

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD  
**COMMITTEE MINUTES**

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**JUSTICE & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, March 13, 2007

Brookens Administrative Center, Lyle Shields Meeting Room

1776 E. Washington St., Urbana

5:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Anderson (Chair), Carter, Gladney, James, Putman, Tapley

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Hogue, Hunt, Sapp

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kat Bork (Recording Secretary), Andrew Buffenbarger (Nursing Home Administrator), Deb Busey (County Administrator of Finance & HR Management), Traci Heiden (Nursing Home), Stephanie Joos (Animal Control Director), Kathleen Liffick (Head Start Director), Susan McGrath (Senior Assistant State's Attorney), C. Pius Weibel (County Board Chair), Marilyn Garmon (C-U Area Project)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

The Recording Secretary called the roll. Anderson, Carter, Gladney, James, Putman, and Tapley were present at the time of the roll call. Anderson declared a quorum and proceeded with the meeting.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDUM**

Anderson requested to move the report on the Juvenile Delinquency Grants to directly after the monthly reports in order to allow Garmon to leave the meeting shortly.

**MOTION** by Tapley to approve the agenda with the recommended reordering; seconded by Carter.  
**Motion carried.**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

**MONTHLY REPORTS**

**MOTION** by James to receive and place on file the Animal Control January 2007 & February 2007 reports, Circuit Clerk December 2006 report, Court Services December 2006 and January 2007 reports, Emergency Management Agency February 2007 report, and the Public Defender January 2007 report; seconded by Tapley. **Motion carried.**

**CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER**

Renewal of Violent Crime Victims Assistance Grant

**MOTION** by Tapley to approve the application for, and if awarded acceptance of, the Violent Crime Victims Assistance Grant; seconded by James. **Motion carried.**

National Children's Alliance 2007 Equipment Grant

**MOTION** by Tapley to approve the application for, and if awarded acceptance of, the National Children's Alliance 2007 Equipment Grant; seconded by Gladney. **Motion carried.**

**ANIMAL CONTROL**

Intergovernmental Agreement for Animal Impoundment Services with the Village of Savoy and Intergovernmental Agreement for Animal Control Services with the Village of Savoy

**MOTION** by James to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement for Animal Impoundment Services with the Village of Savoy and the Intergovernmental Agreement for Animal Control Services with the Village of Savoy; seconded by Carter. **Motion carried.**

FY2006 Annual Report

James stated he was impressed with how well the report was put together and the information it contained. He has visited the Animals Services Facility and found that Joos runs an excellent, clean facility.

**MOTION** by Tapley to receive and place on file the FY2006 Annual Report for the Animal Control Department; seconded by James. **Motion carried.**

Request Approval for Extension of Holding Period for Adoptable Animals

**MOTION** by James to approve the extension of holding period to 30 days for adoptable animals and creation of an adoption program; seconded by Tapley.

Joos requested the holding period for stray, adoptable animals at the Animal Services Facility be extended to thirty days to afford the Animal Control Department more time to find an adoptable home prior to euthanizing the animals. The current holding period is seven days. Due to a lack of resources, the Humane Society has not been able to take all of the adoptable animals, as Joos had hoped they could. Joos proposed that after seven days, the animals be tested and, if deemed adoptable, be offered to the public for adoption through the County's website, anyone who contacts the Animal Control Department, PetSmart, Petco, and Petfinder. Joos said Animal Control would not be holding adoption fairs or adopt-a-thons. If an animal has not been adopted by the end of thirty days, the animal will be offered again to the Humane Society and breed rescue groups. If those resources are not able to take the animal, it may be euthanized. Joos estimates this could prevent the euthanasia of one hundred animals annually.

The committee discussed the statistics of the number of animals going through the Animal Services Facility. James asked if there would be fees for adopting a pet. Joos said there are costs involved in making an animal adoptable. For a dog, it costs Animal Control \$67.40 to spay/neuter, vaccinate, de-worm, microchip, heartworm test, and give a flea treatment. For a cat, it costs Animals Control \$33.85 to give a feline leukemia test, spay/neuter, vaccinate, de-worm, microchip, and give a flea treatment. The Humane Society has asked that Animal Control offer its adoptable animals at comparable rates to the Humane Society's, so the County is not undercutting them. The Humane Society currently charges \$75-\$85 for a dog, \$100-\$120 for a puppy, \$85 for a cat, and \$100 for a kitten. James asked further questions about how the adoption program would function and if it would be costly to operate. Joos explained that the facility has only reached full capacity once (in July 2005), so she felt the current cage space would be adequate to house animals for the thirty-day period. The Animal

