

Columbus Consolidated Government

Minutes of a Special Called Meeting: Ordinance Amendment

Animal Control Advisory Board

February 3, 2023

5:30 pm

Location of Meeting:

Public Works Driver's Training Room

602 – 11th Avenue Bldg. E

Columbus, GA, 31901

Work Discussion/Ordinance Amendment

Present at Meeting:

Contreana Pearson

Jayne Dunn

Sabine Stull, Chairperson

Raymond Culpepper

Kristi Ludy

Courtney Pierce

Julee Fryer Co-Chairperson

Stephen Waters

Channon Emery

Drale Short

Absent from Meeting:

Dr. Jean Waguespack

Dr. Scott McDermott

A special called meeting for a work session to discuss an ordinance amendment **Section 5-7.2 Restraint** of the Columbus Consolidated Government, Animal and Fowl ordinance for supervised tethering. The Animal Control Advisory Board was called to order at 5:32 pm on Thursday, February 03, 2023, by the chairperson Sabine Stull.

Sabine Stull asked for the approval of the minutes from 12/13/2022 and 01/17/2023. Raymond Culpepper made a motion to approve the minutes and Courtney Pierce second the motion.

*****ACTION TAKEN: ALL VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT APPROVAL MINUTES FROM BOARD MEETING 01.17.2023 and 12/13/2022.**

Sabine Stull referred all board members to their informational packets given to each board member.

Raymond Culpepper made a statement; the tasks of the Animal Control Advisory Board is to make animal control better. He stated, the time spent with this proposed ordinance amendment and it not being enforceable is a waste of time. The board needs to focus on getting the animals out the shelter and concentrate on the audit that was just done. The auditor was very thorough in her detailing of animal control needs. The concentration on grant monies and the need for more animal control officers.

Contreana Pearson explained the grant monies the city council voted on last Tuesday was for Animal Control to 'apply for' and 'accept' a grant. This is a capital improvement grant from the Atlanta Humane Society. Designated for improvements at the shelter for monies between \$ 10,000 to \$30,000 if awarded. One improvement suggestion was a wash station for dogs to be used before they go out for offsite adoption events. Stephen Waters inquired if animal control already had sinks for washing. Contreana Pearson replied, they are now washed in the sinks where the animal bowls are washed. Contreana Pearson, also stated another improvement would be a designated meet and greet area for families trying to adopt. Courtney Pierce offered PAWS Humane play yard for animal playgroups.

Courtney Pierce stated, she wanted to go over the data that was supplied from the animal control dispatch logs relating to cruelty in specifics tethering. She went through 1200 calls to compare the data. She focused on dog related calls with 118 were for no shelter and very few people called about trolley systems. She believes the proposed language is being crossed with changing a single point tie out which is already a law that bans this type tethering. She explained, with animal control 5 officers short it is very hard to follow up and enforce. She would like to see more community outreach and educating the public about proper tethering.

Dr. McDermott asked Contreana Pearson to read an email to the board in reference to his stance on amending tethering ordinance after he reviewed the data from dispatched calls. He emphasized in the email/letter to the board, 1) animal control is taxed with calls, 2) bulk of calls are improperly chained or without food or water and 3) unattended animals for prolonged periods of time on trolley systems were not a call of concern. He believes the existing law is clear and concise. He feels the boards efforts best served by focusing on educational programs, city grants and financial assistance for citizens. His proxy vote will be against any such proposed ordinance change to Section 5.7.2.

Jayne Dunn stated she spoke with three councilmen regarding the language. A concern was for animal control to be able to enforce the ordinance, may need additional staff. Raymond Culpepper asked about volunteers fielding calls. Contreana Pearson, stated no, all officers must be sworn in and vetted within the Columbus Consolidated Government policies and procedures. She stated the pay increase for the officer salaries went in effect January 2023 and should be more attractive and hopefully more qualified applicants will apply.

Stephen Waters stated referred to his research packet for the board members to see, other cities have passed supervised tethering. For example, Dade County, Miami and Gwinnett County. Drale Short asked clarification for a leash or tethering, while the dog left outside. Stephen Waters stated, it is for dogs supervised when out on a trolley systems.

Contreana Pearson posed the question to the board members to vote, keep the current ordinance **Section 5.7.2 Restraint**, without change. Jayne Dunn motioned to keep the ordinance with the current language and no change. *****ACTION TAKEN: VOTING MEMBER PRESENT VOTED; DUNN – YES, EMERY-YES, WATERS-NO, PIERCE-YES, FRYER-YES, CULPEPPER-YES, STULL-NO, MCDERMOTT-VOTE BY PROXY – YES.**

VOTE OF 6-2 APPROVAL FOR NO CHANGE TO ORDINANCE SECTION 5.7.2 Restraint

The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 pm The next scheduled meeting Tuesday, June 13, 2023.

C: Clerk of Council, ACAB Members

