

ANIMAL CONTROL COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting

December 29, 2008

A regular meeting of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Animal Control Commission was held at the Borough Administrative Center Chizmar Room at 809 Pioneer Road, Fairbanks, Alaska. Ronnie Rosenberg, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ronnie Rosenberg, *Chair*
Shellie Severa, *Vice Chair*
Mary Ann Fortune
Jamie Marschner
Karen Wilson

GUESTS PRESENT:

Lynn Orbison
Jeanne Olson
Pat Streeter
Sandy Klimaschesky

ABSENT:

NONE

STAFF PRESENT:

Matt Ruger, Animal Control Manager

There were no corrections or additions to the December 29th agenda. Jamie Marschner noted that on page 8 of the November 24th draft minutes a comment was attributed to Sandy Klimaschesky regarding a previous licensing issue with the new shelter software and it was actually made by Marschner herself. Ronnie Rosenberg stated that a new draft of the corrected minutes should be submitted to everyone so it can be approved at the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Orbison (Lynn Orbison, 23 Mile Chena Hot Springs Road) established herself as a frequent visitor of the shelter and stated that she has been “disturbed” by what she has witnessed at the shelter of late. In the first instance, she recalled that two weeks ago a staff member was striking the bars of a cat cage where one of the shelter’s cats had just been deposited. Apparently the staff person put the cat in with another cat and the cats were not getting along. The staff person’s response to this was to bang on the cages rather than move it to one of the empty cages instead. The next incident occurred the same day. She visited some puppies and their mother. She offered the mother dog a biscuit she had in her pocket and the mother dog snatched it out of her hand, leading Orbison to conclude the dog was “quite hungry.” In addition, she noticed that neither the mother dog nor the puppies had water in their cages. She mentioned this fact to the staff person and the staff person gave the animals water, which they promptly drank. The last incident took place on her most recent visit to the shelter and involved a volunteer rather than shelter staff. She was viewing a dog she was interested in outside when the volunteer went outside to bring the dog in, as it was time for the dogs to be brought inside. She observed that the disabled volunteer—whom she described as a “not 100% participating human”—“yanked” the dog after putting the leash on and she asked the volunteer to stop so she could pet the dog. She said her request went unheeded and the volunteer continued to “drag” the dog inside; however, the volunteer stopped and allowed her to pet the dog when she repeated her request for him to stop more loudly. She is repeating what she observed because she questions the quality of human contact the shelter animals are receiving after what she witnessed. In addition, she questioned why the animals’ welfare and care does not come first when the shelter selects volunteers.

Fortune asked Orbison if she reported these incidents to the shelter manager and Orbison responded she had.

Ruger replied that these matters have been dealt with.

Orbison wanted ACC to know that the quality of care for the animals at the animal shelter is “not perfect” as she ended her testimony and thanked the ACC.

Fortune thanked Orbison for reporting these incidents.

Rosenberg invited other members of the public who would like to comment.

Olson (Jeanne Olson, 1890 Hollowell Road, North Pole) requested that a letter she wrote and submitted to the ACC in April 2008 be submitted into Public Comment. She commented that she still had not seen her letter documented in the minutes, though she has been requesting that her letter be submitted for some time now. In addition, she acknowledged that Rosenberg responded to her and let her know that the letter would be submitted and possibly addressed, if the ACC chose to address it, in the next regular meeting which would most likely occur in the fall. She stated that she wrote a letter in November 2008 after her previous letter had not been included in the October 2008 meeting minutes and, when listening to the audio file from the November 24th meeting, was puzzled that the ACC had no comments regarding her letter/s and the overall lack of response from the ACC.

Fortune apologized that Olson did not have her correct and current email address.

Olson acknowledges that she did not and was thankful that when she pointed this out to Matt Ruger it was addressed in the November meeting and, at that time, correct email addresses for the ACC were collected and that now all the emails are updated and correct on the FNSB web site.

Rosenberg emphasized that while the public is always welcome to address the ACC and bring forth comments and concerns, the public does not set the agenda for ACC meetings.

Olson retorted that Public Comments that are submitted for Public Comment should be documented in the Public Comments.

Rosenberg concurred.

Fortune stated that Public Comments are documented.

Olson disagreed and reiterated that her written Public Comments have not appeared in the meeting minutes.

Ruger assured Olson that her letter will be with the November minutes once those minutes are approved.

Olson questioned whether it is her original letter from April that is being submitted or her follow-up email that was submitted for the November meeting.

Ruger answered that it is the one from the November meeting.

Olson inquired about her April letter that has not yet been submitted for Public Comment.

Severa affirmed that Rosenberg did read a letter from Olson at a prior meeting.

Ruger mentioned, recalling Olson's letter from April, that there were questions being asked in the letter but did not recall a request that it be part of the record.

Olson disagreed and said that she even sent a copy of her letter to the Clerk.

Rosenberg stated that if Olson has another copy of the April letter it can be submitted for the record tonight.

Ruger continued that the letter from the November meeting was a repeat of the April letter.

Severa stated that they recall a "very lengthy, very detailed" letter being read by Rosenberg at the October meeting and that it was read aloud to be put onto the record.

Olson asked which meeting this occurred because she had listened to the recordings and never heard her letter being put on the record.

Two AC Commissioners commented that this was "months ago," though there was general uncertainty with the ACC as to what meeting the letter was read aloud at and whether it was on the record. Some commissioners recalled reading the letter and others recalled having it read aloud but there was no general consensus as to which meeting.

Olson disagreed, saying she listened to all of the recordings and has yet to hear her letter being put on the record.

Rosenberg interrupted and brought the discussion back to the present December meeting. She asked Olson if she had any additional comment to make, or if she had a copy of the letter she wanted submitted, and they can make it into the record tonight. She repeated that taking up any topics in an ACC meeting stemming from Public Comment is up to the ACC to put on the agenda and decide what they will discuss.

Olson stated she finds this "incredible."

Rosenberg: "That is how it's going to be."

Olson stated she accepted this and just wanted to reiterate that she wants her April letter submitted into the Public Comment in the meeting minutes. In addition, she stated she has listened to all of the audio recordings of ACC meetings that are on the web and has read all of the approved and posted minutes and has yet to see her letter accepted and documented into Public Comment, since April.

Ruger stated that this is because the letter that asked to be part of public record was not the April letter but the letter sent via email submitted into Public Comment for the November meeting.

Olson emphasized that it was the April meeting.

Rosenberg asserted that as a “point of order” they must move on. She asked Olson if she had any comments she would like to make regarding the content of the April letter.

Olson stated that she just wants it put on the public record in the Public Comments.