Control staff is working so efficiently that they are finished cleaning the animals by noon and it should not be a burden to care for the animals during the extended period. She has spoken with the Humane Society to plan in the event that the Animal Services Facility reaches its full capacity. If this occurs, Joos would offer the animals to the Humane Society and rescue groups before the thirty days are complete or the animals may be euthanized prior to the thirty-day deadline because Animal Control's ultimate responsibility is to have an impoundment facility for the stray animals in Champaign County. The Humane Society has agreed to take any animals if they have open space. Joos stated the general public is not allowed to enter the kennel space unless they are escorted by an Animal Control employee to identify their stray dog or cat. She described that if the adoption program is implemented, she would keep a book of pictures and descriptions of the available animals at the front desk. A member of the public looking to adopt an animal would browse through the book and ask to see a specific animal. That animal would then be brought out to meet the person. The public is not allowed to wander about the facility for safety reasons. While the animals are kept for thirty days, they will be exercised each day by the kennel staff. This will give staff the opportunity to train an animal in basic commands so it is more adoptable. Joos was thinking about offering adoptions from 1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. because this is the slowest time of the day for the kennel staff.

James stated he would prefer the adoption program be implemented for a trial period of six months, nine months, or one year in order to determine if it would cause any problems. He said that Joos is doing a great job with Animal Control, but he worried about any expansion that might be costly. Joos noted that the Animal Control Department is operated by revenue generated from the registration fees and contracts with the villages. She is not asking for any General Corporate Fund money to subsidize this program or her department. She stated Champaign County is the only progressive county with an Animal Control Department in the State of Illinois who does not offer animals for adoption. By creating an adoption program, Animal Control will be eligible for more grants to provide for spaying/neutering. Animal Control is only eligible for one PetSmart grant at the present time because it is considered a strictly euthanasia agency. The food for the animals is donated by Pedigree Foods, so the extended holding period will not result in any higher food costs. There might be an increase in the medical costs because the animals would have to be vaccinated prior to adoption, but those costs can be recouped from the person adopting the animal. Animal Control vaccinates and spay/neuters animals before sending it to a breed rescue group. The breed rescue group reimburses Animal Control for those costs. Joos has an agreement with the Humane Society that they will provide those services at their facility if they take an animal, so it does not cost the County any money.

Gladney suggested offering animals for adoption at a lower price than the Humane Society, while still covering the medical costs, as a way to make pet adoption from Animal Control more attractive to the public. The committee discussed the County's relationship to the Humane Society.

Busey encouraged allowing the adoption program to function for a year in order to get a solid statistical basis on the costs and number of animals affected. The quantity of animals in the facility fluctuates during the different seasons of the year so a full twelve months is needed to understand the full cycle of the issue. Busey noted that Animal Control ended FY2006 with a balanced budget and a positive fund balance. Its budget includes the costs to maintain the facility and replace equipment.

The committee discussed the adoption program proposal. Tapley stated he did not wish to micromanage a department and could support the program if it was understood that no General Corporate Fund money would be used to subsidize it. Joos was willing to have a one-year trial period, after which she would submit a full report to the committee.

**James and Tapley agreed to a friendly amendment that the extension of the holding period and creation of an adoption program would be set for a 1-year trial period.**

**Motion carried.**

Discussion of Champaign County Animal Control Ordinance Proposed Changes

Joos announced the state law was changed and placed new burdens on the County Animal Control Department. The State started a Pet Overpopulation Fund. Illinois citizens must pay this fund a \$25 public safety fee if their unaltered dog is caught running at large. This fee is returned if the owner alters the dog within fourteen days of impoundment. Champaign County Animal Control does not have to enforce this fee; they just inform the pet owner and the State when the animal is caught. The State passed a law requiring county animal control departments to have a \$10 differential between the registration for altered and unaltered animals. Animal Control currently charges \$10 for a one-year registration tag for an altered dog or cat and \$15 for an unaltered dog or cat. A three-year registration costs \$18 for an altered dog or cat and \$24 for an unaltered dog or cat. To adhere to state law, Joos suggested changing the registration fees to \$20 for a one-year registration fee and \$30 for a three-year registration for an unaltered animal. Five dollars of the additional charge goes to the County's Pet Overpopulation Fund and \$5 goes to the State's Pet Overpopulation Fund. If a county does not have a Pet Overpopulation Fund, then the full \$10 goes to the State. These are the costs if the owner registers the pet within twenty days of the vaccination. If the owner registers the pet twenty-one to thirty days after the vaccination, the cost increases by \$5 as a penalty for not registering a pet in a timely manner. After thirty days, an owner could be issued a citation for violation of a county ordinance, which is a \$100 fine. Joos noted Champaign County is not even at 80% registration of animals vaccinated within the County. However, the registration numbers have improved since owners have been able to purchase registration tags at veterinarian offices. This makes it easier for owners to register pets. Another change in the state law requires the owner of a dog that has been declared dangerous to pay a \$50 fine to the County's Pet Overpopulation Fund. The only other changes are minor administrative changes.

