

## ANIMAL CONTROL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### SCHEDULED MEETING - MARCH 15, 2016

The Animal Control Advisory Committee met on Tuesday March 15, 2016 at 6:00 PM at the Burke County Library. In attendance were: Bill Tinley, Carol Jones, Larry Lewis, Monika Mobley, and Kelly Jenkins. Stephen Murray, Sarah Ford, Jones Gresham, and Jesse Stone were unable to attend. Minutes from the February 16, 2016 meeting were approved.

Bill Tinley distributed: Department of Agriculture Incoming / Outgoing Animal forms; the City of Waynesboro's Animal Control budget; and a newspaper article from the Augusta Chronicle.

The meeting was opened to public comment.

Janice Morris made the following observations:

- Aim for something more than just adequate
- Capacity needs are based on population data. However this is likely to underestimate the true need, due to large numbers of Vogtle workers who are not included in census data.
- A stricter ordinance in Richmond County will create an incentive for people to dump dogs across the county line, further increasing the needed capacity.
- Funds should be allocated for education and for low cost spay/neuter
- Internet and social networking will require significant time and effort by shelter staff
- The projected budget should include veterinary care and should consider the possibility of clinic or surgery space within the shelter
- Ideally the shelter should be as close to no-kill as possible
- Any revised ordinance should address liability for people caring for feral cats (i.e. caretakers are not owners and not liable for issues related to feral cats)
- The shelter location should be easily accessible to the public, not too far "out of the way".

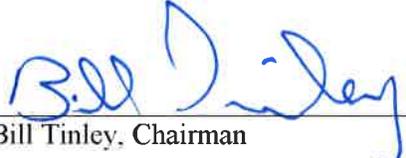
Samantha Holton raised the need for an anti-tethering law and discussed several specific cases of tethered dogs, abused and neglected dogs, and other specific cases she has dealt with. Patricia shared some documents about no-kill shelters.

Bill Tinley and Wayne Crockett visited the Emanuel County Animal Shelter recently and left with a positive impression of the operation and its staff. There is a combination of full-time workers, part-time workers, volunteers, and people fulfilling community-service sentences.

Kelly reminded the committee of Jesse Stone's idea to leverage EMA locations around the county, so that people could surrender animals there, rather than at dumps.

A working draft of the committee's final report was distributed and Bill asked that everyone read it and make comments prior to the next meeting. Bill also will look closely at the ordinances.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 PM. The next scheduled meeting is April 19, 2016, at 6:00pm at the Burke County Library.

  
Bill Tinley, Chairman

  
Carol Jones, Secretary

**ANIMAL CONTROL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**At the Burke County Library**  
**6:00 P.M.**  
**March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**AGENDA**

1. Call to order
2. Approval of last meeting's minutes
3. Opening Remarks
4. Public comments
5. Reports of Committee Members
6. Other
7. Adjourn

Waynesboro

**ANIMAL CONTROL BUDGET 2016**

100-10-3200-511100 SALARIES	24,466
100-10-3200-512100 EMPLOYEE INSURANCE	8,383
100-10-3200-512200 EMPLOYEE SOCIAL SECURITY	1,859
100-10-3200-512400 EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT	1,710
100-10-3200-512700 WORKERS' COMP INS	1,770
100-10-3200-512900 OTHER EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	150
100-10-3200-522210 REPAIRS & MAINT - BLDG	500
100-10-3200-522220 REPAIRS & MAINT - EQUIP	1,000
100-10-3200-523200 COMMUNICATIONS	500
100-10-3200-523500 TRAVEL	200
100-10-3200-523700 TRAINING AND EDUCATION	200
100-10-3200-531110 OFFICE SUPPLIES	25
100-10-3200-531230 UTILITIES	300
100-10-3200-531270 VEHICLE GASOLINE	1,860
100-10-3200-531720 UNIFORMS	100
100-10-3910-523950 DISPOSAL FEES	1,000
100-10-3910-531120 MAINT & OPERATING SUPPLIES	6,000
100-10-3910-542000 CAPITAL OUTLAY-ANIMAL CONTROL	0
100-10-3910-523910 ANIMAL CONTROL-OTHER	0
<b>TOTAL ANIMAL CONTROL</b>	<b>50,023</b>

By Mark Tribby, D.V.M.  
Guest Columnist

I spoke to the Augusta Commission's Public Safety Committee on Jan. 26 as a veterinarian member of the subcommittee appointed to update the city's animal code. My topic addressed the public and animal safety concerns, as well as the humane issues that must be addressed when the city considers a much-needed novel "trap-neuter-release" program for abandoned cats - which I am strongly in favor of.