Rosenberg asked again if Olson had a copy of the letter with her tonight.

Olson stated she did not have one.

Rosenberg asked if she can submit one.

Olson agreed and mentioned that the Clerk and Assembly members also have a copy of the letter. She then moved on to the subject of where the public is supposed to take their issues. She asserted that when issues are brought to the attention of the ACC and the ACC chooses not to take up those issues, the public brings the same issues to the Assembly and the response of the Assembly is, “Have you approached the Commission?” She stated that this makes both the ACC look bad and the public, as it makes them look like “a bunch of radicals.” She asked, “What is the public to do? Aren’t you guys supposed to be the liaison between the public and Animal Control?”

Severa and Fortune both asked Olson what her concerns are.

Olson responded that “the long letters” are an issue, especially the policy that once an animal is on the euthanasia list it is permanently on the euthanasia list. She cited an instance where “they” went to ACC about the puppies and kittens that were under 8 weeks old that were on the euthanasia list the ACC replied “That’s the ordinance” and took no further action. She pointed out that it was the public who took this issue up to the Assembly and recommended that the law be changed and not the ACC.

Olson also commented about what she heard in one of the audio recordings of an ACC meeting, that a note was found on the ex-director’s desk that discussed reducing the size of the ACC in order to have a more effective Commission and also a quorum. She noted that she has never seen the issue of establishing a smaller, possibly more effective ACC on the Agenda and believes that as a “quasi-judicial group for bite hearings” reducing the size of the group would be undesirable. She further submitted for Public Comment that it is not acceptable for the ACC to reduce its size because it has trouble recruiting commissioners. She then went on to state that the mayor did not even know the ACC was four people short.

Undistinguishable murmured that this was not true.

Olson then suggested that the ACC has difficulty attracting members because it is a frustrating thing for the public to not have their issues put on the ACC Agenda and then returned to the subject of the letter she wrote in April about the “pros and cons” of many issues that have not incited any comment from the ACC. She continued with her written comment in the November meeting that questioned a previous statement made by the ACC that sled dogs are on a three-year cycle and that is why rabies vaccines are reduced at the rabies clinic. She felt that this statement should have been considered more and not accepted as fact. She also brought up the issue of what AC’s policy is regarding animal cruelty. She questioned the State Troopers handling animal cruelty cases when it is, or should be, AC’s jurisdiction.

Olson: “Who has the most training in animal cruelty? Troopers or AC? And why are you spending public money sending AC officers to animal cruelty classes if they are not going to investigate animal cruelty?”

Olson cited a local case she thinks is an animal cruelty case, where the person was instead charged with misconduct with a firearm, when a similar case occurred in Anchorage and the person was charged with animal cruelty. She expressed her frustration as both a member of the public and also as someone who is aware that Fairbanks AC has attended animal cruelty training, specifically equine animal cruelty training, that no one from AC was sent to deal with the case. She wanted to know why ACC is not investigating situations like the one she described and further stated that she refrained from writing a letter to the editor in order to save the ACC from embarrassment.

Severa asked why it would be an embarrassment to the commission if a higher authority was in charge of the incident and also pointed out that a call to 911 was placed and reminded Olson that AC has no authority when a 911 call was placed, according to Alaska statutes.

Olson agreed but stated that the State Troopers requested the assistance of AC.

Ruger stated that the Troopers did receive AC’s assistance.

Rosenberg confirmed this statement.

Olson asked if AC ever went out to the scene of the incident.

Ruger affirmed that AC went out and that there has been a “tremendous amount of misinformation floating around about this.” He informed Olson that AC officers are not “expected or paid to go out at night to a place where an unknown person is firing firearms...”

Olson interjected: “It was not night it was daylight.”

Ruger continued that while AC has experienced criticism for this incident, AC officers do not go out with a can of pepper spray and a baton to an area where an unknown person is discharging firearms.

Olson interrupted to state she knows the guidelines because she was a manager and you can get Trooper support if needed in these types of situations, as she had to do several times during her tenure as a manager, and she is also aware that money was spent on flak jackets. She allowed that AC officers are not expected to risk themselves in situations as described, but feels it is unacceptable: “...to go out the next day when there is a dead horse or not even going out at all and then you know evidence is gone.”

Ruger asked Streeter to correct him if he was incorrect, but Streeter did go out when called.

Streeter confirmed that he went out for “the second one.”

Ruger asked for clarification of what incident Streeter was referring to.

Streeter explained that AC was told not to respond to the incident Olson was referring to.

Ruger asked if that was the incident that occurred while Ruger was on vacation.

Streeter clarified that the incident that AC was told not to respond to was while Ruger was on vacation.

Olson agreed that a higher authority did tell AC not to respond but continued to state that AC is supposed to be the contact for animal cruelty cases because AC is the organization that has the training, not the Mayor or the Chief of Staff. She added that the Chief of Staff has no idea AC even has animal cruelty training.

Several commissioners, Streeter and Ruger corrected Olson and said the Chief of Staff is aware of AC's animal cruelty training.

Olson noted that the Chief of Staff knows *now* and asked: "So where are we?"

Ruger stated that it is an issue of jurisdiction and that Legal has been involved in this matter because under Alaska Statute 3.55.100 or 3.55.101, he believed, law enforcement is in charge of investigating animal cruelty and while AC assists, they are not in charge (note: AS 3.55.110 addresses investigation of cruelty to animals).

Olson: "You know what? It needs to be done the right way. Let me give you one recording on this and this is this, and this is the way the truth should be and the way it's not always done and the way I'm hearing you and that's fine. But the thing is always do the right thing even if the government authorities forbid it never do the wrong thing, even if they require it."

Ruger: "That's the way I live my life."

Olson retorted that is not true because the "right thing" would have been to accompany the State Troopers on the horse firearm incident because the Troopers did not have any knowledge or experience of horses and admitted such. She wanted to know why AC did not go out with the Troopers and why nothing has been said to the mayor or done to change the law so that AC would have jurisdiction in these cases.

Ruger: "And how do you know that conversation didn't happen?"

Olson: "I don't know that it didn't... I'll tell you why I don't know because they said, 'There's a confidentiality here we can't tell the public.' I tried, I tried calling and the only time anybody even went out finally the Troopers went out is because people showed up on their doorstep on Friday at the borough office after that it had snowed, a horse was dead, and, and all the evidence was gone, pretty much. Did anybody go over and look at the other horses, to see if they really were banged up?"

Severa stated that the meeting is going "off base" and there are too many details being discussed.

Olson: "No, I agree. It's fine, because we shouldn't talk about it because the public isn't supposed to know about it."

