



Jones County Health Department
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Health Director

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Jones County Animal Control Subcommittee Meeting
Tuesday, November 20, 2019

Members: April Aycock; Wayne Hurley; Tom Labuda; Wesley P. Smith, Dr.
Steve Stelma

Staff: Melissa Lamb, Accounting Technician III; Ann Pike, Nursing
Supervisor I

Others: N/A

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m. by Dr. Steve Stelma, Board of Health Chair.

Old Business

Dr. Stelma called attention to the agenda, and asked everyone to review the minutes from the October meeting. *A motion was made by Tom Labuda to approve the minutes from the October 30, 2019 Animal Control Subcommittee Meeting. April Aycock seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.*

New Business

Dr. Stelma opened the meeting with discussion on the Animal Control Survey. Per Smith, there has been discussion between him and the Water Department on disseminating the surveys. The survey will go out in November with the water bill for all of Jones County in two (2) separate mailings. Dr Stelma referred back to a concern by a member of the public during the October Subcommittee meeting. The concern was that the survey would be used as a tool to push public opinion. Dr Stelma clarified to the Subcommittee the purpose of the survey was only to get the opinions of the county. He further stated there is no need to pursue other avenues of disseminating the survey.

Smith provided information to the subcommittee that states three (3) things local governments are required to do in reference to animal control: 1) Rabies Control; 2) Animal Adoption; and 3) Dangerous Dogs. Smith also provided a set of documents that included the various General Statutes on the issue of Rabies. Smith reviewed the documentation provided in reference to Rabies Vaccinations, and explained to the Subcommittee that an ordinance is not necessarily needed in order to perform what needs to be done in Jones County. Per Smith, Rabies control and, in some cases, nuisance animals can be handled under State Statues already in place.

As an example, Smith provided a scenario in which the Health Department were to receive a call on a stray dog, there are a series of questions that can be posed to the caller to determine if that dog can be picked up under current law. He discussed a line of questioning such as: 1) did the dog bite you (Rabies) 2) did the dog approach you in a menacing or threatening manner (Dangerous Dog); and 3) is there a collar on the dog (Rabies). If a dog is running loose in Jones County without a rabies tag, the Health Department can have that dog picked up and impounded until the owner of the dog is found to determine if the dog is currently vaccinated. If no owner can be identified then the rules of animal adoption will come into play.

Dr. Stelma stated that many of the goals the Subcommittee had been working on to be included in an ordinance can be met by enforcing State laws already in place. Smith informed the Subcommittee the contract currently in place with Top RJ's to board animals ordered for quarantine would need to be expanded to include stray animals picked up by Patricia Roddy-Jones. The Board of Health could approve the revised contract, but would also need to be reviewed by the County Attorney.

Smith asked Labuda why counties have animal control ordinances when there is State law already in place. Per Labuda, should a county want to take State law and add other rules to it, a local ordinance would need to be in place for the superseding of State Law to take effect. Hurley suggested the Subcommittee take the State law, make a few adjustments, and include them in a local ordinance for the Board of Commissioners to consider. There was much discussion by the Subcommittee on what it would take to get an ordinance approved by the Board of Commissioners. There was additional discussion over revising the current Rabies Policy and developing a Dangerous Dog Policy for the Board of Health to approve. Smith explained that the Health Department policies would not exclude hunting dogs during hunting season – that can only be accomplished through a local ordinance. Should a hunting dog wander onto someone's property it has no permission to be on and not wearing a rabies tag, then the dog needs to be picked up. Per Dr. Stelma and Labuda, this is State law now being followed in a policy; therefore, hunting dogs would not be excluded. Hurley stated he would still like to have cats exempted from wearing a collar.

Smith stated the revised policies would be enforced based on complaint calls and not by having staff canvas the county for dogs or cats not wearing a collar. There was further discussion by the Subcommittee regarding fees which are stated in State law. Per Smith if the owner of the dog being picked up can be identified, the owner will have to pay vaccination fees, boarding fee, and reclamation fee prior to picking up the dog. Hurley asked which budget line Smith would use to pay Top RJ's for picking up & boarding dogs. Smith stated he would need to increase the Contract Services line in Rabies Control from \$2,000.00 to around \$5,000.00. Hurley then stated he believed a solution had been reached. ***Hurley made a motion for the Health Department to adopt policies and procedures based on NC General Statutes for dangerous dogs and rabies, and take***

no further action regarding a County Ordinance for Animal Control. Aycock seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

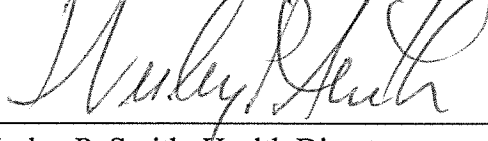
Smith stated the next course of action would be for him to revise the Health Department's current Rabies Policy and draft up a new Dangerous Dog Policy. In addition to the policies, final results of the survey will be compiled and presented to subcommittee members at a meeting prior to the next Board of Health meeting. The final step for the subcommittee at that meeting would be to make recommendations that would be taken to the Board of Health, and close out the Animal Control Subcommittee.

Hurley made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Labuda seconded the motion. All were in favor.

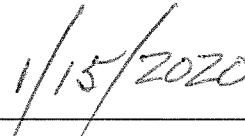
Next Meeting

Date to be determined.

Respectfully Submitted: Melissa Lamb, Accounting Technician III



Wesley P. Smith, Health Director



Date