Regular
Burke County Animal Advisory Board Meeting
Burke County Services Building
Commissioners Meeting Room
110 N. Green Street
Morganton, NC 28655
August 20, 2025
5:30 pm

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present:
- Debbie Hawkins (Chair)
- Gwen Hood (Vice-Chair)
- Jennifer McGrady (Secretary)
- Denise Smith
- Linda Arriaga
- Morgan Bollinger

Board Members Absent:
- Jeff Robinson
- Gwen Stephens

Also Present:
- Kay Draughn – Animal Services Foundation

Call to Order

Welcome – Mission Statement: *The Burke County Animal Advisory Board's primary mission is to advocate for the humane treatment of companion animals. This will be accomplished through: 1. Encouraging responsible pet ownership by promoting and protecting the health, safety and welfare of companion animals and citizens of Burke County, 2. Monitoring animal welfare groups providing care for the animals, 3. Providing support to Animal Services, 4. Partnering with rescue organizations to promote owner retention and adoptions, 5. Advising County Commissioners on best practice for improvement to the Animal Ordinance, ensuring compliance with statutes pertaining to the care and treatment of animals.*

Welcome new members: Linda Arriaga, Morgan Bollinger

Approval of Agenda – Jennifer McGrady motioned to approve the agenda, Denise Smith seconded. Unanimous approval.

Approval of Minutes (July) – Denise Smith motioned to approve the July Minutes, Debbie Hawkins seconded. Unanimous approval.

Presentation:

Monthly Animal Services Report – by Debbie Hawkins – see attached.

- Discussion that in the future will be reporting 3 monthly reports for the quarterly meeting.

Old Business

- Case updates - none

- Staffing – BCAS is seeking a full-time veterinarian position, which is posted on the county website.
- Program Needs - none

New Business

- Updated Rules of Procedure – for vote & submission to County Commissioners for approval
    - On the Commissioner's Agenda for Tuesday, September 2nd @ 3pm
- Ordinance Revision Status
    - Debbie Hawkins along with Kaitlin Settlemyre, Eliot, and Bryan Epley met and had a consensus on changes.
        - Approved changes: Sheltering an animal for 14 days, instead of 3 days, before being claimed as owner.
        - Discussion of the definition of managed intake.
            - Discussion of priority levels – highest being those in imminent danger/sick/injured. Discussion that this diverts strays.
    - Discussion of the Definition of Community Cat Program after conversations with local cat rescues.
        - Cat rescues do NOT want to register cat colonies and asked to remove the word "registered" from the definition.
        - Jennifer McGrady made a motion to approve the ordinance with the following modifications. Gwen Hood seconded. Unanimous approval.
            - Motion: To remove the line "in a cat colony registered with the animal services department" from the Definition of Community Cat Program and to delete 6-115 (a).
- Discussion of Concerned Citizen Report
        - See attached
        - Unknown if BCAS was contacted about stray dog.
        - Find out if resident willing to make a report to law enforcement.
- Animal Advisory Board Goal Suggestion Box
    - Challenge members to think on goals for the AAB to tackle.

New Shelter Update:

- Walls are up and starting work on the inside of the building now.
- Discussion of color – preference for earth tones.

Foundation Report:

- Congratulations on ASFI running for 5 years now.
- Andy Thompson of Heritage Funeral Homes to join the board.
- Selling Tweetsie Railroad tickets at a discounted price.
- Upcoming Events:
    - August 27th – Chipotle Fundraiser (must show flyer) – from 5pm – 9pm
    - September 14th – Sit Stay Drink Fundraiser for ABLAR at Silver Fork Winery
    - October 4th – 1st Annual Corn Hole Tournament at Fonta Flora Brewery at Whippoorwill Farm
    - October 8th – Applebee's Fundraiser from 11am – 11pm

- November 8th – Fall Scrapping for Paws event at the Co-op
- United Way Day of Giving
- December 7th – Purrs and Paws on Main at 100 Main Restaurant from 2pm – 5pm

Animal Enforcement Report:

- Discuss getting Animal Enforcement reports and specifying the subtypes of intake, especially ACO pickup vs. citizen drop off of strays.

Public Comment

Each citizen allotted 3 minutes to present their comments.