Severa clarified that the issue is not that information is being kept from the public but they are currently on the record and if details are going to be discussed, the details must be accurate for the record.

Olson agreed to refocus the meeting and get back to her issue, which is that ACC needs to let the mayor know that the current policy needs to be evaluated, open a public discussion on the issue of when AC should be involved and assist the Troopers, and that this issue should be on the agenda.

Fortune stated that they have discussed this issue in the past.

Olson replied the issue should be on the agenda again.

[Olson's voice and at least another AC commissioner; cannot decipher beginning of sentence]

Severa cited that there is already a statute in place that states if an agency wants to request the assistance of AC they can and they will get assistance. However, if an agency such as the Troopers claims jurisdiction and do not request AC assistance then they are responsible for the consequences, not AC.

Olson replied that this is not what she is hearing, from what she has been told at this meeting. What she has understood is that AC did not respond when requested by the Troopers because the mayor's office told AC not to respond.

Severa agreed that this is what happened the first time.

Olson contradicted and asserted it is what happened the second time. And if this is the case, the 2001 Task Force is also a moot point because it states that AC needs to be well-trained for animal cruelty cases and if they are not attending the animal cruelty cases then the money allotted for animal cruelty training should be taken from the budget to save the taxpayers' money. She further stated that if this is the case, that AC does not have authority over animal cruelty cases, she questions the purpose of a group like the ACC.

Rosenberg interjected that it was time to move on.

Olson asserted that it is her right to ask this question.

Rosenberg gave Olson three more minutes to comment.

Olson asked what rule limits her to three minutes.

Rosenberg responded that, as the ACC Chair, she has just limited Olson's remaining comments to three minutes.

Olson questioned the purpose of government agencies that do not respond to the public, and that this lack of response incites the public to vigilantism. Olson referred back to the incident she had brought up and stated that if government agencies were doing what they were charged to do, what occurred would not have unfolded. Olson further proposed that if a similar incident were to occur in the future and, again, the government agency failed to respond, then a greater tragedy may take place because the public would act on its own. Olson went on to say that she has already seen this happen and began to describe another incident involving a person's dog musers.

Unknown indicated Olson had taken up her time.

Olson: “Fine. We don’t get any help we’re going to buy ourselves a trap. We’re going to set up a benevolent fund. We’re going in to take dogs out of places that they’re starving because AC doesn’t respond. It’s getting out of hand and I’m hearing it on my phone.”

Rosenberg: “Do you realize those decisions were made long before this horse incident?”

Olson accused Rosenberg of using the fact that decisions have already been made on the issues she brings up as an excuse and clarifies that what she is asking for the ACC to do is to re-address these issues with a more critical eye.

Streeter stated that while he does not agree with the decisions, the changes were made by Governor Murkowski.

Olson replied that grassroots democracy is the beginning and that is how you start, by disagreeing with a policy and then going on to doing something that will change the policy. Olson then reminded the ACC that when they stated “That’s the law” in regards to the puppy and kitten euthanasia list policy that the public disagreed and got the law changed.

Ruger responded that Olson is the grassroots movement in this case suggested that Olson take this issue to her legislators.

Orbison pointed out that the legislators tell the public to bring it back to the ACC.

Olson angrily confirmed that when the public goes to their assembly, the assembly refers them back to the commission.

Fortune asked Olson to please calm down.

Olson said that is all she wanted to say and asked Fortune [or the ACC?] if they can understand what she was trying to tell them.

Fortune stated that the reason she has been a member of the ACC since 1996 is because she cares and wants to ensure better care for the animals but, as her fellow commissioners have mentioned, the ACC operates with certain restrictions and hopefully will operate under a larger sphere in the future but, as a government body, has limitations. She let Olson know that as a member of the public Olson does not have the same limitations and can actually help the ACC.

Olson stated she will go to the assembly.

Ruger asked to comment regarding the incidents discussed and the role of the Mayor’s office. Ruger stated that, to the best of his knowledge, the Mayor’s office said not to respond on the first incident where it was dark and firearms were being discharged because AC officers are not paid to enter into situations like that where they may be in personal danger.

Rosenberg added that this is true, especially in cases like the one mentioned, where the people involved have a “known history of firearms with the family.”

Ruger stated he cannot confirm that, but the Mayor’s office told AC to not respond that night, but not necessarily to not respond at all. The next day the Troopers took over the investigation because the priority issue was the discharge of firearms in an area where people were present

and the Troopers would call AC if they were needed. He clarified that at that point it was the Troopers' investigation and AC would assist when the Troopers asked for assistance.

Olson: "As I recall the lady said you told her, 'Bring in a copy, come in and file a report,' and all that's really there is her report."

Ruger: "Who's 'you?'"

Olson responded with the lady's name.

Ruger clarified his question, asking who the person was who told the lady to file a report.

Olson said that she can no longer discuss the details as it is a matter of public record.

Ruger stated that he does not recall being the one telling the lady to file a report.

Olson continued that her thoughts are the ACC loses nothing by putting these issues she has raised on the agenda and that is also what the ACC is paid to do.

Severa reminded Olson that the ACC is not paid.

Olson apologized and stated that the "pay" is "honorary" and the people on the ACC volunteer to fulfill this position. She went on to say that as a member of the public she does not think she could get on the ACC. She further stated that she knows Lynn Orbison has tried to get on the ACC but has been told that she is "too critical" of the AC to serve on the ACC.

Olson: "What kind of a democracy is it when you're all a like-type of thinkers?"

Unknown protested this comment.

Rosenberg clarified that the Mayor chooses who is on the ACC, not any members of the ACC.

Olson responded that she knows this but that someone told the Mayor that Lynn was "too critical" of AC.

Rosenberg continued to say that after the Mayor chooses an ACC member they are then confirmed by the assembly.

Olson affirmed that she knows this also.

Severa stated that the ACC is composed of "independent thinkers."

Olson stated that is not what she thinks.

Severa stated that, unfortunately, she has never met Olson and is doubtful Olson knows how she thinks.

Olson replied that she believes the ACC considers what she feels should be discussed is not "any of their business" and so she will now take her leave, become a vigilante and take the issues she thinks are important to the assembly. She stated that she feels "why bother?" when it comes to AC. She then cited an incident passed on to her by John Chandlemeyer (?) who had

been frequenting AC often and witnessed a woman trying to adopt a husky. The woman did not have the money to get the dog spayed and Chandlemeyer (?) told the woman to inquire about the SNIP program and the AC counter person was discouraging, telling the woman that the SNIP program was always full. Chandlemeyer (?) spoke to the AC person at a later hour during that visit and recalled that they should have referred the woman to Second Chance League Sled Dog Rescue. The AC person declared that they don't refer just anyone to Second Chance. Olson admitted this incident was hearsay but she hears this type of hearsay often and questions why she is the one the person reports to and not AC. She concluded that it is just easier if she handles these matters herself from now on, though it is not her job and her property taxes do pay AC staff to resolve these issues. She then continued to lament that the people who are supposed to resolve AC issues say that they cannot because laws restrict them and the ACC does not even have the courtesy to acknowledge her written public comment.