At present, the old and new versions of the animal code are neutral to any private citizen wanting to help the plight of abandoned cats. We must do better than that. I have neutered many such cats and will continue to do so when requested.

**VETS CAN EDUCATE** people one-on-one on the health and legal risks they are assuming, and give them the current science on what works and what does not. The county needs to be proactive in discussing the risks and benefits of a sanctioned novel TNR program so we can all make informed decisions as a community.

Ignoring the problem benefits no one. People who love all God's creatures - abandoned cats, pet cats, the wildlife cats prey on and all those who value their medical health - have an equal stake in where the city decides to go with TNR, and should not be shut-out of an open dialogue. I am hopeful a great compromise can be had that addresses all concerns. We can reach far further goals if we all are rowing the boat in the same direction!

The Augusta Animal Code was updated Feb. 2, and has one more reading before adoption. I am hopeful the new public-relations money the commissioners granted to Animal Services this year will educate citi-

zens with unaltered pets to be a part of the solution to lower the serious overcrowding and the shelter's 54 percent euthanasia rate. I presume that the shelter's current and future budgets will not be offset by any new income from fines and fees so they will have more funds to help more pets. Is that money alone sufficient to solve the high euthanasia rate?

Also, will the new animal code be as effective as the version proposed by the subcommittee advisory board, since two key tools to reduce the high euthanasia rate were voted down by the commission? One positive change prevents owned pets from being sterilized if the owner is found and the pet released. This just makes sense! We are thankful Linda Bragg brought that to the commission's attention.

What makes no sense is the failure of the commission to enact pet microchipping - a onetime \$15 to \$20 fee gives you a lifetime of protection for your loved pet if it gets lost and picked up by Animal Control, or taken to a humane society or the vet. Microchip companies must list your pet's unique ID number for free; all you have to pay is the implantation. Your pet can be scanned and rapidly returned to its home, even before being impounded, as the Animal Control officers are delighted to keep a pet from checking in where they may never check out.

A microchip also prevents cats from having to wear required rabies tags and collars that can cause them to be strangled in bushes, etc. A microchip also ensures that each pet matches each unique rabies tag. Someone trying to skirt the law on rabies vaccines could have a dozen yellow labs, but just get one vaccinated. They then use that one tag and collar as "proof" it had been vaccinated if one pet goes stray

and is impounded.

**IN MY EXPERIENCE**, microchips rarely fail, but more than 99 percent of impounded dogs and cats at Animal Services are not wearing collars or tags unless they have grown into their neck skin from being tethered and neglected. Logic shows that microchipping your pet can help it be returned home and, most importantly, keeps the animal population and euthanasia rate down at Animal Services. Microchipping also will help re-trapped TNR cats to be specifically identified for necessary booster vaccines, vet care and medications.

The other major tool to ensure a decrease in the euthanasia rates at Animal Services, which commissioners declined to accept, are incentives for altering your pets and disincentives for the ongoing high birth rate of unaltered pets.

The citizens of Fulton and DeKalb counties in metro Atlanta have long had mandatory pet licensing that offered low annual fees for altered pets and somewhat higher for unaltered pets - \$10 and \$25 a year, respectively. In Savannah it is \$5 and \$35 a year, respectively. Some jurisdictions offer lower fees for senior and indigent pet owners.

These are genuine "user fees" and not a "new tax" on the general population of Augusta. Pet registration is as simple as mailing in a copy of your pet's rabies vaccination and the license form. No trip to the Animal Services is needed. Moreover, Augusta had an annual pet license fee up through the 1960s that was well-accepted.

**ALL PET OWNERS** should have some "skin" in the fight against unwanted and abandoned pets. We should not just expect irresponsible pet owners to be the best solution to the euthanasia problem, yet as it is now they are the main ones who will pay into the city coffers. The new \$10 annual li-

cence fee for unaltered pets makes little financial sense. If I did not care to have my pet neutered, which can cost \$100 to \$200, then it's quite a bargain to only have to pay \$10 and allow the uncontrolled breeding to continue. Fair laws are made to educate all citizens that unrestrained dog and cat breeding is causing the taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars to run Animal Services (a real tax). So why not use commonsense changes that have been proved to work in our state instead of striking a weak compromise?