Next Regular Meeting

November 12, 2025 @ 5:30pm

Adjourn

- Jennifer McGrady motioned to adjourn, Gwen Hood seconded. Unanimous approval.
- Meeting adjourned at 7:19pm

Signed: **Date:** 11/12/25



Debbie Hawkins
Burke County Animal Advisory Board Chair

Attachment:

Notes on Concerned Citizen Report from Kay Draughn

Not happy with results.

5998 Pearson Ave – So Mtn Community

Ferral cat pop out of control

Dog appeared, bk male lab,

No food or watered provided

Everything is fine – dog friendly

At 2 am dog goes crazy - barking

Barking fiercely at next door neighbor's residence

Ms. Schronce wonders if neighbor pepper sprayed the dog

Dog continues to bark – directed at the next-door neighbor's house

That neighbor shot dog in the road. The wounded dog runs into her flower bed.

Shooter came onto her property and shot the dog 2 more times

She contacted SO

Meanwhile the neighbor (shooter) drug the dog to his backyard

She saw him on her property, at the flower bed, including the clothing he wore.

SO said they can't prove it

SO " sorry and hope you have a better day".

Has not spoken to the Sheriff yet.

Going to get a copy of police report when available.

Attachment:

BCAS July Data

July 2025 Data

Canines				
		In Shelter	In Foster Care	Total
Beginning Animal Count on 07/01/2025		**47**	**121**	**168**
Live Intake	Adult	Up to 5 Months	Age Unknown	Total
Stray/At Large	22	13	0	35
Relinquished by Owner	13	25	0	38
Transfer in from agency (in state)	0	0	0	0
Transfer in from agency (out of state)	0	0	0	0
Transfer in from agency (international)	0	0	0	0
Owner Intended Euthanasia	0	0	0	0
Impound/Seizure	0	0	0	0
Other Intakes	0	0	0	0
TOTAL LIVE INTAKE	**35**	**38**	**0**	**73**

Live Outcomes	Adult	Up to 5 Months	Age Unknown	Total
Adoption	32	12	0	44
Returned to Owner	9	1	0	10
Transfer out to agency (in state)	5	4	0	9
Transfer out to agency (out of state)	0	0	0	0
Transfer out to agency (international)	0	0	0	0
Returned to Field	0	0	0	0
Other Live Outcome	0	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL: LIVE OUTCOMES	**46**	**17**	**0**	**63**
Other Outcomes	Adult	Up to 5 Months	Age Unknown	Total
Died in care	0	4	0	4
Lost in care	0	0	0	0
Shelter Euthanasia	5	2	0	7
Owner Intended Euthanasia	0	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL: OTHER OUTCOMES	**5**	**6**	**0**	**11**
TOTAL OUTCOMES	**51**	**23**	**0**	**74**

Felines				
		In Shelter	In Foster Care	Total
Beginning Animal Count on 07/01/2025		**44**	**188**	**232**
Live Intake	Adult	Up to 5 Months	Age Unknown	Total
Stray/At Large	20	68	0	88
Relinquished by Owner	78	24	0	102
Transfer in from agency (in state)	0	0	0	0
Transfer in from agency (out of state)	0	0	0	0
Transfer in from agency (international)	0	0	0	0
Owner Intended Euthanasia	0	0	0	0
Impound/Seizure	0	0	0	0
Other Intakes	0	0	0	0
TOTAL LIVE INTAKE	**98**	**92**	**0**	**190**
Live Outcomes	Adult	Up to 5 Months	Age Unknown	Total
Adoption	83	24	0	107
Returned to Owner	1	3	0	4
Transfer out to agency (in state)	4	4	0	8
Transfer out to agency (out of state)	0	0	0	0
Transfer out to agency (international)	0	0	0	0
Returned to Field	0	0	0	0
Other Live Outcome	0	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL: LIVE OUTCOMES	**88**	**31**	**0**	**119**
Other Outcomes	Adult	Up to 5 Months	Age Unknown	Total
Died in care	1	7	0	8
Lost in care	0	0	0	0
Shelter Euthanasia	5	11	0	16
Owner Intended Euthanasia	0	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL: OTHER OUTCOMES	**6**	**18**	**0**	**24**
TOTAL OUTCOMES	**94**	**49**	**0**	**143**

Live Release Rate:

Dogs: 85%

Cats: 83%