Fortune asked Olson if Rosenberg responded on behalf of the ACC, acknowledging that they received Olson's letter.

Rosenberg confirmed she did respond to Olson via email verifying they received her letter.

Fortune acknowledged Olson may not have received an "argumentative response" or commentary on her written public comment.

Olson responded she did get an acknowledgement that her comments would be introduced into the minutes as Public Comment but she did not get any feedback from her actual letter. She mentioned that even Bill Stringer who was only "cc'ed" on the original April letter responded quite lengthily but he was the only one who responded to her letter with comments on the content.

Severa responded that if there is an available comment, her email is now current; she would be interested in the content of Olson's letter from April.

Fortune does recall Rosenberg reading this letter at a prior meeting.

Olson commented that Rosenberg stated she would introduce the letter in the fall meeting and that is where she looked for it [in the minutes on the FNSB website].

Rosenberg believed that was in "Other Comments."

[People talking over one another, cannot decipher.]

Rosenberg stated that the meeting was going to move on and if there was anything to submit at this time, please submit.

Fortune thanked Olson.

Olson let Severa know she will send the letters to her but pointed out that in her comments from the last month she referred to the April letter and ACC members who do not recall the April letter or its contents should have asked about the letter then and noted that they did not have it and requested it from Olson at that time, but no one did this.

Wilson stated she was not aware of a letter from last month either.

Rosenberg stated that that letter was handed out.

Ruger confirmed this and said that everyone was given a copy to read.

Wilson admitted that she recalled the letter now.

Rosenberg also added that the AC commissioners were given the opportunity, at least twice, to add to the Agenda. Rosenberg asked the other members of the public present if they would like to make comments. There were none.

SHELTER REPORT:

Matt Ruger presented the Shelter Report.

New items:

Ruger stated that the casual Admissions Clerk resigned from AC effective today, after she had given two weeks notice, due to a family matter outside. The opening was posted last week and will close on Wednesday. He hopes to be interviewing for the position in the next couple of weeks.

Ruger informed the ACC that the new shelter software, Chameleon, is up and running. He stated that installation and formal training were done on the week of Dec 8 – 12 and Animal Control staff has been in informal training since then and the staff experienced some of the usual teething issues experienced with a major software change but are correcting issues as they are encountered. He stated that once the AC staff gets used to being paperless, a goal he mentions he has had since he started his position as Manager, all will be well.

Rosenberg stated that one of the issues is when passing through [the shelter] it is helpful to jot down notes on how the animals are doing. Rosenberg noted that it is better to have updated information and at least they do not have outdated information.

Ruger stated that they are trying to keep the comments as minimal as possible because there is always criticism regarding the accuracy of their comments: in some cases the comments have been deemed “too positive and in others “too negative.” He also mentioned that the program has no spell checker and typos and writing errors can risk the credibility of the staff. He further stated that it is always best for people to talk with AC staff and/or the animal tenders to find out about an animal; furthermore, the information is available, it is just no longer written out in longhand on the animals’ cages. He has spoken to other people who made the transition to Chameleon and experienced the same difficulties though they have told him they were satisfied with the product in the end. He mentioned that the kennel cards are less cluttered now and there is no longer the difficulty of trying to decipher other people’s handwriting.

Fortune stated that they have the sex and age approximation, then asked for confirmation that they have at least this information noted.

Ruger affirmed that they do have the age approximation as well as other vital information.

Fortune asked if they have that the animal is housetrained.

Rosenberg noted that whether an animal is housetrained is “fairly irrelevant” for the shelter because how animals behave in the shelter or how they were at home is never consistent.

Ruger noted that another issue with lengthy information on kennel cards at the shelter is the shelter does not have the animals long enough to know. He added that he realized the dog he personally adopted was housetrained because she would never “mess” in her kennel at the shelter and she is the same way now inside the house. He noted that when behavior like this is observed it is noted and passed on to shelter visitors. He also noted that one issue that has always been a problem, and the absence of the writing on the kennel cards prevents, is when owners/people turning in the animals describe the animal as, for example, “great with children” then someone adopts the animal and it is not so good with children, the shelter gets blamed because it looks like they endorsed this information as their observations when it is not information they added. He mentioned that he always stresses to the AC staff that they must note when information is provided by previous owners and when it is observed at the shelter. He noted that the adoption paperwork also states that the shelter cannot vouch for the health or behavior of animals because they just do not have them long enough. He admitted there are issues they are trying to resolve by providing less information, rather than too much information, because it encourages people to speak to the staff about an animal instead of reading information on the kennel card and taking that information as being presented by the shelter when it is really just information pulled off the admittance paperwork entered by the previous owner.

Rosenberg admitted that she likes having the updated information because sometimes an animal does not respond well to first being admitted and may be shy or get sick and then if that original observation is not updated the negative comment is all people see and it tends to make them pass over that particular animal.

Ruger mentioned that he has heard from his counterparts at other shelters with this software that it has more strengths than weaknesses. He commented that shelter software is this company’s only product so they have built their reputation on this one product versus other companies who produce shelter software as part of a product line but not as their specialty. Chameleon’s livelihood depends upon this software so they focus on customer needs.

Rosenberg asked if they can get an adopted list because people like to see what animals and how many animals got adopted.

Ruger replied that an adopted list is one of the many things they would like to see the software carry out but that they are currently just learning the basics of the system. He continued that, although the list of what they’d like to do is long, the primary issue now is ensuring all data from Shelter Pro gets entered as they have discovered that some of the data did not transfer. He stated that he will be speaking with the person who trained the staff via the telephone this next week and working the shelter statistics report.

Rosenberg clarified that even if it takes a month or two it is important to see the success stories because this is a difficult job and it is encouraging to see animals get adopted and also the variety of animals that do get adopted.

Ruger replied that he has told his staff if there is something they would like to see accomplished with the new software to email him so that it can be added to the list of tasks they would like to see Chameleon perform once they learn the basics of the new software.

Wilson asked if Chameleon interfaces with Petfinder and Pet Harbor.

