

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 17 1998, 11:00 AM

Members Present: Chairman Rollin Shaw
Commissioner Johnnie Evans
Commissioner J. Lee Warren, Jr.
Others: Cliff Strassenburg, County Manager
James Martin, Deputy County Manager
Cliff Spiller, Asst. County Manager
Grainger Barrett, Deputy County Attorney
Marsha Fogle, Clerk to the Board
Carlton Person, Director, Animal Control
Staff, Animal Control

1. Approval of Minutes: August 24, 1998

MOTION: Commissioner Warren offered a motion to approve.
SECOND: Commissioner Evans
VOTE: UNANIMOUS

2. Discussion of waiving fees at the Animal Control Department and allowing the public access to all animals

Ms. Linden Spear, Executive Director, The Haven-Friends for Life Animal Sanctuary presented the following proposal:

1. development of animal therapy programs to serve a variety of need-identified groups using animals obtained from Cumberland County Animal Control;
2. development of animal career vocational training using animals obtained from Cumberland county animal control,
3. negotiation by The Haven with area vets for reduced cost spay/neuter certificates to accompany adopted animals from Cumberland County Animal Control;
4. development of a protocol when The Haven is given access to animals completing their stray holding period and prior to their euthanasia;
5. development of a protocol where adoption fees are waived for animals transferred to The Haven-Friends for Life Animal Sanctuary as a courtesy between two cooperating agencies;
6. future development of low cost spay/neuter services for all Cumberland county residents;

Note: The haven requests \$15,000 to start a self-supporting spay/neuter service for Cumberland County. The Haven guarantees a 40 - 50% reduction in homeless animals.

Chairman Shaw noted that the Committee would focus on items 2, 4, and 5.

Carlton Person, Director, Animal Control, indicated he objected to people going through the Shelter prior to designation of adoptable animals. Another concern is that this organization or others would have priority over the adoptable animals and the citizens of Cumberland County would not have an opportunity to view the adoptable animals. In addition, he noted concern about charging some people for animals and allowing others to get the animals free of charge.

Mr. Person also noted that someone from her agency had stopped by his Shelter and ask for information misrepresenting who they were and why they wanted information.

Cliff Strassenburg, County Manager, stated that some criteria would have to be established which would designate agencies who would be allowed to get the animals free of charge.

In response to some questions from Commissioner Evans, Mr. Person noted that he has to hold animals 72 hours before they can be euthanized or given up for adoption. Animals may be adopted at a cost of \$4.00 per day times the number of days the Animal Control Department has held the animal, plus the cost of a rabies shot and a county tag. Euthanization costs about \$.35 to \$.50 per shot plus labor.

Ms. Spear indicated she ran a state approved shelter in Hoke County. She picks up animals from shelters and/or takes animals from citizens (charges \$50 to take an animal). She spays and neuters animals if necessary and puts them up for adoption. Her adoption fee is \$50. She also looks for breed specific animals and sells them to breed specific groups and rescue groups. In responding to some questions, Ms. Spear indicated her facility in Hoke County is open to the public on Saturdays and Sundays from 1:00 - 4:00 PM. Otherwise you must make an appointment to get into The Haven. She also offers off-site adoptions in Cumberland County at "Books-A-Million".

Mr. Person noted he had spoken to some people in Hoke County about Ms. Spear's operation and her fees to adopt animals. Ms. Spear indicted she was not a county related agency and it was not appropriate for us to ask those questions. Mr. Grainger Barrett, Deputy County Attorney, stated that the County has obligation to check the credentials of agencies with whom we do business.

Commissioner Warren noted he was disturbed about the misrepresentation that had occurred at the Animal Control Department. He addition he noted that Ms. Spear in effect is requesting that The Haven be a clearing house for the county's animals with no restrictions. He said he felt it appropriate that the county inquire about The Haven and its operation in Hoke County. He noted that Cumberland County Commissioners have a responsibility to the citizens of Cumberland County to do what is right.

Ms. Spear apologized to the Committee for the misrepresentation that occurred at the Animal Shelter earlier today.

MOTION: Commissioner Evans offered a motion to direct County Staff to develop some criteria that would qualify an organization to take animals from the County Animal Shelter at no cost and bring the information back to the Committee meeting in October.

