


September 16, 2015

Meeting between

 (Bartow County Citizen)

And

Steve Taylor, Bartow County Commissioner

Subject Matter:

Bartow County Animal Control Shelter

Proposal for Improvements

Bartow County contract with Etowah Valley Humane Society

The current purchase of services agreement between Bartow County and Etowah Valley Humane Society is no longer in the best interest of the animals concerned. Several of the outlined programs are not being performed, such as foster programs (section 2) through the humane society, which have never been enforced. Due to the Humane Society having no foster program, many of the animals in the Animal Control shelter fail to be rescued. The Humane Society will not take a Heartworm positive animal back, even when it was adopted from them previously. Their reasoning is since they do not house any animals with fosters, they have nowhere for them to be placed while they go through treatments. Even if this animal has an adopter wanting it, it can't be adopted out through the Humane Society. Another rescue will have to be sought out to save the animal and have it treated. Where 35% euthanasia rate may have been considered a good percentage several years ago, the current percentages of the majority of the shelters in surrounding counties is less than 10%. These are only a few of the major reasons why this agreement should be voided at once.

Animal control shelters in the surrounding counties welcome volunteers and their help in photographing and video taping the animals as well as bathing, grooming, and socializing the animals in their care. The standard procedure for other animal control shelters is to photograph the animals upon arrival, weigh them in and give age appropriate vaccinations, and worming medicines. They also sterilize the kennels on a daily basis with a quality disinfectant. Due to their quality of service, there is less spread of disease in these shelters. They will list the animals on their own county/city Facebook page as well as other pages such as Pet Finder and Adopt a Pet. This allows more visibility of the shelter animals.

With the current system in Bartow County, the public is not allowed inside the building unless they are in search of their own pet or surrendering an animal. The rescue coordinator from Humane Society takes the pictures of some (not all) of the animals in the care of animal control and lists them on an urgent page giving them 5 days max to be rescued. They have until Monday to be rescued by a licensed rescue. If

they do not have a commitment from a licensed rescue group, they will either be given another week for a chance at rescue or they will be euthanized on Tuesday morning. These animals are only listed on the "Rescue at Etowah Valley Humane" Facebook page. It is shared with others by volunteers choosing to share with their friends. The normal person missing an animal will never know to look on this page. These animals are not listed for the owners to have a chance of seeing them. For reasons unknown to me, all animals are not and never have been listed in this album.

While many of the problems fall in the hands of Bartow County Animal Control, other problems exist by the addition of rules imposed by the Humane Society's director and employees. Many of the additional rules are due to the humane society being no different than any other 501c3 rescue. They have more rules to follow because they are responsible for each and every animal that is rescued from Bartow County Animal Control. The GA Department of Agriculture requires more paperwork from each rescue because it is going through one rescue to another, thus making more duplicate paperwork for each rescue involved.

If Bartow County Animal Control takes responsibility for their own animals, the rescues will only have to follow the rules of the GA Department of Agriculture. An Animal shelter does not have to follow the same guidelines as a rescue group. The rescue group who takes possession of the animals is liable for the vetting records that are required by the State of GA. Currently because the Humane Society has temporary possession of the animals, they have to supply all vetting records from the rescue groups who take the animals into their rescues as well. Etowah Valley can still rescue the same animals as any other rescue, through the animal control shelter. The Rescue Coordinator can and should be employed through the county instead of the Humane Society. Monies paid by the county to the Humane Society could easily pay for the employment of a rescue coordinator located at the county intake facility.

In addition, other shelters are vaccinating the puppies and kittens upon intake. These vaccines are being given by the volunteers and/or the shelter employees. A group of volunteers have already offered to furnish Bartow Animal Control with these vaccines out of our own

pockets. We have also offered to purchase a very high quality disinfectant for them to use. Our offer was never accepted. I was told that unless a vet or vet tech would administer the vaccines, they would not be allowed. In addition, they would only allow the vaccines to be given to the owner surrendered animals and not the ones listed as strays. Debbie Elrod (Animal control manager) told me directly that she would not take responsibility for an animal having a reaction to a vaccine and causing the county to be sued by the owner if said owner came back to re-claim this animal. (See list of vaccinations offered as well as the disinfectant we offered to purchase.)

In the past 2 weeks, 3 puppies from 3 different locations have died from Parvovirus. Another one is barely hanging on to it's life. This shelter continuously has parvo running rampant throughout the runs and in the puppy rooms. The kittens don't have a very good survival rate either. If all animals were listed, I could give you a number count.