Ruger replied that it does and that there are actually four or five websites that Chameleon interfaces with. He stated that it currently interfaces with Pet Harbor but there are security issues Chameleon is working with Petfinder so Chameleon can post updates to Petfinder.

Rosenberg interjected that there is a "bridge" program and that is what they are currently working on.

Wilson mentioned it would be helpful if on the websites (citing Pet Harbor as an example) in the "lost & found" section, the location where the lost dog was found was provided. She noted that Pet Harbor is one website, for example, that does not provide this information.

Ruger mentioned the link from the AC website that directs people to Pet Harbor to view animals and stated that when the "gigs" are worked out with Petfinder they will still use Pet Harbor too. He further stated some people prefer Petfinder, including himself, but others prefer Pet Harbor.

Several others agreed they prefer Petfinder also.

Rosenberg mentioned that Petfinder is easier for people with dial-up to use since it uses less bandwidth.

Fortune noted she tried unsuccessfully to access AC's adoptable dogs over the weekend so she could download updates for the posting they have at Cold Spot.

Rosenberg answered that the new dogs are not on there and Fortune must go to Pet Harbor for now.

Fortune replied that she did not see anything about Pet Harbor.

Ruger responded that there is a link on the site to view animals on Pet Harbor.

Fortune admitted she could have missed it and will try again at home.

Rosenberg told Fortune that she may not be able to download her pictures off of Pet Harbor.

Ruger mentioned again the "bridging security situation" the techs are dealing with between Petfinder and the tech person with Chameleon is working Petfinder to fix this. He mentioned he just returned to the office from vacation today and asked if Petfinder is working okay now.

Rosenberg mentioned there are some "weird" issues occurring: Janice talked to Sandy Reynolds in Computer Services...

Ruger asked if this happened recently.

Rosenberg did not know when exactly but that it was sometime last week. Rosenberg further clarified that this is an ongoing issue and people are on vacation for the holidays.

Ruger concurred that this is a difficult time of year to get issues resolved because of the holidays and vacations.

Rosenberg mentioned there were duplicates, dogs listed as both “adoptable” and “lost.” She clarified that when animals come in, “lost” has various meanings covering all statuses (e.g., stray, picked up by an AC officer) except for the dogs available for adoption. When it became time to transfer the dogs over from “lost” to “adoptable” the dogs appeared in both places. She stated that the idea behind the “lost” status is if someone is missing an animal they may recognize the picture of their lost animal and act on the possibility. She ended comment with the fact that there are still some issues with Chameleon.

Ruger reassured everyone that there are always “teething” issues with new software programs, especially one as involved as Chameleon.

Fortune apologized for changing the subject but wanted to ask, for the record, “What would your response be to people that say, uh, they’ve gone to the shelter and they haven’t seen that many dogs, lots of empty cages, and their speculation is that the euthanasia list is active and well a few times a week or that we’re euthanizing large numbers for the empty cages that people see, and door cages I’m talking about.”

Ruger said he signed one euthanasia list before he went on vacation and has not seen one this week. He explained that a list is generated when AC is full or for unadoptable animals. He stated the euthanasia rate this year is at 13%--the lowest euthanasia rate in the history of AC.

Fortune accepted this response.

Ruger conceded that people will always speculate but the truth is the euthanasia rate is less than half the rate it was when he arrived, it is the lowest it has been since he has been at AC and the numbers are continuing to go down. He predicted that the euthanasia numbers will plateau at some point, though he likes to think it could go down to zero. He stated that he believes the numbers tell the whole story.

Fortune thanked Ruger for his explanation.

Ruger went on to mention Shelter Pro and the statistics that he has are accurate as of December 3, 2008 (they were printed on the 15th). As time allows they will pull the records for the animals in Shelter Pro so they can close out and not duplicate the statistics when they overlap Shelter Pro with the new program Chameleon. However, AC will use Shelter Pro for at least another year for research because some information did not get transferred into the new software. Microchips are one example of information that was left behind and AC has learned that when an animal comes in microchipped they need to search for the information in Chameleon and Shelter Pro as well. He thinks one reason information was left behind is because of the different formats from the manufacturers and also, possibly, because the data transfer in Chameleon saw the information, did not know where to store it, and so ignored it. He admits similar issues arose when he arrived and AC was transferring from an older software program to Shelter Pro and they still look up historical information from the older program, on occasion. He restated that as they have time they are pulling reports and running wild card data queries to see what is not in Chameleon and make sure they get the data input into Chameleon.

Fortune asked if a member of the community finds a dog but does not want to bring the dog to AC and subject them to the stress of a shelter but wants to advertise for the lost dog themselves, if they come to AC to check and see if the dog is microchipped will AC scan the animal for them?

Ruger responded “absolutely”. AC performs this service frequently and does a “found” report. The member of the public is welcome to take the animal back home with them. He also mentioned that if the community member has made a good faith effort to find the owner and the animal is unclaimed, after a period of time, the community member is welcome to claim the animal as their own if they wish to do so and that this is actually law, citing the ordinance (Title 6). If a member of the public finds a lost animal and that animal is unclaimed after 72 hours the animal can then be claimed by the person that found it. He noted that the State of Alaska views animals as property and the same laws apply to lost property: if a good faith effort is made on behalf of the person who found the property (advertising and such) and that property is not claimed, they will then at some point own the property.

Rosenberg added that you also must not have a reason to believe it is someone else’s animal.

Ruger agreed that you must not have a reason to believe it is someone else’s animal and cited a common occurrence of a person giving a dog away and then changing their mind. If it is after 72 hours the dog belongs to the person the original owner gave it to. Ruger added that he thinks the ethical ruling would be that the dog belongs to the person immediately when the original owner says they can have it, but the ordinance states 72 hours.

Fortune added that a clear effort to advertise that the dog has been found is also needed.

Ruger mentioned that AC is the clearinghouse for lost and found animals. If a member of the public completes a “lost and found” report with AC...

Rosenberg interjected that one is not legally obligated to advertise that they have found the animal.

Ruger stated that there are people new to the area who do not know about AC and put advertisements in the paper when they find a dog or cat and do not know to file a “lost and found” report. He summed up that as long as a “good faith” effort is made and if the owner does not come to claim the animal then the person who finds the animal and keeps it is justified in doing so.

Wilson noted the lost/found ads in the News-Miner are free.

Ruger returns to the subject of Shelter Pro and that AC will continue to use it as a backup to ensure that the data transferred accurately. He stated that he should have statistics for the next ACC meeting and that the new format for his statistics are easier to read and more concise.

Rosenberg stated that she likes details.

Ruger explained that while the new statistics with the Chameleon software are less detailed, more details can always be added if there are specific details one is looking for.