I have faith that the pet owners of Augusta will respond in a positive way as their cohorts of Atlanta and Savannah have. These are the same people whom the commission now requires paying \$77 to \$154 a year for rain control. Surely these very low user fees are at least as justifiable in light of the strong concerns we all have of the high euthanasia rates and associated costs of running Animal Services.

Please call your commissioners and ask them how their removal of two key tools - that the subcommittee diligently researched to reduce euthanasia's at the Animal Services - will help instead of hinder. Will a one-time cash infusion for public relations really be the solution? Instead, look at what works in Atlanta and Savannah, which are getting closer and closer to being no-kill animal shelters.

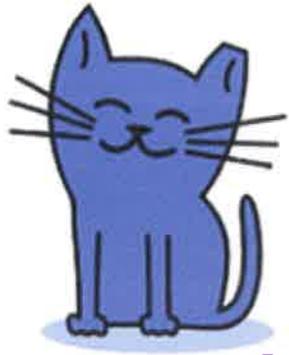
Lastly, I recently asked CSRA veterinarians at our monthly meeting if they would consider neutering one abandoned or indigent cat owner's cat a week *pro bono* to help with the unwanted pet overpopulation, and I received many thumbs-up. Call your vet to see if he or she is willing to help out. We all can make a big difference!

(The writer is an Augusta veterinarian.)

Trap-neuter-release program for stray cats requires the right approach

# New County Animal Ordinances

effective Jan 1, 2017 in Richmond County, GA



People caring for feral cats are NOT considered owners. Augusta will NOT pursue outdoor cats without complaint.

Every dog MUST have collar with valid Vaccination and Registration tags and ID tag with owners name & address.



Owners have 5 days to claim animals that are impounded at Animal Services.



- Anyone who has a cat or dog 6 months or older MUST register the animal with Augusta Animal Services and get a registration tag.

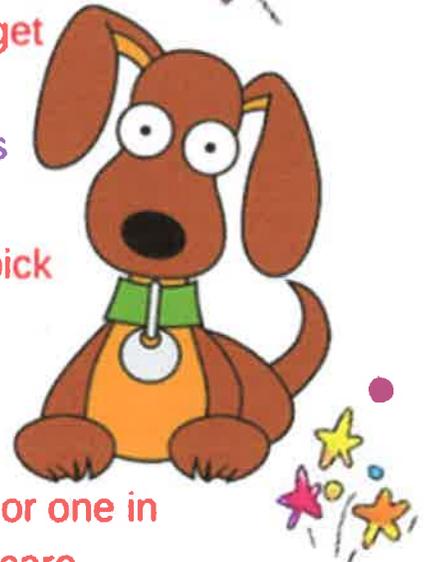
Dogs cannot be tethered outside unless the owner remains outside with the dog and keeps them within sight.

No animal may travel in the trunk of a vehicle or under a pick up truck's bed cover or "low profile" cover.



- Animals kept outside must be provided a large enough, structurally sound, weatherproof shelter.

It is unlawful to fail, refuse or neglect to provide your animal or one in your charge with food, water, shelter and necessary vet care.



To get the Registration Tag, owners must provide proof of spay/neuter and get annual rabies vaccinations. Registration for fixed animals is free. Registration for animals that are NOT fixed is \$10 annually per animal with the fee not to exceed \$200 annually for owners with multiple unaltered animals.



**ATLANTA** — A local group is slashing the euthanasia count and giving thousands more animals a chance for adoption.

Lifeline Animal Services took over the Fulton County animal shelter in 2012, when almost 6,000 animals were euthanized. Last year, less than 1,000 animals were put down.

"Since November, our Fulton County animal shelter has been no-kill. This is a first for metro Atlanta of any open intake shelter," said Karen Hirsch, with Lifeline.

The group says it's putting down only critically injured or aggressive animals, which is less than 5 percent of the animals it takes in.

"Our animal control officers are no longer dog catchers. (They) go out in the community to try to help people with their animals (and) try to educate, get people to keep their animals," Hirsch said.

Lifeline says they aggressively match pets with foster homes and specialized rescue groups.

The group sometimes offers flea medicine, food or vet services in order to encourage people to keep their pets.

Workers on animal control calls check dogs for microchips on the spot, so they can take a stray home right away.

The group says another program that works is its "Dog for a Day" program. Potential pet owners can check out a dog and make sure it's a good fit for their families.

"When we hit the no-kill mark, it's just an amazing feeling. We couldn't put into words how happy it made us because that's animals that we're saving," said Breia Milde, with Lifeline.

Lifeline says it is also making progress at the DeKalb County animal shelter.

WSB-TV  
Atlanta 2

## CONTACT LIFELINE

**LifeLine Animal Project**

**P.O. Box 15466  
Atlanta, GA 30333**

**Cat Adoption Center**

**3172 E. Ponce de Leon Ave  
Scottsdale, GA 30079**

For general information: 404-292-8800, [info@lifelineanimal.org](mailto:info@lifelineanimal.org)

For Decatur/Avondale Clinic: 404-292-8800, [clinic@lifelineanimal.org](mailto:clinic@lifelineanimal.org)

For Airport/South Metro Clinic: 678-973-2881, [clinic2@lifelineanimal.org](mailto:clinic2@lifelineanimal.org)

For adoptions: [adoptions@lifelineanimal.org](mailto:adoptions@lifelineanimal.org)

To foster: [foster@lifelineanimal.org](mailto:foster@lifelineanimal.org)

To volunteer: [volunteer@lifelineanimal.org](mailto:volunteer@lifelineanimal.org)

Catlanta: [catlanta@lifelineanimal.org](mailto:catlanta@lifelineanimal.org)

Fundraising: Jennifer Eddy, Director of Development - [jeddy@lifelineanimal.org](mailto:jeddy@lifelineanimal.org)

Media Contact: Karen Hirsch, Public Relations Director - [khirsch@lifelineanimal.org](mailto:khirsch@lifelineanimal.org)

Fax: 404-292-8804

**LifeLine Animal Project at  
Fulton County Animal Services  
860 Marietta Blvd NW  
Atlanta, GA 30318**

*For life threatening emergencies, call 911*

For general information: 404-613-0358

For adoptions: 404-613-0357, [adoptions@fultonanimalservices.com](mailto:adoptions@fultonanimalservices.com)

For rescue groups: 404-613-9157, [rescue@fultonanimalservices.com](mailto:rescue@fultonanimalservices.com)

To volunteer: 404-613-9127, [volunteer@fultonanimalservices.com](mailto:volunteer@fultonanimalservices.com)

To foster: [foster@fultonanimalservices.com](mailto:foster@fultonanimalservices.com)

Fax: 404-792-3970

**LifeLine Animal Project at  
DeKalb County Animal Services  
845 Camp Road  
Decatur, GA 30032**

*For life threatening emergencies, call 911*

**Animal Shelter Division (managed by LifeLine Animal Project):**

Animal Shelter: 404-294-2996 (please follow the prompts for the correct department)

For general information: 404-294-2949, [info@dekalbanimalservices.com](mailto:info@dekalbanimalservices.com)

For adoptions: 404-294-2165, [adoption@dekalbanimalservices.com](mailto:adoption@dekalbanimalservices.com)

For rescue groups: 404-294-2963, [rescue@dekalbanimalservices.com](mailto:rescue@dekalbanimalservices.com)

For volunteer: [volunteer@dekalbanimalservices.com](mailto:volunteer@dekalbanimalservices.com)

For foster: [foster@dekalbanimalservices.com](mailto:foster@dekalbanimalservices.com)

Fax: 404-294-2935

**Field Enforcement Division (managed by DeKalb County):**

Mail address: 3630 Camp Circle, Decatur, GA 30032

Cruelty report hotline number: 404-294-2939

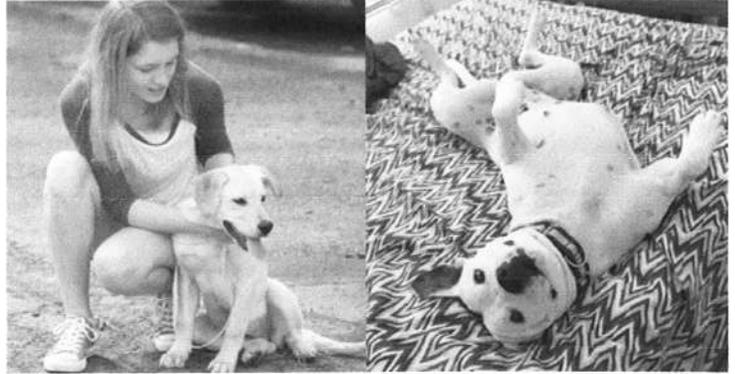
Field Enforcement: 404-294-2996

Fax: 404-294-2947

## LIFELINE ACHIEVES NO-KILL LEVELS AT FCAS

When LifeLine Animal Project took over DeKalb and Fulton County Animal Services in 2013, our mission remained unchanged: to save the lives of healthy and treatable animals in county shelters. We had no idea how long it would take us to get there managing shelters for two of the largest counties in Atlanta, but we dove in and got to work!

