Call to Order & Welcome

Chairman Thornton welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He asked for attendees to introduce themselves.

Review Agenda & Approval of Minutes

Chairman Thornton reviewed the agenda. He then stated the draft minutes from January 17, 2019, were distributed for review in advance of the meeting. Mr. Bond had an amendment to the minutes, to make a clear distinction that he represents the City Manager's Office under 'members present'. The Chairman then called for a motion to approve.

ACTION: Andy Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and Dan Winters seconded. A vote was taken and motion passed.

City Manager’s Report

Steven Bond stated the City Manager’s proposed budget was approved by City Council. He reported he and other City staff attended the 2019 National Hurricane Conference in New Orleans, which included a seminar on Pet Sheltering by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture. He stated they touched on lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina and other disasters. They provided a number of different forms and various best practices we can use, which Hampton will be implementing. Mr. Bond reminded the committee that this is Hurricane Preparedness Week and emphasized the importance of having a plan for yourself and your loved ones, which includes pets.

Bruce Sturk, Director of Federal Facilities Support, gave a brief background on his role with Animal Control—Pe the City Manager he will be working as a liaison with Animal Control staff and the Animal Control Advisory Committee on an Animal Control project and to get a better appreciation of both groups.

Animal Control Report

Angela Taylor gave a brief update, stating Animal Control held two career fairs; Frances Asbury and Armstrong Elementary. She also briefed the Police Academy today, with about twelve Police recruits, on what to do when responding to animal complaints. Ms. Taylor gave recognition to Animal Control officer, Mike Falls, who responded to a citizen complaint regarding several cats. She stated the citizen was so impressed that they made a $1,000 donation to the Peninsula Regional Animal Shelter, on behalf of Hampton Animal Control, as well as a brick paver in dedication to animals. She said this was the nicest compliment received for Animal Control. The committee gave
applause for this recognition and Chairman Thornton asked Ms. Taylor to relay the committee’s appreciation to Officer Falls.

Current Issues/Trends - No Report

Old Business

ACAC Community Education Forum – Paws, Claws & Tails:
Chairman Thornton asked Mr. Anderson to give his recommendation on the event. Mr. Anderson inquired if we should hold the event again and when. Chairman Thornton also gave some comments on the event. Mr. Winters suggested the event be held in two year intervals and there was a consensus by the committee. Ms. Wiggins suggested keeping it around the same time each year, in a specific month – last week in January. Some concerns were shared regarding the facility, technology and staff support. Mr. Brightbill stated the issues were more with the committee needs, rather than the vendors. Chairman Thornton commented that the feedback was positive, and suggested we have notes to reference for next time. Ms. Keller suggested having the event on a Saturday, which would increase participation. Mr. Brightbill suggested we ask the vendors about holding the event on Saturday. Chairman Thornton agreed and asked Mr. Anderson if he could do so. Chairman Thornton thanked Mr. Anderson and all for their efforts regarding the forum.

Animal Licenses:
Ms. Wiggins gave a brief background on the meeting discussion from last month of how to get the word out about having pets licensed. Ms. Taylor mentioned Animal Control provides a flier, regarding pet license, to those they come into contact with. Ms. Wiggins explained the pet licenses process. Mr. Bond stated some people don’t know about the licenses and some know but choose not to get it. There was some discussion regarding statistics and enforcement. Mr. Winters suggested making the acquisition of license more positive, such as providing a tag with the identification of the pet and a contact number. Mr. Brightbill mentioned Animal Control has a van with white space, which could be used as an advertising tool. Another suggestion was to provide pet waste bags with the purchase of a license. Ms. Wiggins stated we would need a target solution for both; those that don’t know and those who know but don’t comply. Mr. Anderson stated vets have to provide the City with a copy of certificates. He mentioned he notices some Bark Park attendees don’t have a rabies or license tag, which is a requirement to use the park. He stated some are military and come from another state and suggested providing an informational packet for the various commands. He also suggested putting fliers at the Convention & Visitors Bureau, as well as give to realtors. Ms. Wiggins mentioned animals have to be rabies licensed, but do not have to have a rabies tag. Ms. Keller agreed with having a sign or flier at vet offices. Mr. Sturk stated these are great comments and ideas, and that education is key. He mentioned vets have a database already established. Mr. Winters stated the problem is the vets send information on different formats, which makes it difficult to compile. Mr. Bond stated the Treasurer had some issues with the database, as they cannot demand the vets follow the same format. Chairman Thornton suggested there be a sub-committee formed to discuss some of these ideas, such as standardized forms from the vets, and report back to the committee. He appointed two sub-committees:

- Andy Anderson/Dan Winters/Angie Taylor
- Shelly Keller/Gordy Brightbill/Angie Taylor

Chairman Thornton stated the charter is to determine how we obtain greater compliance with the requirements of animal licensing in the City of Hampton.