Rosenberg stated that the ACC needs to have details.

Ruger added that the report generated by Chameleon covers the same details as the reports generated by Shelter Pro software but the format is just more concise. He restated that he did speak with a Chameleon tech today and they are going to discuss the statistical report glitches in the software next week.

Old items:

Ruger stated that the Emergency Operations Manager position was reposted last week. The new close date is January 6th. He will continue to report directly to the Chief of Staff until a new Emergency Operations Manager is hired.

Rosenberg stated that it seemed as if the job description changed for this posting.

Ruger said he did not look at the job description on the second posting.

Wilson asked about the reports, mentioning the top row on every page has numbers in it but does not have a caption.

Ruger replied that the animals in question were in the system but when the data was entered into the records the system did not know where to put it and so stuck it in the section Wilson was inquiring about. He stated that most of those animals were put in for adoption and then, apologizing, stated that what they were looking at are animals on the Intake list. That section in the Disposition report is animals that are still in the shelter but for one reason or another were not classified.

Rosenberg expressed the idea that some of those animals are “carry over” animals that came months ago, as far back as November, that are still in the shelter. She went on to state that there are animals in the shelter now that have been there since October.

Ruger concurred.

Rosenberg stated that these animals have been “carried over” as they did not come in this month and they also did not get adopted out this month.

Rosenberg stated that one thing she believes would be useful is getting into using the Asilomar Accords. An example of this is when euthanasia is listed under “temperament” when something like temperament has so many other descriptions, e.g., feral, vicious, etc.

Ruger stated that the new software breaks out for temperament and behavior, then behavior is further distinguished by behavior that can be fixed and goes back to restate that once they learn the software there will be so much that they can do, such as describing the different behavioral distinctions.

Rosenberg stated that this will be very good and good information for the public because at this time undesirable behavior is all lumped together. She stated that they do have animals that have behavioral problems but...

Wilson interjected that they have other animals that there are safety issues regarding their behavior.

Rosenberg concurred that it is safety mixed in with...[trails off].

Ruger agreed and stated that “animals that want to eat your face are lumped in with ones that won’t use a litterbox” and states that AC does not like this and that this is the good thing about Chameleon. Once they learn it they will be able to “fine tune” these distinctions in behavior and

temperament and he stated that the Asilomar Accords do this: break down behavior and all those areas they want to track.

Rosenberg stated that no one will pay to have an animal behaviorist come in, at the borough's expense, and transform these vicious animals and at the same time there are the other animals that are trainable.

Ruger: "We have a word for that and it's called 'rescue'."

Fortune brought up, for example, the 75-pound black labs that do not have even basic training and the animal tenders do not want to deal with them.

Ruger stated that it is not that they do not want to deal with the animals, it is that the animal tenders do not have the time.

Fortune agreed but stated she is describing her "worst-case nightmare" and so these animals get described as having behavior issues but they are just not trained.

Rosenberg stated that the general public does not want animals with behavior issues and the shelter does not have anyone who wants to come in on a consistent, regular basis (for training) and then the animals are also not kept at the shelter long enough to benefit from training.

Ruger stated that they do try very hard to work with animals that have behavior issues that can be trained, citing a 9-month-old puppy with no manners as an example, and try to rescue them to people with time to spend to correct these correctable behaviors. He stated that they do have rescues in town, citing Homeward Bound Pet Rescue & Referral as one rescue they use that does really well with behavioral issues.

Fortune offered Golden Retriever Rescue (GRR) as another good example.

Ruger readily agreed and stated they work with GRR as well, though GRR focuses more on their "niche" whereas Homeward Bound does not specialize in certain breeds or personalities. He stated that the person running Homeward Bound does not care what kind of dog it is—Shih Tzu or Mastiff—if she thinks she can correct behaviors and get the dog adopted, she will rescue it if she has the space. He emphasized that the shelter works very hard to ensure animals are not euthanized just because they were "shortchanged" by their previous owners.

Wilson remarked that it is often because no one has taken the time to teach them any manners.

Ruger agreed and restated that the shelter tries very hard not to euthanize but at times they have space limitations and the rescues are full and there's no other alternative, "but we try really hard not to do that."

Ruger noted to Orbison that he has a printout for her, a records request that she made then offered one of the copies he had on hand so Orbison would not have to make a trip to the shelter, which she accepted. He reminded her that the information is current as of the 3rd of December, printed on the 15th.

Rosenberg summarized the handout and stated that it looks like AC is handling a little over 400 animals a month.

Ruger agreed that it is around 400 - 450 and it does fluctuate from month to month.

Rosenberg asked for any new questions for Ruger based upon his shelter report, stating that he had already covered the item on the agenda under “New Business” about the new Chameleon software upgrade.

There were no questions about the Shelter Report.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Rosenberg announced the election of Chair and Vice-Chair would be at the upcoming January meeting. Rosenberg then brought up the potential legislation regarding the Open Meeting Law. She brought this potential legislation to the attention of the ACC because it was discussed at the borough assembly meeting in December. She noted that in August the borough assembly passed a resolution commenting on the State Open Meeting Law, AK statute 44.62.310, about government public meetings. She stated that the ACC falls under the Open Meeting Act of the State of Alaska and that one of the issues dealt with Road Service Commissioners. “Where Road Service Districts, as I understand it, meet regularly at regularly noticed meetings, just like this, they give public notice, the public can come, and they decide what repairs they wish to make in their road service districts and then they hire a contractor to do that, because that’s how rural road districts work—they tax themselves to upgrade and plough their roads. Well, so then typically what had happened on a few occasions, in certain districts, was some people that were retired that were commissioners met the contractor to show the contractor where the potholes were or the berms or whatever they wanted and because that part of it was not ‘noticed’ even though the decision of which potholes was ‘noticed’, that violated the Public Meeting Act. And, of course, each time that that happens it’s by the day—it’s a separate violation. So it was impeding their ability to get the roads repaired because people on the whole commission, people work and they couldn’t all take off to meet the contractor.”

Severa: “That’s not exactly how it works. Each service area, within the Fairbanks borough anyway, has a service commission. Each service area has a chair and members of it and, out of all of those service areas, contractors bid on who has it. So it isn’t a matter of a chairman or a service person meeting with anybody, the contractor has the bid for any work that goes on in that service area.”

Rosenberg stated that this is correct.

Severa continued: “So if a road needs to be done, you don’t have to hold a public meeting you don’t have to have a quorum. You don’t have to have...[trails off].”

