

Animal Control Advisory Board (ACAB)
Sterling Police Department, 135 Leominster Road
Sterling, MA 01564

Meeting Minutes - April 28, 2021

Roll Call:

At Police Department: Terry Sadler, Chair; Anne Marie Catalano, Fran Simonds, Edee McNamara, Lainey Armstrong, and Animal Control Officer Louis Massa

Attending by Remote Connection: Elaine Heller, Recording Secretary

Absent: Kathie Nickerson and Cindy Miller

Other Attendees: Judy Reynolds, Pam Donaldson, Jeff Donaldson, Cassandra Correia, Karen Kase, Carlton Grady, Dee Sendrowski, and Greg Vonsternberg

Call to Order: Chairman Sadler called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM.

Review/Approve Prior Meeting Minutes: A motion to approve minutes of the March 3, 2021 meeting was made by Anne Marie Catalano and seconded by Edee McNamara. All in favor, motion carried.

Announcements/Correspondence: None

Old Business:

Disaster Response Plan for Animals Update: Ms. Catalano is continuing to work on the proposal.

New Business:

Discuss a New Meeting Night for ACAB Meetings: After discussion, members agreed to hold future meetings on a Thursday night, preferably the first Thursday of the month.

Reports:

ACO Reports: to date 1075 licensed dogs, 0 pending court action, 475 unlicensed dogs

ACO Wildlife and Domestic Reports: Reports were reviewed and discussed by Board members. A motion to approve both reports was made by Fran Simonds and seconded by Anne Marie Catalano. Unanimous vote.

ACO Other Concerns/Comments: ACO Massa advised members there will be an article in the next edition of the Meetinghouse News that, as of May 12, 2021, late fees will be applied to unlicensed dogs.

Ms. Catalano suggested ACO Massa contact the Light Department about displaying a notice on their electronic sign regarding late fees. Ms. Armstrong suggested the Facebook Community Page as well and ACO Massa mentioned the Police Department Facebook Page.

A photograph of ACAB members who participated in the recent rabies clinic was published in the newspaper. As a thank you for hosting the clinic, Ms. Catalano brought cookies for the veterinarians and staff at VCA Animal Hospital.

At 7:10 PM, Chairman Sadler called for a 5-minute break in the meeting. The next Agenda item is a scheduled appointment at 7:15 PM.

At 7:15 PM, Chairman Sadler re-opened the meeting.

Appointment: 7:15 PM:

Kennel Owners and Owners of 4 or more dogs: to discuss outcome of Public Hearing by Planning Board re: ZBA proposed changes to Kennels in Sterling - going to Warrant for Town Meeting on June 14, 2021:

Sterling residents concerned about the proposed changes by the ZBA to deny kennels in rural residential zoning participated in a discussion with ACAB members and the Animal Control Officer. Planning Board members recently voted against approval of this bylaw change. Resident Pam Donaldson stressed it would be advisable to educate the public before the Town Meeting. Those who oppose this change should mobilize and form a group to establish a plan of action, and possibly an amendment to the article on town floor.

After further discussion, Ms. Donaldson offered to lead a group effort for informational purposes.

A motion to oppose the ZBA article to limit kennels by allowing them only by special permit was made by Edee McNamara and seconded by Lainey Armstrong. Unanimous vote. The Board would like their opposition to this article noted in the Town Meeting Warrant.

Ms. Catalano suggested meeting with the Select Board to discuss their opposition to the article and will send a request to be on an upcoming Select Board agenda.

Unforeseen Agenda: None

Set Next Meeting Date:

If necessary, the ACAB will hold a meeting on May 5, 2021, as a follow-up to a potential meeting with the Select Board. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 3, 2021, at 6:30 PM at the Sterling Police Department.

Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Simonds and seconded by Armstrong. All in favor, meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM.