall 2011 city budget. We will learn if we received the funding by the end of March.

Finally, Dan also expressed optimism that Director Stubbs will reallocate dollars within the overall Regulatory Services budget to add up to two additional staff members at MACC. If this happens, we will go back to our regular hours serving the public – open 6 days each week (instead of 5) and open Monday to Friday, 2:00pm to 7pm (instead of opening at 3pm), and Saturdays 11:30am to 3:30pm.

- a. **Dr. Terri Derr** – We are excited to announce that Dr. Terri Derr has joined our contract vet staff. She will be working Monday to Friday 9am to noon. In the past, MACC has had up to three contract vets at the animal shelter that would make rounds for every animal at MACC, administer vaccinations, prescribe medicine, etc. Our vets

traditionally rotate days so that we had coverage every day of the week. We have negotiated with Dr. Derr to be at MACC Monday to Friday for several hours, and in addition to her regular contract vet duties, she will assist MACC with training for staff/volunteers, offer suggestions for animal care and enrichment, animal handling, cleaning protocols, and much more. Our other contract vets will provide services on the weekend. Dr. Terri worked at MACC many years ago and has a great deal of expertise at other shelters. We are thrilled that she is joining our staff.

- b. **Pet Licensing** -- Jeanette reported that we are about three weeks behind in pet licensing due to a glitch working with a 3rd party company that hosts our online licensing platform. However, the I Love My Pet Rewards Card campaign has been received positively since its kick-off in January. Businesses and pet owners have expressed excitement and interest in the new initiative. To date, we have distributed 5,000 of the 20,000 cards to pet owners.

In addition, we now have nine vet clinics and/or pet stores selling pet license tags on behalf of the City of Minneapolis (or that have signed contracts and will soon be selling tags). One vet clinic sold 40 tags their first month! Jeanette plans to approach each of the remaining 22 vet clinics in Minneapolis. The businesses that have partnered with MACC to sell licenses include:

Westgate Pet Clinic	Minneapolis Veterinary Hospital
Minnehaha Animal Hospital	Lake Harriet Veterinary
Chuck & Don's NE Mpls	Chuck & Don's Calhoun
Pet Doctors	Camden – contract signed
Kenwood – contract signed	

- o If any board member has a connection with other veterinary clinics in Minneapolis, please reach out to Jeanette

Mike made a great suggestion to announce MACC to new residents. Several of the board members mentioned looking into the Post Office's "Change of Address" packets that include coupons to local businesses.

Finally, later this spring-into-summer Jeanette hopes to use the Volunteer Paw Patrol to canvass neighborhoods in Minneapolis as a way of letting residents know of the requirement to license their pets. Other jurisdictions have had success with leaving flyers at properties that have any indication that a pet lives in the home/apartment. Although we have lost our graphic designer for the City of Minneapolis, we may look into asking a volunteer who is

a graphic designer and who helped significantly with the Dog House event last fall.

5. Other Business

- a. Phone Application – Shannon suggested MACC should look into getting a MACC phone app. Jeanette mentioned that the city’s Communication Department has MACC included in FourSquare, such that pet owners can “check-in” at MACC or the other pet clinics that license pets on behalf of the city and receive a tip when they check-in.
- b. Dangerous Dog Paperwork – Maureen continues to hear from her clients that the dangerous dog packet process is confusing (her clients are trying to get clarification from her trainers, the pet owner doesn’t fully understand the process, the six-month time frame is confusing, etc.). Dan suggested serving Dangerous Dog paperwork to an employee at Canine Coach, and go through the entire process of explaining the paperwork. By doing this, MACC will receive immediate feedback and the staff will have a better understanding of the process.

Dan thanked the group for their hard work on the board. It is exciting to him that the board is working hard and making such progress on important topics.

Jeanette adjourned the meeting at 3:51pm and thanked everyone for coming.

Upcoming Meetings:

June 11, 2012
September 10, 2012
December 3, 2012

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