Free-Roaming Cats:
Mr. Winters stated there was a meeting this week regarding free-roaming cats and the issue is being addressed on the Peninsula. Mr. Brightbill stated it’s a public awareness issue, as cats have a ‘free’ pass to roam around. Mr. Winters mentioned that there is a perception that cats are killing birds, but his research shows birds are mostly killed from high-rise buildings with glass windows, as well as high-wires. He read several cases from his research. He feels we have more free-roaming cats in the community than we want, and would like to reduce the number of cats...
born. Mr. Sturk mentioned Animal Control is positively moving into the right direction to address and incorporate some of these things. He stated Animal Control is looking at resources and possibly partnering on the issues. They can provide input at the next meeting. Chairman Thornton suggested some harmonization of philosophies with the various municipalities on this issue.

New Business

Ms. Taylor introduced Kara Moran, volunteer from VA PawsitiVAty Initiative, who provided information regarding Pet Store Permitting Ordinance (copy on file). She briefed the committee, highlighting some of the following items:

- Background on purchasing pet
- Consumer fraud
- Ordinances in Chesapeake and Virginia Beach
- Animal licenses
- Pet store inspectors
- HBH 77 Bill passed
- Reports/Audits

There was a question and answer period. After some discussion regarding the ordinance regarding pet store requirements, Mr. Winters proposed Animal Control discuss, run it by City Attorney’s Office, and draft a recommendation to City Council for the committee to review. There was a consensus by the committee to do so. Chairman Thornton asked Ms. Taylor to come back to the next meeting with some recommendations. He thanked Ms. Moran for her briefing.

Public Comment

Debra Griggs stated she is attending this meeting in support of the ordinance presented by Ms. Moran. She is glad Hampton is taking a look at it. She also mentioned the animal licensing issue, and stated she attended a meeting in Richmond recently, of which there was no solution. She feels the program is broken. She stated studies were done in her community and discovered most people do not know they need a licenses. Ms. Griggs also commented on the free-roaming cat issues, stating she supports conversation on this. She referred to the PetCo Foundation website, where they use Virginia as a model because they have been reporting data for twenty years. She mentioned ways the Virginia Federation of Humane Societies is helping with the issues; by giving a $2,600 grant to the Peninsula Regional Animal Shelter to put portholes in the cages, as well as a $4,000 grant to Peninsula First Spay/Neuter.

Melanie Paul referenced the Animal Control Report and inquired about the number of animal bites listed. Ms. Taylor responded the chart should add up and she will fix the numbers to be sure they are correct. She stated what is listed are the calls that come in for animal bites, but not all are animal bites. Ms. Paul also commented on free-roaming cats. Chairman Thornton asked Ms. Taylor to get with Ms. Paul to clarify the numbers on the report.

Closed Session

Chairman Thornton entertained a motion to convene a closed meeting pursuant to the exemption from open meetings allowed by Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) of the Code of Virginia, to discuss recommendations for appointments to the Animal Control Advisory Committee.

ACTION: A motion was made by Andy Anderson and seconded by Dan Winters. A vote was taken and motion passes. The doors were closed.
Certify Closed Session

Chairman Thornton entertained a motion to certify that, to the best of each member’s knowledge: (1) Only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under Virginia law were discussed, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting by the Animal Control Advisory Committee.

ACTION: A motion was made by Andy Anderson and seconded by Dan Winters. A vote was taken and motion passes.

Next Meeting

There was a consensus to hold the next meeting on Thursday, July 18, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.

Adjournment

Chairman Thornton called for a motion to adjourn. Dan Winters made the motion and Shelly Keller seconded.