

Minutes for Mayor's Task Force for the Animal Shelter on 9/18/14 at 7:05PM.

In attendance were Art Layton, Eileen Heaphy, Annie Taylor, Brendon Leyden, and Maryann Kleinschmitt. Absent were Dr. Steve Zeide and Theresa Geary.

1. Our speaker was Mike Costentaris of Bark Busters. He trains dogs and owners. He says he had helped 3,000 dogs and never told anyone to euthanize their dog because of behavior. He believes you must understand how dogs think and act. They have four needs: food, safety and security, shelter and entertainment. Dogs have subtle behaviors and to be effective you must be aware of them. He talked about the methods he uses to help dogs and the owners. He offered to provide his services free to the ACOs with problems dogs. Mr. Costentaris was asked how long to train a problem dog. He said he trains the owners, not the dog.

2. Katina Wargo was introduced as the new volunteer coordinator. The manager, ACO reported 16 dogs in the shelter; three in quarantine. There are ten cats and six are kittens. There were 15 adoptions to date in September.

There was a discussion of veterinary services including micro chipping and spay/neuter surgery. That is now done through Rippowam Veterinary. They accept the voucher from the state.

Shelter hours should be expanded to let volunteers work on weekends. We reviewed the following updated documents concerning adoptions at the ACC: surrender document, application to adopt, reasons for rejection, adoption agreement and waiver/hold harmless and request for donation. There was some discussion and analysis of conflicts between volunteer application and duties of volunteers.

3. Feline Issues. Eileen Heaphy and Dr. Steve Zeide met with representatives of Friends of Felines and Pitter Patter about the feral cat problem. Three problems exist with the current handling of feral cats in Stamford: health of feral cats and health threat they can pose to a community, challenges of put traps for trap-neuter-release programs on private property and the need for city ordinances to address the entire issue.

Eileen distributed model ordinances from other cities and guidelines for building a new ACC, which had been found by Theresa Geary on the Humane Society of the US website. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.