

To be approved at a later meeting
(For unofficial, early posting; approval won't occur until August)

**Town of Rehoboth
Animal Advisory Committee
Minutes of Meeting on April 23, 2019
Blanding Library Meeting Area**

Present: Sarah Arrigo, Richard Panofsky, Nancy Scott; Animal Control Officer Robert Johnson

Excused: Elizabeth Botelho

Call to Order: 6:10 pm

1. Approval of the minutes of April 2, 2019

- S. Arrigo moved approval; N. Scott seconded. Motion carried.

2. Housekeeping, updates, announcements

- R. Johnson reported on animals in the shelter.
- A new, stronger roof is installed over the outside area to the south. They have had to purchase a new freezer.

3. Current Shelter, recommended minimum needs

- Discussion brought out that our task is to determine minimum improvements needed if the present shelter building must be used for longer than, say, two years. If a new shelter is not built, what minimally must be done to have a functional shelter facility?
- R. Panofsky had distributed resources by email, a document on construction details from Seekonk and the draft of proposed new state law on shelter facilities. It is clear that the new law would apply to public animal shelters. It is not clear, if passed, how the law would be applied to existing facilities.
- R. Panofsky distributed a draft outline from the general concepts worked out last meeting. Discussion went point by point. Its points were accepted, some with new wording and details.
- R. Panofsky moved that this document, as modified in our meeting, represents the advice of the Animal Advisory Committee on needs for the current building, if we are to retain its use for more than two years. S. Arrigo seconded. Motion passed unanimously. R. Johnson indicated his concurrence. Panofsky will circulate the document for any corrections, and it will be attached to these minutes.

4. Do public shelters take in surrenders—practices and policies

- Minutes of the last meeting read, “Currently animals are taken as surrenders in cases of crisis or other difficulties, or when doing so meets a citizen’s specific needs. This is an active policy, but not advertised. Surrenders are expected to be adoptable animals.” R. Johnson verified this is a correct statement of current practice. We also reviewed two relevant FAQ statements now on the website.
- Discussion of any changes to policy is deferred to a later meeting.

5. Discussion of progress on current issues: public awareness of policies through communications and activities; wi-fi and computer needs

- R. Panofsky asked for comments on the revised Animal Control website. He explained that he made the changes as his volunteered work, not a committee action, and they have been approved by R. Johnson. Members pointed out some links in the FAQs that are not yet live.
- There was a consensus that, in addition to the coverage provided on the website, the new Loose Dogs statement should be printed up and given as a handout in locations such as the senior center, town hall, and library.

- There is no progress on wifi being supplied to the shelter. The committee will emphasize the need in the assessment of facility needs (Agenda item 3), and our strong consensus is to ask for a hard cable to be run from the town office building to the shelter building. Even if this costs three or four thousand dollars, it is something the town should be able to do. Not having access to management software causes real, continuing disadvantages to good service and planning.
- R. Johnson reported on volunteering at the shelter. A new volunteer is walking dogs, and the regulars are covering needs. Right now the number of animals is small. The program has developed additional volunteers who will be available when numbers of animals increase. The committee emphasized the animals need care and socialization more than once a day.

6. Open session: Audience comments

- No audience was in attendance.

7. Any other business

- The regular time for the next meeting would be the fourth Tuesday, May 28. R. Panofsky will not be in town, returning in early August. By our current regular time, the next meeting will be August 27, 2019. If something comes up requiring a meeting before fall, we'll work for a special time.

Adjournment

- N. Scott moved to adjourn at 7:01 pm; S. Arrigo seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Panofsky, Chair

Attachment: Approved Document of Required Shelter Facility Fixes

Animal Advisory Committee
 Meeting of April 23, 2019
 6:00 pm
 Blanding Library Annex

Current Shelter, recommended minimum needs
 Do public shelters take in surrenders—practices and policies
 Discussion of progress on current issues: public awareness of policies through
 communications and activities; wi-fi and computer needs

Attachment, minutes of April 23, 2019

Required Fixes to the Present Shelter April 23, 2019 Animal Advisory Committee

Voted unanimously at the meeting of April 23, 2019. ACO Johnson participated actively in the planning and concurred with the motion.

Rob Johnson has done a lot of work in making things better. He has followed the recommendations of our expert evaluator, Chelsea Reinhard. We have consulted regulations and pending legislation of the Massachusetts Division of Agricultural Resources.

Specific improvements are needed if we are to use the existing building for more than two years. These are minimum actions needed to have a decently-functioning shelter operation.

Potable water. Need is for at least a strong water treatment system; perhaps a new well. Contaminants include manganese, iron, and sulfur. Equipment is stained. Shelter animals cannot drink the water; every day, shelter staff bring water for the animals from their own homes.

Enclosed, insulated ceiling rafters; light fixtures. Needed is an insulated, solid ceiling (not suspended ceiling tiles or anything pervious), including new, more efficient, light fixtures. All sensors or detectors must be relocated onto the new surface. The open beams are rusted and unsanitary, uninsulated, and places where loose cats can hide. A suspended-panel ceiling would harbor pathogens, and animals could push through it.

Ethernet connection to building. This long standing need must be provided for. Currently, fiber-optic cabling terminates at the town office building. We strongly recommend installing cabling from its current terminus to the shelter building. Other solutions, such as point-to-point microwave, have limited bandwidth permitting connection of only one computer, and they would require an open, functioning town hall building. Computers and the web provide management software needed for efficient and effective functioning.

Fire sprinkler system. The building now has smoke and heat detectors, both alerting an alarm service. Sprinklers are not required in code; however, there have been sad cases of animals being destroyed in shelter fires, and the committee recommends sprinklers be installed.

Demolition of current small utility room and adding a larger space for two rooms along the entire east-facing wall. As explained in the bullets below, we need to demolish the small added utility room (about 8 x 8 feet) and replace it with a larger structure that extends along the entire east-facing wall, for a new space of about 30 by 12-15 feet. This would be divided into rooms.

- *Expanded, re-furnished utility room/food preparation/bathroom.* Needed are counters, a refrigerator, storage, a utility sink, a large sink for washing dishes and equipment, a hand sink, an animal bathing stall, and a small bathroom. Doorway to the outside, as at present. The present room is so cramped that it doesn't perform its functions properly. It isn't hygienic and mixes storage, food preparation, and cleaning in inappropriate ways. The toilet is poor.
- *An added room for better cat capacity.* The present quite small cat room would expand into the new space, and an additional room would provide cat exercising/socialization. A hand-washing sink is needed in this area, and floor drains are needed for cleaning. Cats have become the shelter's major "clients." This provides a larger cat housing room plus a separate room dedicated to cat socialization

and exercising. Cats are now using two dog spaces in impromptu conversions; and only the Director's office is available to let cats out for exercise and socialization.

Install a second hand-washing sink near the dog runs.

Quarantine area.

- *Install a door to the outside*, in the wall where the large building opening used to be. Current standards recommend access separate from the regular animal population.
- *Discussion of other, future needs for this area*: Recent repairs to this room have been successful. However, proposed new state legislation has requirements for *air circulation, washing isolation, and animal separation* that our space does not meet, and if it passes (which seems likely) they may be enforced on existing buildings. Currently, we need to use curtains or other visual separators if a dog and a cat are in the area at the same time; sound separation is impossible. When the room is occupied, cleaning of the floor should be done while blocking the drain that moves waste water into the regular animal area.

If the town hall should become unused while we're still using the current shelter, we'd need to consider whether any other utilities to the shelter would be affected.