

The Governor's Commission on the Humane Treatment of Animals

Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2019

1) The regular meeting of the Governor's Commission on the Humane Treatment of Animals was called to order at 1:00 PM in Room 203 of the Legislative Office Building by Chair, Patricia Morris

2) **Members Present:**

- a) Patricia Morris, Chairperson & Equine Association
- b) Lindsay Hamrick, National Humane Organization & Secretary
- c) Tom DeRosa, Dr. Jeri Zezula, Jennifer Eber, Marga Coulp; General Public
- d) Heather Faria, NH Federation of Humane Organizations
- e) Wendy Munroe, NH Veterinary Technician Association
- f) George Cook, Dog Owners of the Granite State
- g) Dr. Jane Barlow Roy, NH Veterinary Medical Association
- h) Chief Dean Rondeau, NH Association of Chiefs of Police
- i) Chairman John O'Connor, House Representative
- j) Gary Lambert, NH Sportsmen
- k) Sheriff Mike Moyer, Sheriff's Association
- l) Sheila Johannesen, Animal Control Officers Association of New Hampshire
- m) Kristi Atherton, NH Farm Bureau
- n) Steve Sprowl, Humane Cruelty Investigator

Public Present: Tyler Clark, NHVMA; Mother of Sheila Johannsen, Ian Mathieson, NHSPCA

o) **Members Absent:** Tom Seymour, Cynthia Collins, general public; Senator Birdsell, Senate Representative; Dr. Crawford, Dept. of Agriculture

3) **Secretary's Report:** Lindsay presented the minutes from the December meeting. Rep. O'Connor motioned to approve the minutes as written. Sheila Johannsen seconded. All other members voted in favor.

4) **Current Cruelty Cases & News**

- a) Steve Sprowl updated the Commission on the German Shepherd case. The defendant has requested a continuance of the trial, which was scheduled for February, and the request was granted. The NHSPCA is awaiting an update on when the appeal trial will be scheduled. They continue to care for the 38 dogs in temporary protective custody at a cost of ~\$400,000.
- b) In 2017, the NHSPCA assisted in a case in Barrington, NH in which horses, goats and other livestock were removed. The defendant entered a plea agreement which required the return of the animals. The defendant then moved to Milton where she was again charged with animal cruelty and her animals removed. Once again, she was able to enter a plea agreement and have her animals returned. Steve spoke to his concerns with this system of returning animals to convicted animal abusers. Trish stated that law enforcement will be unlikely to act in the future if the person is likely to get the animals returned after a guilty verdict.
- c) The motion schedule has been announced in the Great Dane appeal (State v. Fay). The defense motions are due in mid-March and the State's response is due in May.
- d) The Labrador Retriever case has been continued again. The Judge has recused herself from the case and the Monadnock Humane Society is awaiting a new trial date.

e) The New Hampton sanctuary case has also been continued until February 8th.

5) 2019 Legislative Initiatives

- a) The commission reviewed all of the bills impacting companion animals and voted on whether or not to monitor these bills throughout the legislative session. At the February meeting, the Commission will determine whether or not to support, oppose or monitor each bill selected.
- b) The Commission voted to monitor the following bills:
 - i) SB 77: Relative to Costs to Care for Animals Seized in Cruelty Cases & Prohibiting the Future Ownership of Animals in Certain Cases
 - ii) SB 161: Relative to Pet Vendors
 - iii) HB 501: Establishing a Cost of Care Fund to Assist Municipalities Caring for Animals During Animal Cruelty Cases
 - iv) HB 688: Relative to Transfer & Inspection of Animals
 - v) HB 484: Relative to Group Dog Licenses
 - vi) HB 605: Relative to Criminal Penalties for the possession, transfer, or manufacture of animal fighting paraphernalia with the intent to be present at, aiding in, or contributing to fighting
 - vii) HB 283: Relative to Age Rabbits can be Transferred
 - viii) HB 376: Establishing a Commission to Study Best Practices for Companion Animal Groomers
 - ix) HB 371: Adding Cats to the Definition of Commercial Breeder
 - x) HB 331: Relative to the Duties of a Veterinarian
 - xi) HB 426: Establishing a committee to study allowing town clerks to accept proof of certain exemptions from the rabies vaccine for the purpose of registering dogs
- c) The Commission voted not to monitor the following bills:
 - i) HB 513: Allowing the Use of Therapy Animals in Proceedings Involving Children
 - ii) HB 249: Permitting Restaurant Owners to Allow Dogs in Restaurants
 - iii) HB 512: Relative to Dogs on Hiking Trails
 - iv) HB 389: Requiring the department of business and economic affairs to prepare materials for businesses relative to service dogs
 - v) HB 313: Establishing a study committee on the authority and duties of the board of veterinary medicine
 - vi) HB 361: Relative to Property Settlement Including Animals
- d) George asked whether someone could send around a hearing schedule on these bills as we learn dates/times. Trish offered to do so.
- e) Chief Rondeau highlighted the new federal PACT bill which would make egregious animal cruelty (ex. bestiality and purposeful torture) a federal felony

6) Cruelty Tracking Subcommittee

- a) Chief Rondeau motioned to approve the animal-cruelty related criminal activity in NH pending the edits submitted by Dr. Crawford. Sheila seconded. All voted in favor.
- b) The committee will begin reviewing data for 2018-2019

7) Legislative Subcommittee

- a) The subcommittee will help with the legislative discussion in February. Bills that do not receive a unanimous vote by the Commission will receive a minority and majority report to be reviewed by the Chair prior to submission to the Governor.

8) Funding & Education Subcommittee

- a) No updates

9) Other Reports

- a) Lindsay will send around the final comments on the Prosecution manual for discussion at the February meeting.

10) Old Business

- a) Dr. Jeri reviewed the state dog licensing laws and found that there is a set fee of \$4.50 for dogs under 7 months of age or adult dogs who are spayed or neutered and \$7.00 for dogs over 7 months or adult dogs who are not spayed/neutered. The town clerks get \$1.00, \$0.50 goes to the diagnostic lab, and \$0.50 goes into the spay/neuter fund. The towns can pass a bylaw to increase the fee.

11) 2019 Meeting Dates

- a) Rescheduled February meeting due to President's Day. The next meeting will be February 25th.

12) New Business

13) Call to the Public

- a) No comments

George moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 2:02pm. Heather seconded. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted by: Lindsay Hamrick, Secretary