



ACCT Philly  
Public Session  
November 23, 2017  
6 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
Location: Philadelphia Free Library, Central Branch

**Board and Staff Attendees:**

Sandy Jones  
Dayna Villa  
Carrie Ruddell Maria  
Adam Corbett  
Audra Houghton  
Vincent Medley  
Darcy Oordt  
Dr. Hillary Herendeen

**Overview and Updates:**

It opened with the board explaining that every other meeting we will conduct board business. The format was changed so that the board can give our undivided attention to public comment. We then did personal introductions of the board and staff.

Audra gave a 5 minute presentation on the Core Values:

Transparency, Respect, Innovation, Commitment, Empathy, Professionalism

She said the values “free us from perfectionism” since perfection is the enemy of progress.

**Participant Questions and Answers**

1.) Participant One, Millie: New volunteer, on the running team

**Issue:** Asked if ACCT Philly allows animals to leave the facility via adoption intact?

**Immediate Response:**

- Dr. Hillary explained that they do let animals leave the facility intact if they have clinical medical issues.
- The contract does not transfer ownership completely until the animal is sterilized and allows for seizure of the animal if it's not completed
- Follow-up is done via phone calls.
- ID is also entered into the system, along with their address
- 97-98% of people comply and return the animal for sterilization
- It's about mitigating risk- we can't eliminate all risk but do best practices so that the most amount of animals leave alive

**Post-Meeting Response:**

- We've confirmed that 97% is a legitimate number and we take enforcement action when necessary to get fosters into compliance.

2.) Participant Two: Carrie. New volunteer, walking and running dogs

**Issue:** Asked about the recent email from Kelsey pausing volunteers due to the help from Best Friends Animal Society. What is the goal?

**Immediate Response:**

- BFAS sent a volunteer manager to evaluate the program at ACCT Philly for recruiting, training and retention of volunteers
- It was decided to pause onboarding of new volunteers and training current ones in new roles IN THE SHELTER only
- Working to revamp and/or create: orientation, volunteer job descriptions in order for volunteers to have a better experience, eliminate the us vs them mentality & promote a culture of "family"
- We are keeping track of people applying to help and working to currently steer them towards helping with offsite events and at off site locations
- Hoping to restart in January
- BFAS also assessed needs for volunteers in all departments
- A volunteer/ staff task force was created

3.) Participant Three: Candice. Lawyer, volunteers, transporter

**Issue:** What's the procedure for checking for microchips?

**Immediate Response:**

- Officers have scanners
- Scanners are placed in various locations around the shelter

- Animals are scanned upon intake and prior to outcome, and sometimes multiple times in between

**Issue:** What's the standard for benefactor dogs?

**Immediate Response:**

- This language has been removed from the transfer partner manual.
- Animals are now fast tracked for adoption if they are "highly adoptable"
- We have a small dog and and large dog adoption program

**Issue:** How does an urgent cat qualify for the \$150 sponsorship?

**Immediate Response**

- Cat must be over a year old
- Not completely healthy
- Notes documented in file
- Must have a preapproved medical issue
- Organizations need to sign a MOU to be part of this program.

**Issue:** Why would a cat (specifically Tom Jr) be sent back to a colony vs being released to a rescue partner? A request was made that in the future, caretakers be made aware of rescue partner interest.

**Immediate Response:**

- In this specific case, lifesaving did not send out the most up-to-date medical information. The cat was at ACCT Philly while sick with no rescue interest. Once better, he was able to be released so he was. Rescues are encouraged to take someone else in need.
- ACCT Philly has final authority of who is available to rescue, and rescue partners should take those with no other options.

**Post Meeting Response:**

- Once all the cats that need adoption or rescue find placement, TNR cats will be considered for rescue.
- In Tom Jr.'s case, once we knew the colony manager wanted the cat back, getting Tom Jr. back to the colony became our priority.

4.) Participant Four: Edye. Passionate about animals, supports rescues financially, works online to find rescue resources

**Issue:** What more can be done to lessen illness and to do more good for the animals at ACCT?

**Immediate Response:**

- Fundraise!

- The board is establishing committees and subcommittees to enable change in accordance with the strategic plan

**Issue:** Philly Urgents Page: Is there a way to have more staff involvement on the page?

**Immediate Response:**

- There is currently no staff availability to manage a page
- Many open positions currently that need to be filled and not enough funds to cover the cost of a paid position
- Vincent announced the new coalition between ACCT, PSPCA and PAWS along with an invitation to join extended to ACCT Philly's top 22 rescue partners.
- The hope is to increase resources for everyone within the coalition in order to reach a 90% or greater live release rate at ACCT Philly.

5.) Participant Five: Megan.

**Issue:** Asked why the application for the Cavalier Rescue was still unresolved.

**Immediate Response:**

- Audra said it was reviewed and wasn't approved at this time, due to the lack of need for this specific type of breed specific rescue.
- Jon in lifesaving has stacks of application to review, prioritizes large dog groups since that's the population currently the most in need of rescue at ACCT Philly
- Megan said the rescue was not followed up with, Sandy said we will look further into the notification procedure for approval/denial

**Post Meeting Response:**

- *Clarification:* Jon has stacks of unapproved applications, not stacks of pending applications
- After reviewing this process with staff, we have determined there are tools we can utilize to streamline the application and approval process. We will be working towards an online application process for transfer partners that will reduce the amount of staff time necessary to process their requests. While this isn't an immediate fix for the Cavalier Rescue, we believe it will be of overall benefit to future partners. We will have Lifesaving reach out to the Cavalier Rescue to complete their application process.

6.) Participant Six: Ian

**Issue:** What is the timeline for recruiting volunteers for the board fundraising committee? What are the other committees?

**Immediate Response:**

- Sandy replied "quickly"
- Finance & Facilities, Operations

**Issue:** There is a lot of notable change on the admissions side but no innovation on the adoption side. Adoption numbers are down at ACCT, Ian referenced ACCT having a roaming adoption van to promote adoptions. He also referenced an adoption event is needed in Rittenhouse Square.

**Immediate Response:**

- Darcy commented that overall the intake number is down so the adoption number would be expected to be down, and lifesaving rates are up which is the best number to focus on

7) Participant Seven: Heidi

**Issue:** What is the functionality of time stamping dogs that failed the food test at ACCT?

**Immediate Response:**

- We know the issue can be managed easily (usually) in a home if it's just food guarding but it could be more generalized resources guarding which could pose a danger to people in the home and is difficult to manage and work with.
- Right now it's policy to time stamped these dogs

**Q & A Time Ends**

Adam noted that most questions this evening were for the staff and encouraged attendees to give feedback about the new meeting format. He stated that board members could and should be focusing on higher level items.

Vincent reminded attendees of his open office hours once a month. Audra reminded attendees of the new monthly volunteer meetings at the shelter.

Sandy, Carrie & Dayna each spoke to the group about needing to all take ownership to spread a positive image for ACCT, so we can capture more high level donors and supporters to make the changes we all want and that the animals deserve.