

LEWISVILLE ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

995 E. Valley Ridge Dr
Lewisville, TX 75057

October 26, 2021
6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

Members Present: Denice Crafton, Citizen at Large
Deanna Perkins, Co-Chairperson Citizen at Large
Britton Chapman, Citizen at Large
Ronni Cade, Council Representative
Amanda Earl, Chairperson, Animal Services Supervisor, Staff Representative
Beverly Freed, Animal Welfare Organization Representative

Members Absent: Dr. Walter Legg, DVM, Veterinarian Representative

City Staff Present: Ariel Davis, Shelter Clerk
Danni Alcantara, Animal Services Field Supervisor
Jackie Davis, Code and Animal Services Manager

Item #1: Amanda Earl announces a quorum is present and calls the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

Item #2: Amanda Earl inquires if the previous minutes need to be adjusted. Amanda Earl moves to approve, Ronni Cade moves to approve. Amanda Earl requests Deanna Perkins to sign the previous minutes. Amanda Earl distributes banquet gifts to the members as the banquet was canceled due to Covid. Amanda Earl introduces Ronni Cade, the staff members present, and committee meeting members provide introductions to Ronni Cade.

Item #3: During shelter updates, Amanda Earl announces the annexation of Castle Hills will happen at midnight on November 15, 2021. In anticipation of the annexation, there were several staff position changes. Two of the non-officer positions were reclassified to Animal Services Officers (ASO) and an Animal Care Specialist position was added. The purpose of these changes is to cross train staff to better care for the shelter and the community, to enhance the shelter staff experience, and to hopefully develop a career ladder in the future, which will in turn add to staff retention and satisfaction.

The previous part time Veterinary Technician position could not be filled due to lack of qualified candidates, so the position was eliminated and those job responsibilities were added to the ASO job responsibilities. This makes the staff more interchangeable when there are absences.

Both of the part time shelter attendants have applied for the open full time positions and are

currently in background checks. Hopefully, the process will go smoothly and conditional job offers are forthcoming. There is a considerable amount of staff training happening right now and the shelter's capacity is 30% higher this year than it has been in past years, so the volunteer program continues to be on hold.

This past fiscal year, the shelter has impounded close to 2000 dogs and cats and close to 300 exotic animals, and service requests have increased compared to last year. More than 200 animals have been adopted through adoption specials. There has been an increase in the number of adoption special request to help combat the increased capacity and to compete with other shelters who are offering adoptions specials as well. Amanda Earl and Danni Alcantara are part of the DFW Shelter Managers groups and regularly work with other shelters to come up with ideas to help find homes for animals. Recently, they tried a shelter exchange program to trade long-term shelter residents in hopes that a change of scenery and different adopter demographics will help those animals find homes. Lewisville Animal Services had to euthanize due to lack of space for the first time in five years recently, as have other shelters in the area, so shelter professionals are doing their best to be more creative.

Ronni Cade inquired about the euthanasia criteria and Amanda Earl iterated that there is no specific criteria, but as long as the animal is healthy, behaviorally, mentally, and medically, the animal remains available for adoption. There is not time limit. Animals are euthanized when the shelter does not have the resources, including staff expertise, time, and financial resources, to care for the animal, mentally, behaviorally, or medically. The shelter recognizes the Five Freedoms – freedom from hunger, thirst, fear, illness, and the ability to practice normal behaviors. Animals must be community safe or it will not be made available for adoption. The process is the same for dogs and cats, but there has not been much issue with space for cats so far. The main issue is with large breed dogs since many of the households in Lewisville are rental or multi-family homes with breed and size restrictions.

Amanda Earl also discussed recent transfers from Mesquite Animal Services and owner surrenders. Mesquite impounded 111 small breed dogs from one household and Lewisville took 11 of those. The following week, 27 dogs were surrendered from one overwhelmed caregiver and five from another. Thankfully, the shelter's placement partners stepped up and almost all of the dogs were transferred to other organizations.

Amanda Earl then discussed her efforts in getting benchmark information from other shelters for a Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) program for Lewisville. She would like to present a workshop for council to discuss the program and request one or two small pilot programs within the City of Lewisville. The committee discusses the issues surrounding TNR and community buy-in and participation. Amanda Earl opens the floor for questions after finishing the shelter updates. There are no questions so Amanda Earl moves on to public comments.

Item #4: Amanda Earl opens the floor to the public and reminds the public that no action can be taken but any questions can be answered and instructs each public member to state their name and address. Cleave Joiner of 331 N Charles St takes the floor and states that he is all in for

anything pertaining to feral cats and states that he understands the limitations. Cleave Joiner shares his personal story to help indicate his involvement. He wants to educate people, explain that the cats should have an opportunity have a life, and minimize the growth that causes animal death in the community and euthanasia at the shelter. Cleave Joiner believes the cats need a chance and expresses they need to minimize disease from overpopulation much like the success he has had in his neighborhood. Cleave Joiner also states that the wildlife in the neighborhood also gets along well and that it is manageable. He would like the opportunity to be involved and to be an advocate for the city in whatever capacity he can and offers to help residents personally trap animals. Cleave Joiner states minimizing population is the #1 goal as it offers a better chance for survival and provides nuisance abatement.

