

**MINUTES**  
**Advisory Board to**  
**Memphis Animal Services**

**February 10, 2009**

The Board convened at 10:00 a.m. in Room 205 at Memphis City Hall, Michelle Buckelew, Chairperson, presiding. Present were:

Board Members:

Earnest Alexander  
Stephen Schwartz  
Franklin James  
Tara Walsh  
Michelle Buckalew  
Allen Iskiwitz  
Carol Katz

Visitors:

Ann Marie Easton  
Amy Kalkbrenner

Michelle called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

Minutes of the January 8, 2009 meeting were discussed and corrected. Minutes were approved as corrected.

Ernie announced a Spay and Neuter Ordinance that will be submitted to the City Council and Mayor for enactment. A draft copy was passed out to the board.

Council members Kemp Conrad and Janis Fullilove visited the shelter last month. They noted the overcrowding and high euthanasia rate. Overcrowding is result of a public facility where no animal can be turned away. High euthanasia rate is result of overcrowding. Ernie impressed the council members with the need to stop the supply.

Although the ordinance does not address owners reclaiming their animals from the shelter, many such ordinances require that an animal be neutered on the second impound. Ernie said that most owners do not reclaim after their dogs have been impounded once. In Ernie's opinion, spay/neuter should be mandatory on the first impound.

Under the proposed ordinance, any citizen wishing to breed a pet will need to obtain a breeders permit at a cost of \$1,000.

Michelle felt that support must be organized for the ordinance in order to get it passed because there will be organized opposition. Ernie said that euthanasia statistics are the best arguments in its favor. Steve felt that the public would support it. Ernie said the Administration was behind it. Too many dogs running are loose and too many are not vaccinated. The cost to the city in managing the animal overpopulation is a strong factor in favor of the ordinance. In 2008, although the shelter significantly increased its adoptions, the euthanasia rate was just as high as the year before. The sheer numbers are draining public resources. The only way to address the problem is to cut off the supply of unwanted animals. A side benefit of the ordinance is improving the health of animals.

Whether the monies coming from the breeders' permits could be utilized for the shelter was discussed. Ernie said it was his desire that this money go into humane educational programs, and he believes that fees and fines could be earmarked for this purpose.

Suggestions made regarding the draft included mandatory neuter for puppies when owner/breeder failed to obtain permit, as well as raising the fine for failure to get permit. Alan expressed his concern that the ordinance will only push the breeding of dogs into the county and to be effective, the county must be subject to the ordinance as well.

Carol hoped that the Board could make a recommendation to the city council and mayor in support of the ordinance. Ernie said he would get statistics to Carol so that she could draft the recommendation. The Board indicated its strong support for the ordinance. Both visitors indicated that opposition would come from hunters, breeders and RAOT. All present felt that a lobbying effort would be critical to passage of the ordinance.

Michelle is continuing to work on a website for Memphis Animals Shelter. The website will be on the agenda next month.

Procurement completed its bid process and Purina Pro Plan was awarded the contract for six months. Due to concerns with quality of food at the shelter, donations were solicited. Sylvia Cox worked on this and obtained a significant quantity of high quality food that the shelter is still using. When it runs out, Purina Pro Plan will begin to be used. Hill's Science Diet did not bid because they required a three-year contract. The city contract is limited to six months.

The Board was aware of a situation last month involving a cruelty complaint at Leahy's Motor Park. Police requested MAS assistance. MAS found a chained dog with puppies that had been weaned but the dog's

chain was too short. The officer issued a citation and the owner was allowed 24 hours to comply. The officer returned after that period and the owner voluntarily surrounded the puppies and kept two adult dogs. MAS offered free spay/neuter for those dogs but the owner declined the offer. MAS picked up 16 dogs in the area with cooperation of the dogs' owners.

The remainder of the meeting was spent discussing enforcement of the ordinance. Meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Smith Katz, Secretary

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at City Hall