Rosenberg clarified that the problem that was mentioned at the borough assembly meeting was people (commissioners) would go out to show them the potholes and then there were “problems” that were a violation of the State Open Meeting Law 1.07, which concerned the borough, prompting them to pass a resolution that they have given to the Interior delegation, asking them to look at the entire issue, which includes committees and sub-committees and even daisy-chaining emails. She noted she put this item on the agenda because the issue arose again at the assembly meeting, though she has not noticed anything pre-filed in Juneau and

admits that she does not know if anything will be pre-filed in Juneau. She explained that what was discussed was restricted solely to road service districts. She wanted to know if the ACC wanted to think about and or discuss this issue, as the Public Meeting Law does apply to them. Rosenberg went on to say that if something does come up and the ACC wants to review the legislation, she just wanted to make them aware of this issue. In addition, she thought the legislation may be applicable if there were ever a sub-committee or anything beyond public meetings for the ACC. She gave the example of when they discussed looking at potential land the borough may have for a new shelter and that this type of errand can be done as individuals or with a staff member, but not with any two or three commissioners together. She noted that it comes up with the Shelter Fund, then corrected herself to say it does not occur with the Shelter Fund anymore, but when there have been three AC commissioners on the Shelter Fund and attending the board meetings they have had to be extremely careful because they do discuss expenses and shelter programs during Shelter Fund meetings and how those discussions could easily have overlapped with ACC business, potential or actual. She concluded that she is not asking for a resolution, she just wanted to bring this issue to the ACC's attention and then cautioned the ACC that they may want to discuss this issue as it progresses.

Ruger asked for clarification regarding this legislation and violation of the legislation. For example, if Fortune and Rosenberg were discussing a cat, would that be the same type of situation that violates the State Open Meeting Law because they are discussing shelter business?

Rosenberg answered that if they are talking about whether one of them wants to adopt a cat, that is not a violation of the State Open Meeting Law, but if they were discussing a specific situation or care issues then that would be a violation. Furthermore, she stated that if she were to discuss a specific situation with Fortune, and Fortune then called and discussed the situation with Klimaschesky and Klimaschesky involved Severa.... She stated that when there are more than two commissioners involved they are at risk of violating the Open Meeting Law even if it is not their intention to discuss ACC business. She mentioned that even on the Shelter Fund board there are only two commissioners, not three, and three tends to be the magic number when it comes to violating the Open Meeting Law. She cautioned the AC Commissioners to be aware and careful of unintentionally "doing business" of the ACC outside of ACC meetings.

Ruger: "Oh, actually, a better example I have...."

Rosenberg interrupted with cautioning the ACC to be very careful.

Ruger: "If you're back there commenting on the cat condos and where it's coming apart—the wall—and you say, 'Hey, we need to do something about that wall,' Boom! Now you've just violated..."

Rosenberg: "Well, if I said it, no, because it's not a public meeting."

Ruger clarified his scenario included another commissioner.

Rosenberg agreed that now it is a violation.

Fortune observed that by that definition, if she were to inquire to Rosenberg about the Shelter Fund possibly assisting a percentage of costs that the borough does not cover, it could be a violation.

Ruger stated that they just all need to be very careful as a lot of time the violations occur inadvertently.

Rosenberg agreed that the violations are usually inadvertent discussions but asserts that the public has a right to be present at discussions that constitute open meetings and anything that is considered “doing business.” She stated that all of the cases that have been construed concluded in favor of public disclosure. She also brought up limits to disclosure that do not apply to the ACC (e.g., personnel issues, lawsuits, etc.). She gave the example that they would not want to discuss who wants to be next Chair of the ACC and reminded the commissioners that telephone conversations and email all constitute a communication. She asked, again, that the ACC be aware of this issue though the legislators may not address it, even though the public wants to discuss it, or if the borough passes a resolution it does not mean the legislators will do anything with this issue.

Rosenberg moved on to the Shelter Fund update and an update on the approaching Pick, Click & Give PFD program. Rosenberg explained that the Shelter Fund is a private non-profit corporation that is a public charity to support the shelter with items not in the borough budget and they are wrapping up their year. The Shelter Fund fiscal year ends December 31. She stated that it has been a successful year—though she has not run the year-end statistics—despite the unhealthy economy. She did note that donations went down during the summer when people started anticipating their upcoming heating and gas bills but the fourth quarter ended strongly. She stated the Shelter Fund will also be participating in the Permanent Fund Check-off program, which allows people who electronically file for their PFDs to select a charity/charities to donate to, and the Shelter Fund will be listed under the 4th Judicial District. She attended training regarding this program, provided by the Foraker Group and, by statute, the charities have to be listed at random so she does not know where on the list under the 4th Judicial District the Shelter Fund will fall. She stated that people can donate \$25 or more in \$25 dollar increments and that it is more of a pledge than a donation as the charities will not receive the money donated until the end of October.

Wilson asked if the state then sends the money to the charity.

Rosenberg responded that the money is disseminated through Foraker and the fiscal agent will be United Way of Anchorage. She stated that for the first 3 years of the Permanent Fund Check-off program neither agency will take any portion of the money donated, so the charities will get the direct amount donated/pledged. The program received a grant from the Rasmussen Foundation that underwrites the administrative costs. She let Wilson know to tell people who pledge that the charity will get the direct amount of money pledged. She stated that people can donate to more than one charity and asked the ACC members to let people know about this and has been publicizing it herself, as a pledge rather than an end of the year donation. She stated that it is only a 3-year program and then the legislature will evaluate the program and if people used it. She said the overall goal of this program is to increase charitable giving and that donations can be anonymous or contributors may give permission to release their names to the charities. She also announced that the Shelter Fund will again be participating in Sadler’s “Christmas in July” program. She stated that the programs mentioned above as well as the community’s support have helped the Shelter Fund this year. She cited the euthanasia donations as having brought the Shelter Fund over \$2,000, close to \$3,000. She admitted she has not “run final numbers” yet so she this is only an estimate. She mentioned that the money from the euthanasia donations is helpful because people outside of the borough, who do not pay taxes, bring animals in to be euthanized or cremated. She stated the Shelter Fund works with the shelter, mainly with animals in need of veterinary care, and they have done business

with an estimated eight veterinarians this year as well as various businesses in town. She then asked for questions.

Fortune asked what the income was for the Shelter Fund for Christmas in July.

Rosenberg replied that Christmas in July generated several hundred dollars, not huge, and that this is typical. She stated that Sadler's generally gives the Shelter Fund a donation too.

Fortune commented that this is nice of Sadler's.

Ruger asked how Pet Photos went since it was canceled then put on the schedule again at the last minute.

