

The VVAW meeting focusing on pet overpopulation started at 11:10 am at the Fredericksburg Colonial Inn in Fredericksburg on Saturday, 7/23/05.

Attendees:

Pat Canning  
Lillian Clancy  
Mary Anne Conmy  
Heather Deem  
Rose Given  
Kim Kincheloe  
Virginia Kincheloe  
Jennifer Kline  
Anne Little  
Gary Loewenthal  
Don Marro  
Mollie McCurdy  
Dawn Morris  
John Morris  
Terri Porterfield  
Patti Stinson  
Glen Swain  
Judith Swartz  
Michell Taylor  
Betty Weakland  
Pat Weakland  
Nancy Windingland

Introductions

Attendees introduced themselves and spoke briefly of their background or the group with which they are affiliated or otherwise described their reasons for attending.

During the introductions, the Board of VVAW was introduced. Board members are:

Lillian Clancy  
Don Marro  
Tammy Javier  
Kim Kincheloe  
Mollie McCurdy  
Glen Swain  
Pat Weakland

All but Tammy Javier were present.

## Agenda

The general theme of the meeting was the discussion of issues of animal welfare and how to start addressing those issues.

1. Jennifer Klein and Michell Taylor discussed the plight of abandoned hunting dogs in Caroline County.

By the end of the meeting, agreement had been reached that a “template” of activities to begin agitating for change at the local county level would be put together by Pat Weakland.

With help from Pat Weakland and his Northern Neck Chapter of VVAW, Jennifer and Michell would start a campaign to change the circumstances of abandoned hunting dogs.

The campaign would include the banding together with others in the county to initiate a Caroline County Chapter of VVAW.

2. Nancy Windingland suggested raising the cost of a dog license for dogs which are not sterile to the equivalent of the charge for s/n surgery. She suggested that \$100 for the license for an intact dog would be the approximate cost of the surgery.

3. Pat Weakland discussed his work with the four counties in the Northern Neck which is currently focusing on Richmond County. With his review of the local ordinances, his reading of the Virginia code, and getting the local Commonwealth’s Attorney involved, the county is starting to come to grips with the problem of “excess” dogs. He noted that the ACO there, in 10 years, has never issued a citation regarding infraction of animal ordinances, but since his campaign has started, the ACO now wears a uniform, sees his job as significant, and has already written three citations.

4. Jennifer Klein talked of the problem of deer hunting dogs running on property not owned by the owners of the dogs.

She was counseled to become knowledgeable about the law in Virginia and to push for enforcement.

5. Pat Canning noted the good press which has been bestowed on Pat Weakland because of his pressure to make change.

There was a general discussion of how to get newspapers, very frequently starved for stories, involved in publicity.

6. Heather Deem spoke of her success in finally getting a paper to talk about the positive attributes of dogs that are often the focus of BSL (breed specific legislation). She was successful in having an article written about “Defamed Dogs” in the Richmond paper, perhaps the only story not critical of such dogs.

It was suggested that she publicize this story statewide.

Heather noted that the breeder's ordinance in Richmond is not enforced, and even law enforcement officials of Richmond break the law with their personal pets.

Heather says she "hounds" the press.

7. Mary Anne Conmy agreed that the dogs of Richmond employees are in some cases not in compliance with the Richmond breeder's ordinance.

She mentioned that judicial enforcement is needed and wondered what might be done to get judges on board. She noted that the recent defeat of Michelle Welch for Richmond's Commonwealth Attorney was bad news in terms of animal prosecutions, and she talked of going to the person who won the election to get buy-in on animal case prosecution.

8. Don Marro asked that everyone who wishes to be active take the 3 hours that could be required to read the Virginia code section on companion animals. Don added that knowing the law provides the basis for asking for enforcement. Without knowing the law, it is easy to be blown off.

Anne Little asked if VVAW would provide a link to that code on the website.

9. Anne Little noted that she has found that less than 10% of Virginians are hunters. She wonders how to get the vast number who are pro-animal involved.

Don Marro said to do so needs organization in many places in the state, and the meeting minutes should ask for help in starting local VVAW chapters for this purpose.

He added that money is needed for the state and localities to enforce their laws, and that money is needed for VVAW to continue its work.

Anne Little asked for the "talking points" so one would know what to sell.

Gary Loewenthal asked for "the ask" – and said he will build into his work the appeal for money for VVAW, the support and growth of VVAW groups, and the support of VVAW initiatives.

Don responded that the talking points are money for enforcement, spay/neuter, elimination of gas, humane education, and accountability.

10. Mary Anne Conmy discussed Cedric Giese briefly and wondered if VVAW would be working with him since he and his advertising agency had been involved in the development of a campaign to eliminate gas chambers several years ago for SOS.

Don answered that we would like to meet with him, but that there is also another meeting to be held in early August with Dr. Wilkes, the State Veterinarian, and Secretary of Agriculture Robert Bloxom. The hope is that gas will be eliminated by fiat by collaboration, but if collaboration cannot be reached, VVAW is prepared to bring the case to the people.

11. Patti Stinson asked how big corporations could be brought in to help, knowing they will spend money on advertising anyway, and how to tie that advertising to our goals. She mentioned specifically a campaign several years ago by Kodak in which a shelter adoption was featured as “a Kodak moment” – which resulted in increased animal adoptions.

12. Pat Canning talked about a reading project in which children read to dogs in libraries ran into road blocks when the same program was attempted in public school. With agitating by parents, changes are underway which may allow the program to be in schools.

13. Terri Porterfield spoke of the Shiloh project where troubled children are teamed with hard-to-place dogs as a way to build mutual trust, and the wonderful results that have been seen.

She was encouraged to think through a humane ed program which could include this program, getting publicity for the program and building it into a state-wide effort.

14. Anne Little encouraged VVAW to think of ways to raise money. She suggested getting Randy Grim, author of Miracle Dog, the story about his dog Quentin who is a gas chamber survivor, to speak.

15. Heather Deem said she will undertake the establishment of a VVAW chapter in Richmond.

16. Jennifer Klein added that she will work on a project with their local newspaper.

17. Pat Weakland advised that getting to know the County Administrator is useful as that person usually has a connection to local newspapers.

The meeting was adjourned at 1 pm.