

MEETING NOTES: Franklin County Department of Animal Control Community Advisory Committee June 23, 2020, Held via Zoom Platform at 6:00 pm

Building Update-Kaye Dickson, Director

- The shelter is an essential business and remained open during quarantine. Public hours have been reduced and shelter is closed Wednesday and Friday for adoptions/fosters but open for redemption only from 3pm until 7pm. Adoptions/fosters are by appointment only. Appointments are not required for redemption. (When asked, the shelter reported that most people are keeping scheduled appointments.) Appointment scheduling will remain in effect for the foreseeable future. Due to County quarantine protocols, all staff members and volunteers must wear face masks while in the building.
- Holiday sleepover program was extended at pandemic onset. This program has been very successful and will continue.
- Dog Wardens have resumed responding to all calls and stray dogs are now being accepted.
- All Community Room events have been cancelled.
- The reduction of dogs in the shelter has provided the kennel staff flexibility in their schedules allowing them to interact with dogs by taking them on walks, spending quality time with the dogs and taking them into play areas. Morale boosts have been noted.
- The shelter is looking at ways to safely offer the monthly Mingle with Our Mutts adoption event.
- All staff members and volunteers have completed Fear Free training. The shelter is working to become certified as a Fear Free Shelter.

Shelter Statistics- Andrew Kohn, Communications/PR

- Overall, the shelter had a 93% live release rate and a 42% owner return rate.
- When asked if extended the deadline to purchase dog licenses had an impact, the response was not really.

Human Resources- April Ricciardo, Assistant Director

- Staffing for vacant positions had been on hold but has been re-opened for hiring. Interviews are occurring via Zoom to fill the following positions:
- 1 Animal Care Manager-Will over see new team responsible for Behaviorist, Foster Coordinator, Rescue Coordinator, Redemption Clerk and Adoption Counselors.
- 1 Kennel Attendant Foreman
- 2 Kennel Attendants
- 1 Deputy Dog Warden
- The staff was notified via email of a new uniform policy, which will begin in July. Staff will receive 11 sets of uniforms. The uniforms will not be taken home and will remain in the building. Bins will be available for laundry service provided by the uniform company. Uniforms allow for a professional appearance and proper sanitation of clothing. Different colors/styles will designate different staff teams. There is no cost to staff.
- Staff was flexible in responding to quarantine restrictions and some worked remotely from home. Staff is now transitioning back to shelter. Social distancing rules remain in place causing

some short waits. Hand washing is encouraged, and sanitizing stations are placed throughout the building.

Operations Update- Dwayne Young, Assistant Director

- Complemented the staff for being proactive and making quick adjustments that were necessary due to quarantine. Offered thanks to volunteers who continued to work with the dogs as well as community members who fostered/adopted dogs. With the low number of dogs in the shelter, staff and volunteers were able to spend quality time and be more innovative in providing enrichment for the dogs. The medical team was able to provide medical procedures that require intensive medical care. Anti-anxiety music is currently being played for the dogs.
- OSU Veterinary students are not providing enrichment at the shelter as this course is currently on a pause.

Volunteer Update- Daniel Riquino, Volunteer Manager

- Starting in mid-March, many Volunteer Program activities were put on hold due to COVID-19. This includes orientations, trainings, and community volunteer events.
- Volunteers are required to sign up to go in and walk dogs at the shelter. This will continue for the foreseeable future. While there has been approximately a 50% decrease in volunteerism at the shelter, there has been a more significant drop in Adoption Floor population. Meaning that Volunteers are spending more time at the shelter “per dog.”
- The Volunteer Program is migrating to a new software program called Volgistics. Goal is to officially switch over to that software system and have all volunteers using it in July. Volgistics will allow Volunteers to access a personal portal (from any computer, smartphone, or tablet) where they can sign up to go in and walk dogs, log their hours, view their volunteering history, and more.
- A group of individuals who attended orientation in March have all completed their One-on-One Training. There are currently five new Volunteer Orientations scheduled in July and August. These orientations are currently fully booked.

Public Comments

1.) Laurie Sliger- Wanted to know what the shelter was doing to lower euthanasia rate. Concerned the rescue dogs needing to be out of building ASAP within 72 hours. She stated she has asked this question via social media but has not received a response.

Question: She also asked why puppies are not listed on the shelter web site. Wondered if a “Coming Soon” page could be possible.

LEADERSHIP RESPONSE:

FCDS focuses on individual outcomes of each animal. They do not euthanize for space or time or even for basic medical needs. They do, however, consider the dog’s quality of life such as when a severe life-threatening injury/illness is present or the dog has an extreme medical or behavior issue and the shelter is unequipped to manage or rehabilitate and rehoming is not an option.

A “coming soon” page is not being considered at this time but the shelter is looking at a new software program to streamline dogs available for adoption as they move through the shelter intake process.

The rescue community asked for time frames for dogs on the rescue list to create a sense of urgency within the foster-based rescue community. The shelter is flexible with time frames and re-evaluates dogs incrementally once they are placed on the rescue only list.

2.) Cory Paul- Reported that his adopted, dog “Oatmeal” reported missing from home. While “Oatmeal” was not wearing his tags he was micro-chipped. Mr. Paul indicated the shelter did not view an up-to-date 24 Hour Pet Watch data file and “Oatmeal” was returned by the shelter in error to the previous owner. Mr. Paul indicated the shelter made one attempt to contact the previous owner to rectify. Mr. Paul contacted the previous owner himself and arranged to get “Oatmeal” back.

Question: What are current shelter policies regarding proof of ownership when a dog with a microchip is redeemed at the shelter? Is shelter database synced with up- to-date microchip company database?

LEADERSHIP RESPONSE:

FCDS uses a county dog license or rabies certificate as legal proof of ownership for reuniting lost dogs with owners. If a dog tag and rabies certificate are not found the shelter will use a microchip ID, lost dog reports, vet records and photographic proof of ownership.

3.) “Flamingomojo” Maureen- Frustration with adoption appointment process. Asked in general if appointment process discouraged people looking to adopt a dog as sometimes folks experience a wait to get an appointment. Committee member, Corey Roscoe, reported that almost all shelters are using a scheduling process under quarantine restrictions.

Question: Does the shelter have a wait list available?

LEADERSHIP RESPONSE:

FCDS follows Franklin County policy regarding social distancing and public safety and therefore uses the adoption by appointment process to ensure all visitors, staff and volunteers have a safe environment. A wait list is not manageable or sustainable.

Committee member Corey Roscoe reported the shelter is hosting a Fire Safety Press conference July 1st. July 4th safety for dogs will be discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.

Upcoming Meetings

All public meetings are held at 6:00 PM at FCDS in the Community Room although may be held remotely online via Zoom for the foreseeable future. All meetings are recorded. The next public meetings are scheduled for:

- August 11 – remote via Zoom
- November 10 – location TBA