

Animal Advisory Committee, January 13, 2015

Voted: to Recommend to the Board of Selectmen the Policy on Adoption of Companion Animals

Rehoboth Policy on Adoption of Companion Animals

Preamble

This policy document concerns the kind of adoption program that Rehoboth will have. Detailed resources exist to guide the development, maintenance, and currency of a successful adoption program, and the Rehoboth shelter will follow such guidelines to implement the program. The ACO and town officials will develop and then follow an implementation plan and timeline.

Policy and Procedure

- Each animal in the shelter shall receive timely medical and behavioral evaluations.
- The shelter will improve an animal's adoptability by providing medical and behavioral interventions that it needs (and adhering to the Euthanasia policy).
- Although an adoptable animal can stay in the shelter and/or be fostered for the time that it needs to be adopted, it is a goal to adopt out each animal in a timely manner.
- Funds-raised will be used to help pay for medical and behavior interventions; all such costs do not need to be funded through the town budget. Conduct specific fund-raising campaigns for animals with high medical needs.
- The shelter will micro-chip all un-chipped dogs and cats.
- While animals not spayed/neutered can be adopted upon payment of a deposit (per MGL 140, Section 139A), the shelter will spay/neuter adoptable adult animals before adoption.
- The shelter will exercise, socialize, and provide enrichment for the animals to maintain their adoptability.
- The shelter will allow potential adopters to interact with the animals.

- Appropriateness of the adopting person(s) will be ensured through an interview and an updated adoption form.

Logistics

- The shelter will post and maintain open hours as well as providing access by appointment. There will be open hours each week day and both weekend days.
- The Town and shelter must ensure that the phone system works effectively, with timely responses to any requests.
- The shelter will seek needed assistance of other shelters and engage programs like Animatch (Massachusetts Animal Coalition) and Missing Dogs Massachusetts.
- Per the Volunteer Policy, volunteers will help in many aspects of companion animal adoptions, including home fostering. The ACO, not a volunteer, will transact the final adoption process with the adopter.
- There is a need to review adoption fees. The adoption fee should recover costs.

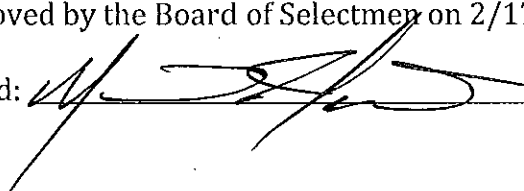
Communications

- Use print and electronic media effectively to expose the public to adoptable animals and inform them about the adoption option.
 - Use Facebook and other electronic media.
 - Improve the town animal program website or use a well-maintained shelter-specific website.
 - Use official sites such as Petfinders consistently.
 - Place flyers and posters around town, in businesses, etc.
 - Use regular articles in the Rehoboth Reporter and PSAs on RehobothTV.
 - Use attractive animal photos, e.g., outside the cage and interacting with a person; and tell their stories.
 - Have a presence at town meetings and events.
 - Set adoption goals and regularly report adoption counts.
 - All media must be kept fresh and current.
- Volunteers will perform many aspects of the Communications program.

Other Considerations

- Rehoboth will develop a Feral Cat Policy. The policy will include means of placing cats in locations such as barns without involving the full adoption process.
- Rehoboth will develop a Shelter Admissions Policy to provide guidance on the animals to be taken into the shelter. An enhanced adoption program can permit the shelter to admit and assist more animals.

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on 2/17/15

Signed:  _____