SECOND: Commissioner Shaw

DISCUSSION: Staff would also confer with Ms. Spear in developing the criteria. It was also suggested that staff visit The Haven, check out state guidelines, etc.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

3. Discussion of the Structure for the Community Health Care Board

Mr. Strassenburg, County Manager, presented the following suggested structure to the Committee:

<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES</u>	<u>APPOINTED BY</u>
Bd. of County Commissioners	1	Commissioner
Cape Fear Valley Health Sys.	1	Administrator
Columbia Highsmith-Rainey	1	Administrator
Womack Army Medical Ctr.	1	Commander
VA Medical Center	1	Administrator
Public Health Department	1	Dept. Head
Dept. of Social Services	1	Dept. Head
Mental Health Center	1	Dept. Head
Southern Reg. AHEC	1	Director
Board of Education	1	?
Business/Industry	1	Plant Managers Assoc
	1	Chamber of Commerce
Physicians	5	CFVHS Chief of Staff CHR Chief of Staff Medical Society appointee (1) Nominee from Sand- hills IPA (1) Minority Health Prof. Organization (1)

Consumers	2	Citizens not affiliated with health care
TOTAL	19	

Following some discussion, the committee revised the proposed structure as follows:

<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF REPS.</u>	<u>APPOINTED BY</u>
Bd. of County Comm	1	Board of County Commissioners
Cape Fear Valley Health System	1	Hospital Board
Columbia Highsmith Rainey Hospital	1	Hospital Board
Womack Army Medical Center	1	Medical Center Commander
VA Medical Center	1	Administrator
Public Health Department	1	Board of Health
Dept. of Social Services	1	DSS Board
Mental Health	1	Mental Health Board
Southern Regional AHEC	1	Executive Director
Board of Education	1	Board of Education
Business/Industry	2	Plant Managers Assoc. (1) Chamber of Commerce (1)
Physicians	8	CFVHS Chief of Staff (1) CHR Chief of Staff (1) Medical Society: Areas: Surgery (1); Primary Care (1); Pediatrics (1); OB-GYN (1); Psychiatry (1); Minority Health Professionals Org. (1)
Consumers	8	Each municipality (Governing Board) in the County shall make 1 appt.

This will make a total of 29 members.

Other Considerations:

- Ability to involve stakeholders through participation on subcommittees chaired by the Health Care Council;
- Facilitator
- Grant applications
- Clerical Support

Note: The Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners shall convene the first meeting. Officers will be elected, i.e., Chairman, Vice Chairman, Recording Secretary. The Chairman of the Council will then direct all meetings. The terms on the Committee will be staggered and determined by drawing lots.

The Policy Committee voted unanimously to recommend this structure of the Health Care Council to the Board of Commissioners for consideration.

4. Other Matters of Concern:

A. Perk Exemption Policy

Commissioner Lee Warren told the Committee he has spoken to Garrett Alexander, Tax Administrator, and requested he draw up a proposed policy to address a problem that occasionally occurs. County policy requires perk tests to be completed by the Environmental health Department to determine soil suitability to support septic systems. The Health Department approval is a prerequisite for building construction. When land will not support septic systems, approval is not granted. When the land will not support sewer the land must be conditioned for this characteristic, reducing the land value. When soils will not support septic systems, the owner has the burden of proof in establishing the inability of the soil to perk by having the Environmental Health Department to provide verification of the condition in writing to the Tax Administrator. Because the expense of perk testing includes surveying and other costs, it has become cost prohibitive for developers to test large numbers of unbuildable lots on a lot to lot basis, in order that the tax liability can be reduced. In older subdivisions, the practice of locating all such properties beforehand and combining them with other lots or setting them aside as greenspace and dedicating them to a homeowner's association was not a normal consideration by developers in the past, when the cost of perk tests were lower. These older subdivisions contain many such lots that may become a liability to the County if developers avoid paying property tax, causing the County to foreclose on the property. In order to prevent the County from acquiring these properties by default and in an effort to assist developers/citizens who face this difficulty, Tax Administration proposes to adopt a policy to accept alternative soil reports. Attached to these minutes in "Draft"

form is the suggested policy that may be adopted by the Board of Commissioners. Grainger Barrett, Deputy County Attorney, is drafting the legal language which will allow us to adopt the policy.

The Committee asked that this item be placed on the October 19, 1998 Board of Commissioners' agenda. Note: The committee will review the legal language of the policy at the next Committee meeting (October 15, 1998).

MEETING ADJOURNED.