

Eaton County Office of the Sheriff

9 10 2008

Sheriff Michael Raines
1025 Independence Blvd
Charlotte, Michigan 48813

To the Members of the Animal Control Task Force:

Thank you for the list of suggestions regarding Animal Control. I will address each suggestion in the order in which they appear on the list:

- As to contracting with an Independent Outside Agency to conduct an overview of the operations of animal control; As Sheriff I would welcome such a review from the National Animal Control Association or the Michigan Animal Control Officers Association, or another independent firm, however, there is no money budgeted for such a venture and the funding would have to come from another source other than the budget of the Sheriff.
- I would be opposed to creating an Advisory Board for Animal Control. Currently there are vehicles in place whereby suggestions and complaints can be handled; i.e. The Command Structure of this organization and also the Public Safety Committee, to name two.

Adoptions

- I am an advocate for the use of new technology and I heartily agree animal adoptions should and can be facilitated through the use of the County Website. Currently I have assigned my secretary to assist with taking photographs of the animals eligible for adoptions. Also, Captain Wessels was able to procure a new web-cam which will aid in this venture.
- Currently I cannot consider expanding the hours of operation of Animal Control as we have had to lay off 2 employees over the last 2 years. Staffing shortages will not permit longer hours.
- Presently the Eaton County Animal Control has agreements with several Rescue Organizations and Adoption Facilities. We also have a good working relationship with the Humane Society and already waive adoption fees when turning over animals to these

entitles. I believe it is important to work with these organizations and not compete with them.

- The Office of the Sheriff does not have the means either financially or the manpower to host an adoption event. We feel by turning our animals over to either Rescue Facilities or the Humane Society we are facilitating their eventual adoption.

Volunteers & Interns

- Volunteers cannot be an option currently as we have already laid off 2 positions in Animal Control. The Union has indicated it will not agree to the use of volunteers until those positions are filled, and due to the current economy and budgetary concerns, that does not appear to be an option in the foreseeable future. Furthermore, since Animal Control is short on manpower, the oversight and management of any volunteers would present several logistical problems.
- The Union has acquiesced and has agreed to allow the use 1 intern per year, who needs the experience for their college program, as this is similar to the program we offer for the road patrol. Presently we are in the process of finding a Vet. Tech Student Intern.
- See above as this Intern will be getting credits for their participation in our program.

Pound Release

- I have already ended the sale of animals to research facilities and have no intention of rescinding that order.

Policies & Procedures

- Eaton County Animal Control is currently governed by:
 1. The Eaton County Sheriff's Office Rules and Regulations
 2. The Eaton County Animal Control Ordinance
 3. Collective Bargaining Agreement

And, as the need arises Specific General Orders will be created for certain circumstances.

- See Above

Public Education and Resources

- While I am not opposed to accepting donations, I feel strongly about competing with the Eaton County Humane Society which does not have the benefit of receiving Eaton County Taxpayer dollars.
- My budget does not allow for an Advertisement Fund; however I would agree to put up posters in Animal Control and an informational section on the web-site about the importance of spaying and neutering. Furthermore, as Sheriff, I could not in good conscious support, nor sponsor, a 'Spay and Neuter Clinic' which could have a negative impact on the local veterinarians, animal hospitals, and the businesses they run.
- Animal Control is mandated by law to enforce laws, we are by definition not a shelter, and therefore, to change the name would be misleading to the public.
- As an advocate of new technology, I have already encouraged and facilitated the relationship of Animal Control with Information Systems. I have encouraged Dr. Sobie and Director Green as they attempt to find and implement new, useful, software in Animal Control.
- Whether or not Animal Control stays within the purview of this office is up to the Board of Commissioners; I am happy to run Animal Control, but would also cooperate fully if the administration of Animal Control was to be transferred to the Eaton County Board of Commissioners. However, it is only at my discretion that any person is sworn in as a Special Deputy in Eaton County. Since I would have no control over the employees working for Animal Control, I would be forced to rescind their Special Deputy status.