When I was allowed to go to the property, I did see a sign on the door of the animal control building stating that no more cats would be taken in until after the next Tuesday. Tuesday is the day the veterinarian visits to kill off the remaining animals with no rescue. Yet, the list of cats and kittens in the urgent album will typically be fewer than 10. They have more than double that many cat cages. I don't know why the rest of the cats are not listed for rescue to be found.

I am attaching copies of statements from other shelters in the surrounding counties for comparison of the differences in the functions, public awareness and rescue coordination. I hope you will verify and help me to save more of these animals from Bartow County. At one time Bartow was the county the shelters were striving to be more like. Unfortunately, the other counties have far surpassed Bartow in the quality of care, education, and euthanasia rate over the past few years.

Bartow needs to make proper changes to save more animals. Etowah Valley as a rescue is wonderful and they do a great job in adopting animals out to the public. The problem lies with the Humane Society taking charge of the County's Animal Control.

We currently have 10 or less rescue groups that will attempt to work with Bartow County animals until we can provide healthier animals

and less hassle for the rescues who are trying to help our animals. The majority of this hassle is due to the Humane Society making additional demands for these rescues and creating personal problems with rescue workers, transporters and fosters. If we could go to only having to deal with the County intake facility, and design it to be more volunteer and people friendly, we should be able to gain the trust and support of many more rescue groups and financial supporters.

If the current staff is not willing to accept the responsibility of running their own facility, they should step down from their positions and allow new administration to make changes for the betterment of these voiceless animals. Without changes being made to make rescue easier and animals healthier, this shelter will continue to have an increase in the euthanasia rate. This current system is not fair to the innocent animals being turned in to this shelter.

I am asking that you please consider updating the current standards and regulations for this shelter. I only want to give these souls a better chance of being rescued or reclaimed by their owners. They all need to be photographed and have their pictures posted in order for their families to find them.

Some of the rescue groups who have left Bartow are:

Road Trip Home

Vickie Hennessey

Macon Paws and Purrs

Brittney Chuyko and Ann Costenbader

Just these rescues were saving so many animals from the Bartow County shelter until personalities and additional rules and regulations forced them away. We need desperately to have these groups as well as many more new groups to join in to help save more of these animals.

In addition we have lost so many monetary supporters. Anne Reed from Road Trip home, not only rescued many animals, but she also pledged a great deal of her own money on the ones she couldn't rescue through her own group. We currently have Meredith Buban Lee and Lisa Ericson who are the main financial supporters. They are backing my decision to ask for reform at this shelter.

Disinfectants and Vaccines

I, [REDACTED] personally sought out what I thought would be the best disinfectant and vaccines, yet be the most affordable.

During my research I asked other rescue groups as well as other shelters who vaccinate, which vaccines they preferred. I also asked about the disinfectants and I found one individual who had compiled a reference book on the proper procedure for disinfecting an animal shelter. Zacharia Atteberry is the Kennel Tech for NE Missouri Humane Society. The kennel he worked for was having many of the same problems with diseases among all of the animals, but especially the puppies and kittens. They found a product which almost cured the disease in their shelter. Trifectant Disinfectant is their product of choice. In my research, I had already determined from my knowledge of the chemicals in this disinfectant, that it would be my personal choice. According to Zach, for a disinfectant to be effective it has to have at least one of the following ingredients:

Potassium Peroxymonosulfate

Sodium Hypochlorite

Calcium Hypochlorite

Accelerated Hydrogen Peroxide

The active ingredients in the Trifectant are Potassium Peroxymonosulfate 21.41% and Sodium Chloride 1.5%.

For the puppy vaccines, I chose the Solo-Jec 5 Plus (25 Dose) This comes to \$2.80 per dose and covers the 5 major puppy diseases. It does not contain Leptospira because it can cause reactions in young puppies and is not recommended by many veterinarians for the younger puppies.

For the kittens, I chose Eclipse 3. It is a modified live virus vaccine for rhinotracheitis, calicivirus, and pan leucopenia. The cost of this vaccine is \$3.07 per dose.

I have gone through the proper channels previously on June 16, 2015. I met with Bryan Canty and gave him copies of the disinfectant and vaccines that the volunteers were willing to purchase for Bartow County Animal Control to use. I even made the offer to come down and administer the vaccinations

myself when notified of the animal's arrival. I thought things were going to change and we were going to update the procedures, but when it came to getting approval from Debbie (manager of animal control) she said that only owner surrenders would be allowed to receive the vaccines and they could only be administered by a certified Vet Tech or Veterinarian and only on a certain day of the week.