Rosenberg stated that "Pet Photos is what it is" but that Christmas in July is helpful as it gives the Shelter Fund names of people that are not already in their database and then these people are contacted again when the Shelter Fund does its solicitations so it helps build their mail membership donation base, which is fueling the success of the fund. She stated that she does have a few more ideas on one more "solid income producer" as the Fund needs to diversify, especially in times of a troubled economy. She noted that the Shelter Fund has been able to supply the power washer, horse equipment, and birdcages with the Rotary grant, which is good capital equipment, then concluded that most of the money goes toward veterinary care. She continued that it will be interesting when Ruger does his Asilomar Accord adjustments because many of the animals with unique medical issues that would usually have been euthanized are not euthanized; the animals with hip pinning and major surgeries, for example.

Fortune stated she was very heartened to see that the Shelter Fund paid for medical issues such as dental care and severe ear infections.

Ruger mentioned the set-up for the horses.

Rosenberg stated that the horse equipment is good because it is portable and if there is ever another disaster such as the boundary fire and they had to set up off-site, they could.

Fortune stated that this is wonderful.

Rosenberg mentioned they will be working closely as Ruger finalizes capital budgets and other budgets for this year so they'll be set for the budget cycle.

Ruger said the capital budget has already been decided on and the rest of the month he will work on his operating budget, which is another reason he wants the statistics up and running.

Rosenberg said the Shelter Fund will be closing out their books in 2 days then asked for Commissioner comments and to set dates for some future meetings.

COMMISSION COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rosenberg encouraged ACC to go to Google and click on Google News and mentioned the opportunity to personalize Google News. If you personalize by using the keywords "animal shelter" you will get up to nine different stories, which change every few days, of news of national and sometimes international animal shelters. Some of the stories are irrelevant but

many are helpful for generating ideas and also allow you to find out what other shelters are dealing with and how our shelter compares.

Fortune commented that while the Animal Shelter, recognizing that it is part of Animal Control, is far from perfect, people get confused and need to realize that Animal Control operates as two entities under one building and has heard feedback that while there are areas that need improvement, FNSB AC does, as a whole, do good positive work and has “a good operation.” She recognized that there is a lot of positive, a lot to be changed and there always will be room for improvement, but she wants it on record that they do a good job and there is a lot of positivity and she has heard this from many different unassociated sources who have commented on what a good operation we have.

Ruger concurred he has heard that FNSB is held in high regard elsewhere in the state and, especially with military personnel coming in and himself having traveled extensively for 22 years, that FNSB AC does very well, receives 100 to 1 positive vs. negative comments, and the statistics support the perceived improvement. He said of the numerous places he’s visited, in and out of the state, he’ll put his staff up against the best anybody can offer. When you look at our numbers they’re among the best in the country. He also mentioned that FNSB AC is the #1 shelter in Alaska according to Petfinder and Rosenberg received a \$1,000 grant check from Petfinder to the Shelter Fund s a result. He stated there are a lot of people who complain about AC...

Rosenberg interrupted that there are actually only a few people, perhaps 10 or 15 they hear from regularly, in a community of well over 100,000.

Ruger stated he gets very many positive emails, letters and comments and encourages people to look at where AC in now as compared to 3 – 4 years ago because it’s easy to feel beat up—and beat yourself up—when you hear people hollering and complaining even though it’s usually the same people.

Rosenberg mentioned that when she receives complaints she passes them on immediately and that she makes complaints but this is inevitable. She stated that complaints are made, they are addressed, and overall the facility is very good very good and people, at times, get agitated because their issues are very important to them and need to be addressed but these issues cannot drive the operation.

Ruger stated that he takes all complaints and issues seriously as there is always an opportunity for improvement. Not that he wants to belittle those with concerns, but at times the progress AC has made should be recognized as it has changed immensely in the past 4 years. He admitted he used to occasionally read the blogs in the Daily News-Miner online, against his better judgment, and divulged that it is frustrating with misleading stories being quoted and he himself being wrongly described and misquoted. He has since stopped reading them.

Rosenberg agreed and stated that they cannot “correct” the public on the misleading information that is out there because there are privacy issues and confidential situations. She continued that, likewise, the ACC may seem unresponsive but they cannot allow agendas of a few individuals to direct them.

Ruger agreed that they (the AC staff and the commission) know the whole story but are unable to provide legal details as that would violate individuals’ privacy rights, so AC and the ACC must “take it on the chin and move on.” He said he has told his staff “from the beginning that

everything you do must be legal, ethical and moral and if you start the day every day purposed in your mind that everything you do is going to be ethical, legal and moral then you don't have anything to worry about. Let people say what they want to say—the truth eventually gets out there and you can go to bed and sleep at night knowing you've done the best you can do every day.”

Rosenberg asked for other comments.

Wilson stated that the animal rescue site that partnered with Petfinder on the shelter challenge will be conducting another challenge.

Ruger stated he is always happy to take their money (several chuckles from the commissioners), though he clarified that the Shelter Fund gets the money to use for AC.

Wilson stated that the shelter that received the most votes in the country was given \$25,000, then \$10,000 to second, and the top shelter in each state received \$1,000.

Rosenberg commented that some of those shelters have national constituencies so they get a lot of support.

Ruger stated that the check Petfinder gave the Shelter Fund was good because there was no contest or call to action. They just emailed him once they decided the award. Ruger corrected himself—Wilson was emailed and she notified him.

Ruger admitted he did not even know they were doing this.

Rosenberg noted that she thinks people will go to Petfinder less until they get that link back up in Chameleon.

Rosenberg stated that they get the long distance adoptions this way and they want to stay on Petfinder because of this.

Ruger stated that Janice followed up on the statistics with Petfinder and FNSB AC “smoked” Anchorage.

Wilson agreed.

Rosenberg acknowledged that they generally do then asked for other comments and to set a date for a January meeting.

Severa wanted to add, to each of the commissioners, that each member has brought something to the Commission, and that each and everyone does a wonderful job. Matt Ruger has done a tremendous job and Pat and Sandy, as the most senior people at the shelter bring, so much to the facility. She is very appreciative of all of them and is glad she serves with them.

Severa was thanked by everyone.

Rosenberg reminded the commissioners to send agenda items to her or Matt Ruger three weeks ahead of time and that the Commission comments section and comments after the Shelter report do not have to be on the Agenda but can be commented on during the meetings.

The next meeting be on January 12th 2009 in the Chizmar Room at the Borough Administrative Center and the February meeting will be on February 9th, location TBA.

A motion was made and seconded to close the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 8:12 PM.

Submitted by Rachel Seale on behalf of Matt Ruger

Note: The written comments dated April, 11, 2008 referred to in these minutes are available in hard copy at the FNSB Clerk's office.