

July 23, 2007

Re-cap from the July 18, 2007 Animal Control Board Public Meeting.

Submitted by Lisa Posada-Griffin, e-mail grieffnl@ci.billings.mt.us office phone number 657-8451.

In attendance: Leadership Team Members: Fred McCracken, Sarah Grau, Amy Lamm, Catherine Schaeffer, and John Fleming. Guests: Joy Stevens, Diana Kay Backmann, Megan McBride, and Sue Timmons.

Leadership Team meeting 6-7pm.

Mission Statement:

The Animal Care Leadership Team exists to provide guidance and recommendations to the greater community including governmental and non-governmental agencies, and to enhance the quality of life for all animals in Yellowstone County and beyond.

The topic of discussion asked the questions, “Where do we go from here?”

We all agreed the concept of the Co-op is still a good one. We are not clear on how to actually move the idea into action. In addition, attendance is beginning to fade and we are fearful the group will cease if we do not take some kind of action and soon.

Creating a MOU is still of great importance yet there is some difficulty in designing a generic MOU that will work for a variety of organizations with a vast array of services to offer. The suggestion was made to focus on specific services/organizations first and write the MOU second.

Sarah Grau has been working on developing the Lost Pet web-site www.yvlostpets.com . The group discussed how this service could and should be expanded as a part of the Animal Care Co-op. Sarah could possibly contract with the City to keep the site current. We discussed how a MOU might be developed for Sarah and other rescue groups to also access the site to look for and include lost/found animals. Sarah will contact the Gazette to determine if the site could be advertised for free as a service to the community. Joy Stevens suggested a computer terminal be added to the lobby of the animal shelter for community members to use in searching for lost animals. A section could also be added to include animals available for adoption.

The group discussed the event hosted by Cat County radio station where animals were micro chipped on site. This one day event was organized by Kathy Kaufman and other animals groups. The Animal Co-op was not invited to participate, but we can learn from their idea and continue to strive for collaboration in the future.

The group agreed to look into the possibility of offering a one day spay/neuter clinic at the City of Billings Animal Shelter. More on this at the next meeting.

The Animal Control Board meeting was called to order by Kevin Walsh at 7:15pm.

In attendance: Kevin Walsh, Mary Alice Jacksha, Dave Klein, Steve Eliason, Diana Kay Backmann, Kim Marchuick, Sonya Whiteley DVM, Megan McBride, Amy Lamm DVM, Don Woerner DVM, Bobbie Woerner, Sarah Grau, Joy Stevens, Lisa Posada-Griffin, Catherine Schaeffer, Fred McCracken, John Fleming, and Sue Timmons.

Fred McCracken shared that the city funding for the half time employee became available on July 1, but the position has not be filled at this time. The County was not able to offer funds for an additional half time person. The original plan was pool the two half times into one full time position for an Animal Shelter staff person. The night drop off has not been re-opened. It is not known at this time when that service will be available. An alternative plan is being developed at this time.

John Fleming from the County stated the Sheriff was out of town but had indicated there still may be an opportunity to work together. No additional information was available at this time.

Lisa Posada-Griffin explained to the audience the conversation that had taken place at the Leadership Team meeting prior to the ACB meeting. She explained the idea of linking the Lost Pet web-site to the City site and various others. In addition, she talked about the need for a spay/neuter clinic to be offered at a low cost to the public. A sub-committee made up of Lisa, Sarah, Fred, Amy, and Joy will work on developing a proposal that will provide a low cost S/N possible hosted by the Animal Shelter on a one time basis.

Don Woerner DVM gave a presentation on *Microchips in Animals*. He first explained how the chips work and why they are so important when an animal gets lost. There are three primary companies that offer chips and registration; Avid, Home Again, and 24 Hour Pet Watch. In addition to having a pet fitted with a micro chip, it is also necessary to register the information with one of the above stated company in order to match the number on the chip with the actual owner. This information also needs to be updated when the contact information changes or the pet has a new owner. Dr. Woerner illustrated how the micro chips can be read on a small dog named Tiff. When the reader was passed over Tiff's shoulder area her chip number appeared on the scanner. Dr. Woerner explained that not all readers have the capability of reading all brands of chips. Also, some readers are more temperamental than others so even though an animal may have a chip it is possible to miss it. Chips also can move once they are placed so it's a good idea to run the scanner over the entire body of the animal when checking for a chip.

Dave Klein from the Animal Shelter gave a presentation on *Summer Safety Tips for Animals*. Dave began his talk by stating there were 6 calls today alone on animals left in hot cars. There have been 88 similar calls from January –July of this year. There have been 4 Cruelty to animals (Montana Code Annotated 45-8-211) citations this year and 96 citations issued between May and September 2006.

Dave stated that any amount of time in a hot car is too long for an animal but citations are not issued until the internal temperature of the vehicle reaches 105 degrees OR the animal appears to be in distress regardless of the temperature.

When animals are over heated they need to be cooled down by providing drinking water, spraying them down, and/or moving to shade. Owner should also be aware not to over exercise animals in hot weather. The animal will keep going and do not have the ability to know when to stop.

When leaving an animal outside all day keep in mind that the sun moves. Even if the animal is in the shade in the morning, they may not be sheltered all day. Leaving the hose dripping in the water dish will assure they have fresh water throughout the day.

Dave also explained that Yellowstone County is under rabies quarantine until September 9, 2007. Animals are not allowed to be adopted until they have had rabies shot for at least 10 days and are showing no symptoms of illness.

A question about the volunteer program at the shelter was raised by an audience member. Fred explained the volunteer program is still operating in a very small capacity but the program is still being redesigned. Sue Timmons, volunteer coordinator, explained she is only interested in placing the “right person” in a position and not simply filling the shelter with volunteers. She is not willing to waver from her beliefs on this topic.

Dates have not been set for the next Leadership Team meeting or Animal Control Board meeting.

The Animal Control Board meeting adjourned at 8:39pm.