Cleave Joiner opens the floor for Gillian Goldthorpe of 331 N Charles St. Gillian Goldthorpe who states that she has just met Claudia, the other resident present for public comment, and explains that Claudia is passionate about TNR. Gillian Goldthorpe states that she has TNR-ed numerous cats and she has been speaking with a lot of people who do not know what a feral cat is or what feral means. She has learned along the way how to trap and what works better through trial and error. Gillian Goldthorpe states a lot of people have discovered that they help with TNR and they provide presentations, in addition, she is looking into becoming a non-profit to obtain funds for TNR. She knows of at least 50 people who are willing to help approach council with their support for TNR. Gillian Goldthorpe also inquires if she would be able to take cats that have been impounded and TNR them herself or if she could assist with complaints at a specific block number to avoid the animal coming to the shelter altogether. Gillian Goldthorpe explains that at 6 months a cat can have a litter and can have at least 8 kittens and the loss of life is a shame. She goes on to explain she knows of many areas already that have out of control feral populations and states that she is just a one man show and she is trying to get the word out.

Gillian Goldthorpe concludes her comments and Claudia King of 111 N Hatcher takes the floor. Claudia King states that she is new to Lewisville and came from Red Oak in Denton County. Claudia King states she knows animal control officers in almost every city and is working towards establishing a network in Lewisville. She states that she is just an individual that has a huge heart for animals and that she's taken many orphaned kittens. Claudia King states that she wants to help the shelter. Claudia King is driven to help animals and has offered to help any way she can.

Gillian Goldthorpe inquires if it would be helpful to go to council with a TNR presentation. Amanda Earl states Gillian Goldthorpe can do as she pleases as a Lewisville resident but requests that Gillian Goldthorpe allow her the opportunity to do a workshop and offers for Ronni Cade to better explain what would be best. Ronni Cade states that Amanda Earl needs to do a workshop and that when the item is put on the agenda for action, that would be the best time for the public to discuss the item. Gillian Goldthorpe inquires if they will be informed of when the item will be brought for action and inquires about the process. Jackie Davis states he will let her know when and Amanda Earl adds that it will be on the agenda, while Jackie Davis states it will

be a few months or longer. Gillian Goldthorpe reiterates that she is trying to start a non-profit group for TNR, as each cat costs roughly \$30 out of pocket, so they could obtain funds and educate the public at the same time. Amanda Earl states that there is nothing in the city ordinance that prohibits TNR but there is an ambiguous ordinance about feeding strays. Claudia King states that the people feeding cats, in essence, are the owners so they should get them sterilized but if they need help, that is what they are there for. Amanda Earl states the shelter can certainly pass on their information to people experiencing problems with feral cats but states that the cats that impounded at the shelter cannot be released to them. Claudia King and Gillian Goldthorpe verify that the feral cats cannot be released to them and inquire if they cannot adopt them. Amanda Earl explains that feral cats cannot be made available for adoption. Gillian Goldthorpe requests clarification about helping in problem areas and Amanda Earl reiterates that she can pass their information on to the complainants, leaving it up to the complainant to make contact. Amanda Earl adds that this is why she wants to do this the right way. Britton Chapman inquires that the non-profit would relieve the liability and Claudia King responds that she assumes that it would have to go through the legal department for a partnership, etc. Amanda Earl expresses that what you do privately is fine but impounded issues would be problematic. Claudia King inquires if we inform the residents trapping ferals that they are euthanized and Amanda Earl states the staff are very transparent about operations. Gillian Goldthorpe inquires if she is allowed to provide their rescue information once it becomes non-profit and Jackie Davis confirms. Claudia King states that Amanda Earl has offered to provide their information already. Amanda Earl confirms that we are happy to provide their information. Ronni Cade interjects about an issue with a feral kitten with an injured paw that they were unable to catch. Amanda Earl explains that if the animal is injured the shelter will try to catch them and Claudia King questions if it would be euthanized and Amanda Earl states that if it is feral it would be. Ronni Cade explains that it was a kitten that was young enough to be socialized. Members discuss the difficulty catching the kitten and social media options for assisting with it. Cleave Joiner states that when something goes to workshop that it doesn't necessarily make it to the agenda and states he will be talking to each member individually and Jackie Davis states that is within his rights. Members discuss how to approach council and other city TNR programs. Gillian Goldthorpe thanks Amanda Earl for everything. Amanda Earl inquires if there are any other public comments and moves to set the next meeting date.

Item #5: Amanda Earl suggests January 2022 for the next meeting and mentions the holiday MLK Day on the 17th. Amanda Earl recommends the 25th and Denise Crafton approves. Cleave Joiner inquires if there is a tentative date for the workshop and Amanda Earl responds that she is still waiting on other shelter information. Jackie Davis states that once we receive it they will sit down as a group to set up, Cleave Joiner offers to assist, and Jackie Davis states he will take the help and keep Cleave Joiner updated. Amanda Earl explains it will not happen overnight and there is a brief discussion among the public and members about the program. Ronni Cade states that she believes the council will give the pilot program a chance.

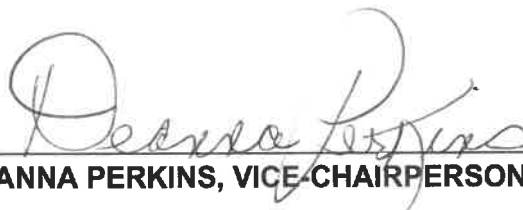
Item #6: Amanda Earl inquires if everything is concluded and moves to adjourn the meeting. Ronni Cade moves to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Ariel Davis, Animal Services Shelter Clerk

**THESE MINUTES ARE APPROVED BY THE CITY OF
LEWISVILLE ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY
COMMITTEE**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Amanda Earl", written above a horizontal line.

AMANDA EARL, CHAIRPERSON

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Deanna Perkins", written above a horizontal line.

DEANNA PERKINS, VICE-CHAIRPERSON