

# Hampton Animal Control Advisory Committee

## -Lawson Conference Room-

### Meeting Minutes – February 7, 2022

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Voting Members Present: John “Andy” Anderson, Sharon Bilyj, Pamela Christiansen, Elizabeth Peabody

Ex-Officio Members Present: Steven Bond, Angie Taylor

Staff Present: Annette Oakley (City Manager’s Office), Olivia Wiggins (City Attorney’s Office)

Guest Present: Melanie Paul, Debbie North

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#### **Call to Order & Welcome**

Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

#### **Election of Officers**

Olivia Wiggins stated January is the Organizational Meeting where the committee elects officers and since the January meeting was rescheduled, the committee would vote on a slate of officers at this meeting.

**ACTION:** Sharon Bilyj made a motion to nominate Andy Anderson as Chair and Elizabeth Peabody seconded. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

**ACTION:** Pamela Christiansen made a motion to nominate Sharon Bilyj as Vice Chairman, and Andy Anderson seconded. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

**ACTION:** Elizabeth Peabody made a motion to nominate Victoria Wineland as Secretary, and Sharon Bilyj seconded. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

#### **Review Agenda & Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Anderson stated the draft minutes from the November 18, 2021 meeting were distributed for review in advance of the meeting and asked if there were any questions. There being none, he called for a motion to approve.

**ACTION:** Pamela Christiansen made a motion to approve the minutes as written and Elizabeth Peabody seconded. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

#### **City Manager’s Report**

Steven Bond stated the City is moving into Budget season for FY2023 and the City Manager will give her proposal on May 4, 2022 at the City Council meeting. Staff is currently building the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) plan for the next five years, and working on allocation of funds for the American Recovery Plan (ARPA) that the City received.

## **Animal Control Report**

Angie Taylor reported on staffing and stated they currently have six officers; one is in training and one is out ill, so they are down to four. There is one vacancy for an officer position and two over-hire positions, which have been posted and she hopes to fill soon. Ms. Taylor stated she will set up an assembly date and will give a presentation to let officers know the 'ends and outs' of H.A.R.T. The Office Specialist position is vacant, which is a WAE position (25 hours per week), and has been posted. Animal Control is working with Hampton Police Division to formalize training. They are also working with Peninsula Regional Animal Shelter (PRAS) and Hampton Fire and Rescue on a program called "Hydrant Heroes" – Looking at bringing adoptable dogs to 'hang out' in the Fire Stations as a stress reliever for firefighters. They may also have citizens come by to look at the animals to possibly adopt. Animal Control's role in the program is to transport the animals, possibly once a week. Chairman Anderson inquired if the Fire Stations can adopt a dog, maybe as a mascot. Ms. Taylor was not sure, they are currently working out the details. Ms. Bilyj mentioned the Fire Station siren is very loud and may be potentially stressful to a dog of hearing and they may want to consider partnering with an organization that specializes in dogs that are deaf. This could also highlight special-needs dogs that could be harder to place. Ms. Taylor liked the idea and stated there is a meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> and she will relay the concern/suggestion.

## **Current Issues/Trends**

No Report

## **Old Business**

### Animal Control Code Amendments:

Ms. Wiggins stated she took three code amendments to City Council in January, which are as follows:

1. Update City Code – to come into compliance with the language of the State code (Passed)
2. Agriculture Animals – which states where you can have agricultural animals, what the requirements are, etc. -- zoning items moved to under the Zoning Division (Passed)
3. Dogs Running at Large – this item was postponed and she is coordinating with the City Attorney's Office on the next steps (Postponed)

### Bylaws:

Ms. Wiggins will resend the red-line bylaws to Mr. Bond for review. Most items the committee can change, but there are a couple items that City Council has to approve. She doesn't foresee any issues on getting approval for the proposed changes.

## **New Business**

### Tethering:

Chairman Anderson inquired about the requirements to put forth a suggestion to City Council regarding people being with their dog on a tether, in their yard. Ms. Wiggins stated right now tethering is unlawful in any circumstance, in any condition and if the committee recommends a change, then as a group would need to decide to bring the proposal to City Council. Ms. Wiggins would need to know what specifically the proposed change is and noted that code amendments are sometimes difficult to pass and take some time. As information, she asked Chair Anderson to please explain his reasons for the proposal. Chairman Anderson stated he lives next to a marsh; has raccoons, squirrels, rabbits, etc. and does not have a fence, so his dog runs off to chase the animals. His dog also plays in the yard and goes out in the night to do his business. He suggested having limited tethering in the owner's presence.

Mr. Bond explained, for the newer members of the committee, when the tethering item went to the City Council previously, the committee had recommended limited tethering. All of the arguments and suggestions were heard by City Council and it did not pass. He does not want to discourage the committee from considering the recommendation, but wanted to give some background. Committee members then gave feedback on Chairman Anderson's suggestion:

- Ms. Peabody feels dogs should not be tethered; does not feel comfortable representing a standpoint of amending the tethering law at this time.
- Ms. Bilyj agreed. She understands making an exception, but it could be a slippery slope and may trigger people to tether. She mentioned a barrier between the owner and the dog, would mean the dog is unattended. She was also concerned about potential injury from a dog being tethered and then chasing wildlife. She does not feel it would be enforceable.
- Ms. Christensen agrees and feels there should not be tethering; there are not enough officers to control/enforce tethering.

#### Name Change:

Chairman Anderson inquired if there had been any discussion to change the committee name now that Animal Control is called Hampton Animal Response Team (HART). Ms. Wiggins mentioned she discussed it briefly with her supervisor. Ms. Taylor mentioned there was no formal resolution to change the name. Ms. Wiggins shared that the code still states the name as Animal Control. Mr. Bond stated if it's the committee's desire to change it and while we are making amendments to the bylaws, it may be a good time to recommend the change. After some discussion, it was suggested and agreed to rename the committee to 'Hampton Animal Response Team Advisory Committee' (HARTAC). Ms. Wiggins stated we need a supermajority for bylaws amendments, and therefore we can put it on the agenda for the next meeting.

#### **Public Comment**

Chairman Anderson read the protocol for public comment (copy of file).

Melanie Paul addressed the committee on the following items:

- In regards Ms. Bilyj suggestion of having deaf dogs at the Fire Stations, she can help with the sign language.
- She mentioned that she made crocheted kitten sweaters, which she will take to the Peninsula Regional Animal Shelter (PRAS). She passed around some of the homemade sweater samples.
- She mentioned a friend caught a cat and brought it to PRAS, and information about the cat was on nextdoor.com. She inquired if she can legally trap a cat, have it spayed/neutered and tip their ear?

Ms. Taylor stated if there is a caretaker in place, someone who is actually caring for the animal and they spay/neuter, tip the ear, and register as a colony, then that is the legal way to do it. Ms. Paul thanked Ms. Taylor and stated she would be sending some follow-up questions. Ms. Christensen asked for clarification; for example, if she trapped a cat, had it spay/neuter and tipped the ear, is it legal in Hampton? Ms. Taylor responded the issue with it is that if a person is not feeding it/caring for it and just letting it go, then its considered abandonment. Chairman Anderson thanked Ms. Paul.

#### **Other Business**

No Report

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Thursday, March 17, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chairman Anderson adjourned the meeting.