James asked when the new fees would be effective. Joos said the fees would be set upon approval of the revised ordinance. James asked if Animal Control collects the majority of fines assessed to pet owners. Joos said the \$25 public safety fee is paid to the Illinois Department of Public Health, so the County's only responsibility is to inform the pet owners that they owe the State \$25. The County becomes aware of an unregistered animal when a pet owner has the animal vaccinated in a veterinarian's office but does not purchase a registration tag. McGrath stated the increased staff in the Civil Division of the State's Attorney's Office has made it possible to increase enforcement activities related to County ordinances. The attorneys have been able to step up the enforcement of pet owners not paying their fines or registration fees and this has resulted in increased collection activities. Putman asked what activities are funded by the County and State Pet Overpopulation Funds. Joos explained the Champaign County Pet Overpopulation Fund strictly pays for altering the pets of low income citizens of the County. The State now requires all counties to have a spay/neuter program for low income residents who are on food stamps, Social Security income, disability, or meet other criteria. The State Pet Overpopulation Fund is supposed to provide for a program where private veterinarians can enroll in an animal Medicaid-type program where the State would reimburse veterinarians for services to low income residents. This program is very new and the State has not yet issued the regulations under which the program would operate. The committee discussed enforcement of the Animal Control Ordinance.

Carter exited the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

**HEAD START**  
**Monthly Report**

**MOTION** by James to receive and place on file the Head Start February report; seconded by Tapley.  
**Motion carried.**

**NURSING HOME**  
**Monthly Report**

**MOTION** by James to receive and place on file the Nursing Home February report; seconded by Tapley.

Buffenbarger introduced Traci Heiden to the committee. She has been the Activity Director at the Nursing Home for the last six years and recently became the new Assistant Administrator. Heiden has a bachelor's degree in therapeutic recreation and is a certified therapeutic reaction specialist. He added that he neglected to thank Arrow Ambulance Service in his monthly report for their work in moving the residents to the new facility. The committee discussed the move into the new facility. James asked what will happen to the equipment left in the old facility. Buffenbarger said they would inventory everything and then likely auction the items. Busey stated the disposal of equipment will follow the County's policy regarding excess equipment.

**Motion carried.**

Request for Reclassification of Positions

**MOTION** by Tapley to submit the Personnel Records Clerk and Human Resources Clerk positions to Job Content Evaluation Committee for consideration of reclassification; seconded by James. **Motion carried.**

**JUVENILE DELINQUENCY GRANTS**

Status Report from Peter Tracy & Marilyn Garmon-Starks

The report was distributed to the committee. Peter Tracy was unable to attend the meeting, so Garmon volunteered to answer questions from the committee. Anderson noted the report listed the agencies who have submitted applications for the FY2008 Juvenile Delinquency Grants. James asked for the total amount of money available to distribute in FY2008 grants. Busey said the total funding amount is in the \$210,000-\$220,000 range. The requests for funding far exceed the available funds.

James raised questions about the last applicant on the list because the grants are intended to fund programs to help decrease recidivism in juvenile delinquents. Garmon said she has not seen the applications because the agency she works for is one of the applicants. She stated the grant criteria is clearly spelled out in application and the applicants are judged on this criteria. Anderson recommended committee members contact Tracy in his office for further explanation. The committee continued to discuss the applicants and the purpose of the grants.

**MOTION** by Putman to receive and place on file the Juvenile Delinquency Grant Status Report; seconded by Gladney. **Motion carried.**

**CHAIR'S REPORT**

Anderson stated the Court Services FY2007 Action Plan has been approved by the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts and is on file in Administrative Services. Anderson spoke positively about a presentation made at the Mental Health Board study session by Peer Ambassadors.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Semi-Annual Review of Closed Session Minutes

McGrath recommended all closed session minutes remain closed because they involve litigation, collective bargaining, or individual privacy rights in regard to employee evaluations.

**MOTION** by Tapley for all closed session minutes to remain closed; seconded by Gladney. **Motion carried.**

James requested information on a County emergency plan that directs the general public where to go in the event of a natural disaster. Busey stated a well-coordinated policy management group of local entities exists

and the committee could have a presentation about what is in place. The committee discussed emergency situations and the different responses to different types of events.

**DESIGNATION OF ITEMS TO BE PLACED ON COUNTY BOARD CONSENT AGENDA**

Anderson designated agenda items VI A-B and VII A, B, & D for the consent agenda.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kat Bork  
Recording Secretary

*Secy's note: The minutes reflect the order of the agenda and may not necessarily reflect the order of business conducted at the meeting.*