

## VAWNN

### Virginia Voters for Animal Welfare Northern Neck Chapter Meeting Minutes April 4, 2005

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:15 PM. Organizer Pat Weakland welcomed the group. Those in attendance included the following persons who introduced themselves and stated their affiliations.

Pat Weakland	VVAW
Betty Weakland	VVAW
Barb Dietz	Animal Welfare League
Joanne Dietz	Animal Welfare League
Michelle Jewell	Lancaster County ACO
Mary Strickler	Northumberland County Animal Shelter
Fran Warren	Northumberland County Animal Shelter
Larry Elston	Northumberland County liaison
Rebecca Elston	Northumberland County liaison
Roger Briney	Northumberland County Animal Shelter/ACO
Annie Davis	Sleepy Hollow Sanctuary
John Taylor	Sleepy Hollow Sanctuary
Ginny Trigger	Northern Neck Humane Society
Susan Christopher	NNHS and Animal Welfare League
Susan Thomas	Northern Neck Humane Society
Michelle Keinholtz	Northern Neck Humane Society
Larry Hinson	Northern Neck Humane Society
Sharon Bowman	Citizen
John Mocko	Citizen
Helen Wilkins	Northern Neck Humane Society

Pat proceeded by giving the group an overview of the purpose of VVAW and explained how this local chapter would add strength to the state organization. He continued that the local chapter would lend local help to all requests of local boards and state legislators. He expressed his hope that all the organizations would put any differences aside and work together for the common goal of redefining state and local laws and ordinances.

Pat thanked the local animal control officers (ACO's) for their attendance and noted that the VVAWNN would be working as advocates for these dedicated individuals.

It was the consensus of the group that a large number of animals were being euthanized in shelters in our area, and that irresponsible animal owners were responsible for these

large numbers.

Agenda items were discussed. The group agreed upon the following.

Meetings will be held on Monday evenings at 7PM. The frequency of the meetings and location will be determined as meeting location availability becomes known.

Governmental liaisons were determined to be as noted:

Pat Weakland	Richmond County
Northumberland County	Larry Elston
Lancaster County	Barbara Dietz/Michelle Jewell
Westmoreland County	Larry Hinson/Helen Wilkins

It was agreed that breeders were not viewed a problem in our area, but the group would back efforts of the central committee in dealing with issues arising from this topic.

Spay/Neuter was agreed to as the way to reduce the unwanted population. Ways to address this topic were discussed including the cost of licensing fees. Pat noted that the State Offices in Richmond, VA, had stated they had not been approached by localities to allow them to increase these fees. It was agreed that VVAWNN would approach the local boards of supervisors and encourage them to initiate written requests of the state to allow the fees for licenses to be increased providing discount incentives for animals that have been spayed or neutered.

Barb Dietz informed the group of financial assistance programs offered by the Animal Welfare League.

The importance of educating the public regarding spay/neuter was discussed. The use of flyers, posters and influential community/business leaders including those involved with the church were pinpointed as effective tools for education. Pat noted the statewide figure for the year 2003 as 134,000 animals put to death, some by way of the gas chamber. Making politicians on the state and local level aware of the cost of this process was discussed, and it was agreed that this issue would be priority with VVAWNN.

The ACO's present noted that many of the animals taken in to their shelters seemed to be the result of animals being "dropped off" and that economic status of the owners played a role.

Ideas presented for spay/neuter awareness included bumper stickers, mandatory micro chipping and spay/neuter awareness activities.

It was agreed that the county liaisons would proceed immediately with approaching their respective county administrator and the county board of supervisors asking them to request from Richmond removal of the license fee cap.

Annie Davis and John Taylor gave a brief summation of the progress on the establishment of the sanctuary and noted some of the problems that were being incurred.

Issues that might affect county funding were determined as isolating county budgetary reserves to be earmarked for increase in the ACO operating budget. Monies going to the localities' general fund was seen as a problem as no real tracking of these funds seems to currently exist. ACO's noted that license fees could be tracked to encourage support to spay/neuter and license fee changes.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM with the next meeting being the first Monday on Monday, May 2 PM, location to be announced.