

Animal Advisory Committee, Revised and Approved March 24, 2015

Voted: to Recommend to the Board of Selectmen the Policy on Shelter Volunteers

Rehoboth Policy on Shelter Volunteers

Preamble

This policy document concerns the kind of volunteer program that Rehoboth will have. Detailed resources exist to guide the development, maintenance, and currency of a successful volunteer program, such as the *Operational Guide [to] Volunteer Management* ©2010 American Humane Association. 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

- The Town acknowledges that a volunteer program is needed to make quality animal-related services affordable. Volunteers are not "an extra" but an essential way to provide the services desired by the Town.
- Volunteers assist in but do not run the shelter. The town's Animal Control Officer or an other official assigned by the Town (referred to in this policy as the "ACO/Shelter Manager") will be responsible for shelter operations and for the volunteer program.
- A Volunteer Coordinator will manage daily schedules, assignments, etc., freeing the ACO/Shelter Manager from such matters. The Volunteer Coordinator will report to the ACO/Shelter Manager. The person in this coordinator position can be a volunteer. Other Coordinators can be used as well (for example, a foster program coordinator).
- All volunteers will apply formally and be screened and appointed in a documented process. The ACO/Shelter Manager will approve all volunteer appointments, and the Town Administrator will file records of each appointment. Performance will be monitored and continuance will be conditional on good performance.
- Volunteers will perform specific functions and roles for which they are trained and qualified. (Functions and roles are listed in a separate section below.)
- Volunteers will be trained in general and also for their specific duties before they perform any duties. Among other matters, training will

emphasize safety, and volunteers will sign a statement at the conclusion of the training that they understand and agree with the stipulations and conditions (copies to be filed with the Town Administrator). A training manual will be used that includes specific statements of the shelter's protocols for safety and operations, and a copy of this manual will be filed with the Town Administrator.

- Legal waiver and release forms will be used, as well as criminal background checks as needed. No person with a record of animal abuse or neglect can be a volunteer.
- A range of volunteer management tools will be used, including a volunteer manual, volunteer job descriptions, logs and checklists, posted policy statements, and a cage-cards system. Volunteers will follow specific work schedules.
- Access to some areas of the shelter (for example, the quarantine room) and to certain specific animals can be restricted to the ACO/Shelter Manager only and, if appropriate, a few highly qualified and trained volunteers.
- Based on their roles and functions, some volunteers may have access to the shelter in the absence of the ACO/Shelter Manager. Keys and access codes will be made available to them.
- There will be meetings and communications to solicit ideas, encourage sharing, and maintain morale among volunteers, as well as means of recognizing them for what they do.


Volunteer Roles and Functions

- Volunteers will be a "front-line" resource to help the shelter adopt out animals, by:
 - Conducting regular shelter open hours and open-shelter events and assisting with answering questions, paperwork, etc.;
 - Responding to phone, e-mail, Facebook, etc., messages and inquiries about adopting animals or referring them for others to handle;
 - Posting animal notices and photos to adoption websites, the shelter website, Facebook pages, etc.;
 - Showing adoptable animals at public events, businesses, schools, senior center, etc.
- Volunteers will help care for the animals and maintain their adoptability by:
 - Grooming, socializing, and exercising them among other enrichment activities;
 - Feeding/watering them; cleaning cages, runs, and exercise areas; doing laundry and dishes;

- Doing behavior evaluations and obedience training (only volunteers so trained);
- Administering medication, performing minor health procedures, and training animals for behavior modification (only volunteers with specialized skills, such as vet techs and trainers).
- The shelter will develop a home-foster program, with appropriate screening and monitoring.
- Volunteers will perform outreach activities not directly related to animals, such as office tasks, fundraising, publicity, and public awareness. Volunteers can conduct special fund-raisers for animals that need extra care and for animals that were victims of abuse, hoarding, and neglect. Volunteers can promote the shelter in off site venues.
- Volunteers can provide specialized computer/web skills to maintain and improve communications and shelter operations.
- Volunteers can assist in the upkeep of the facility.
- Volunteers will have roles and functions in new program areas not yet developed, such as a feral cat program.

Approved by Board of Selectmen on 4-13-15

Signed:


Michael R. Costello, Chairman