The volunteers who had offered and are still willing to furnish these items are:

Meredith Buban Lee

Lisa Ericson

Gina Leigh Greenway

Susan Dayton

I gave Debbie Elrod, Animal Control manager, a copy of the printout on the Trifectant Disinfectant during the following week and she was to pass that along to Reginald who is the Kennel Tech for Animal Control. He never responded that he was or was not willing to try this disinfectant. Debbie said she had a quality disinfectant that was a parvocide. I know the Humane Society is using "One Step Parvo Tech". It was purchased through a salesman Dick Grosswald, who convinced them it would work. In researching the ingredients on the computer, none of the active ingredients are listed. I know if it is being used correctly, it obviously does not work at the animal control shelter.

So many of our top rescues have stopped rescuing puppies because of the massive amounts of sick puppies that come from this shelter. It is so sad to watch these puppies either be put down, or to be rescued only to break with this dread disease within a couple of days of their freedom. Some do survive, but so many do not live through it and even if they do survive the cost to the rescue group is around \$500 - \$1,000 per puppy. It is so much cost effective to just disinfect properly and vaccinate upon arrival. Not to mention preventing the suffering of these innocent puppies.

The Kittens have a similar problem with getting sick. They have a tendency to break with Calicivirus which kills them as fast as Parvo kills the puppies. All it would take is disinfecting properly and vaccinating to prevent so much spread of these diseases. I tried going through the proper channels

and failed. I am hoping you will see the severity of this problem and help us to save more of these animals from Bartow County.

Instead of trying to make changes to improve the quality of care for these animals, they seem to be making excuses for animals dying and breaking with disease as soon as they leave the shelter. We have been trying to offer our support and it has not been accepted. There is no reason for Bartow County to be falling behind the other counties. At one time Bartow County was the animal shelter everybody compared themselves to because we were better, now we are the county nobody wants to be like.

Currently, Polk County Humane Society wants to take over their animal control shelter just as Etowah Valley has done in Bartow County. The volunteers who have brought such great changes to that shelter are doing all they can do to prevent this from happening. Why would they want to go back to where they were a year ago when they have only had to kill 9 dogs during 2015 because of lack of space. They have had no cats put down for space this year. That is what I want to see in Bartow. Improvements and more lives saved.

This can happen, but there will have to be changes. We need to catch up with today's standards. I feel certain that we can gain back some of the support we once had, if we can do a better job of communicating, disinfecting and vaccinating. We need to be more active in getting the pictures of animals out to the public for possible owner reclaims as well as letting the rescue groups know these animals are in the shelter. Rescues need to be allowed to see the animal they are considering taking into their care. Volunteers socializing with the animals would be great as would giving baths, flea dips, flea and tick preventatives, vaccinations, etc. At the present time the public is not even allowed to see the animals in the animal control shelter. Unless you are searching for your lost pet, you are not allowed to go past the lobby. Volunteers should go through training before being allowed to help, but they could definitely be a great asset.

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TRIFECTANT Disinfectant - 10 Lb. Tub

Broad Spectrum disinfectant. 99% effective against over 100 viruses (including canine Parvo), 400 Bacteria, 75 Fungi (including Ringworm). Fast acting, no residue, biodegradable. 1-Tub makes 123 Gallon. One Gallon of mix treats 160 Square feet.

Product ID: 15100
Manufacturer: Vetoquinol
Availability: In stock

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Quantity: 1

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Solo-Jec 5 Plus (25 dose)

SoloJec 5-25ds

Product ID: 12395

Availability: In stock

\$ 69.95

Quantity: 1

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SoloJec 5 Plus provides puppies an updated advanced formula effective against 5 major diseases including: canine distemper, hepatitis (adenovirus type 1), tracheobronchitis (adenovirus type 2), parainfluenza, and parvovirus.

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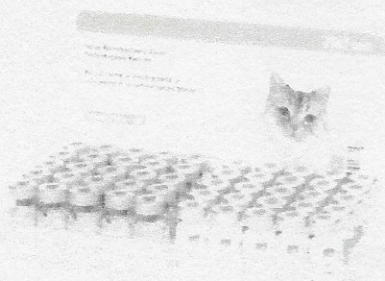
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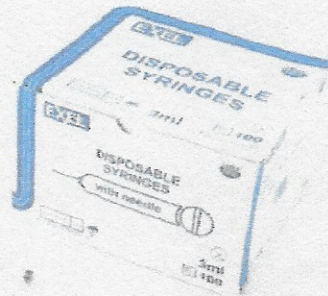
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