## Alachua County Animal Welfare Advisory Committee Minutes

November 15th, 2023

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| **Members Present**Kristen YoungChelsea BowerPerry KoonMelissa MoomawStacy Hudak | **Members Absent**Meredith Montgomery |
| **Staff Present**Julie JohnsonSarah GilleyFaye Gould |  |

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 1:09pm

**Approval of the Agenda and Meeting Minutes**

Items 6 and 7 were moved to 2 and 3 to elect the Chair and Vice Chair before approval of agenda.

Election of Chair – Stacy Hudak made the motion for Perry Koon to be Chair, Chelsea Bower seconded the motion, all in favor at 1:10pm

Election of Vice Chair – Perrk Koon made the motion for Melissa Moomaw to be Vice Chair, seconded by Chelsea Bower at 1:12pm

Motion to approve the agenda made by Perry, seconded by Chelsea Bower, all in favor at 1:13pm. Motion to approve minutes from August 9th meeting made by Perry Koon, seconded by Chelsea Bower, all in favor at 1:14pm

**Public Comments**

Citizens in attendance declined to make public comment.

**Introduction of New Staff and Committee Members**

* 1:15pm – Introduction of new committee member, Kristen Young. Kristen has worked with the Wagmore Foundation and has experience working with non-profit animal welfare organizations and has been an animal foster.

**Old Business**

* Director Announcements: Director announcements began at 1:16pm. Director Julie Johnson stated the previous Shelter Supervisor is no longer with the organization. A round of interviews for the position had just been concluded, but a suitable candidate was not found. The position is open again, and Julie asked the committee to encourage people to apply. There is a high bar currently set to locate a candidate who will emphasize the importance of community relations and create a positive and welcoming environment within the shelter. Chelsea Bower suggested of working interviews for candidates, Julie stated working interviews are not permitted, but the interview questions have been updated. Perry Koon asked if employees at Animal Resources have access to mental health programs and specialized training for crisis intervention for distressed owners coming in. Julie stated the staff has completed Compassion Fatigue training, and resources are being updated to change the shelter’s perception as being the first place where people go to surrender animals into a last resort. Julie used euthanasia for owned pets as an example, stating owners are encouraged to seek guidance from private veterinarians to have a more personalized experience.
* Director Announcements: Update about the new shelter began at 1:23pm. Julie stated the location of the new shelter is still being determined. Property at the University of Florida is still on the table, but acreage and achieving the proper layout is still being discussed. The County Manager is pushing for a location to be selected by the end of the year. Perry Koon asked if sub-locations would be possible, Julie responded that managing multiple locations would be difficult. Ideally, there would be one centralized location to make the shelter more accessible.
* Committee Announcements: No new committee announcements.

**New Business**

* Home for the Holidays: Discussion of the upcoming adoption event began at 1:32pm. The name of the event is subject to change, but the event will emphasize placing as many animals in homes before the holidays as possible. All adoption fees will be waived, and the event will become an annual tradition.
* New tag system: Kristen Young asked if the new tag system had been rolled out, discussion began at 1:35pm. Julie stated it has been going well and was being well-received by veterinary practices. There is now one set fee of $25 and no longer tiers, and owners can register online without staff assistance. The new tag has a QR code pets can wear along with the owner phone number. Microchips are still important and recommended, but the tags will make returning to owners easier for the finders.
* New shelter software: Julie provided an update on the new shelter software, PetPoint, at 1:37pm. PetPoint is web-based and is more user-friendly than the previous software, Chameleon, was and provides more reports.
* Quorum: Perry Koon addressed quorum at 1:39pm, asked if it could be updated to state quorum is the majority of positions filled, not including vacancies, so vacancies would not hinder voting. County Attorney Diana Johnson stated the resolution can be updated and presented to the Board of County Commissioners. The motion was made by Kristen Young to direct staff to change quorum guidelines at 1:43pm, motion seconded by Chelsea Bower, all in favor. Perry Koon requested that the list of current members be sent out prior to the next AWAC meeting, Sarah Gilley responded yes.

 **Next Meeting**

At 1:46pm the next AWAC Meeting was set for February 14th at 1:00pm in the Community Support Services Center, Conference Room A.

Julie Johnson asked if the committee had feedback for the next agenda before the meeting was adjourned. Kristen Young suggested the committee provide feedback on educational topics. Melissa Moomaw and Chelsea Bower suggested having topics the staff would like additional feedback on. Kristen Young suggested a deep dive into community relationships. Julie mentioned veterinary clinics had been upset with the shelter in the past, Stacy Hudak asked for more details. Chelsea Bower responded the shelter not accepting found animals from practices was a topic of controversy in the past. Faye Gould responded found animals can be accepted but asked that everyone followed the same process and contacted the shelter prior to accepting found animals. Julie Johnson stated we had spent the year establishing infrastructure and will work to rebuild community relationships in the second year. Perry Koon asked if this would extend to working with children. Faye Gould responded our officers have been attending Touch-a—Truck events, and Sarah Gilley responded the shelter has embraced group volunteer opportunities to get students out to the shelter and involved in various activities.

**Adjournment**

Perry Koon made the motion to adjourn at 2:10pm. Seconded by Chelsea Bower, all in favor.