Now, just two years later LifeLine Animal Project has made history! **We obtained no-kill levels at our Fulton County Animal Services (FCAS) shelter in November, December and January!**



This is the first time ever in Atlanta where an open-admission animal shelter (one where no animals brought in are turned away) has achieved no-kill levels, defined as saving 90 percent or more of the animals coming in.

**FCAS saved an amazing 90 percent of animals brought into the shelter during November, December and January!**

And LifeLine's DeKalb County Animal Services (DCAS) has also achieved wonderful results. **DCAS has sustained an over 85 percent save rate in December and January.** We are confident that LifeLine at DCAS will reach the no-kill level for all shelter animals by the end of 2016.

How have we achieved our success so far? We have **wonderful adopters** who open their hearts and homes to our dogs and cats. We have a **terrific team of employees** who love animals and are dedicated to saving them. We have an **awesome group of volunteers** who spend much of their free time helping out with whatever is needed at our shelters, working offsite events, speaking to groups, fostering animals, and much more! We have **great rescue partners** who pull many, many animals, including the critically injured.



And we have **wonderfully generous donors** who make our lifesaving programs a reality.

Additionally, LifeLine's Atlanta trap-neuter-return (TNR) program for stray and feral cats, has saved thousands of cats who would have been otherwise euthanized. Atlanta has sterilized more than 29,000 cats in order to humanely control free-roaming cat populations. Other programs, such as our "Dog for a Day" program, special monthly promotions, and offsite housing for some of our cats, have created more exposure for the animals, resulting in an increased number of adoptions. And owner retention counseling have provided many pet owners with resources so that they could keep their pets.

However, **we cannot sustain these lifesaving rates without your continued support and the support of our community.** Please help us spread the word and ask your friends, colleagues and neighbors to do the following:

1. Adopt a homeless animal from one of our shelters;
2. Spay/neuter, microchip, and vaccinate their pet;
3. Support LifeLine by making a tax-deductible donation;
4. Volunteer at our shelters, vaccine clinics or by fostering a dog or cat;
5. Advocate by sharing our supply wish list, social media posts or encouraging those in their network to adopt.

Thank you for helping us achieve our no-kill goal at FCAS and for achieving great success at DCAS! We could not do it without you! With your continued support, Atlanta will become a lifesaving model for cities everywhere!



## ABOUT TNR

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) is the method of humanely trapping feral cats, having them spayed or neutered, vaccinated for rabies and then returning them to their colony to live out their lives. TNR also involves a colony caretaker who provides food, adequate shelter and monitors the cats' health. TNR has been shown to be the least costly as well as the most efficient and humane way of stabilizing feral cat populations.



Through TNR, feral cats can live out their lives without adding to the homeless cat population. Furthermore, by stabilizing the population, cats will naturally have more space, shelter and food, and fewer risks of disease. After being spayed or neutered, cats living in colonies tend to gain weight and live healthier lives. Spayed cats are less likely to develop breast cancer and will not be at risk for ovarian or uterine cancer, while neutered males will not get testicular cancer. By neutering male cats, you also reduce the risk of injury and infection, since intact males have a natural instinct to fight with other cats. Spaying also means female cats do not go into heat and therefore they attract less tom cats to the area and reduce fighting.

### Benefits of TNR

- A cat community controls rodents.
- Spaying and neutering effectively reduces:
  - fighting and howling by 88 percent;
  - urine spraying and smell by 87 percent;
  - risk of spreading disease to other cats.
- No killing: TNR is a better alternative than sending the cats to a needless death at animal control. (Last year roughly 75,000 – including an estimated 25,000 feral cats – were killed in Atlanta metro animal shelters.)
- The TNR cat colony does not produce unwanted litters.
- Reduced expense to taxpayers: Each year, metro Atlanta animal controls spend over 15 million taxpayer dollars dealing with the consequences of animal overpopulation. Research proves that euthanizing animals does not effectively reduce pet overpopulation – only neutering and TNR can do that!

## FULTON COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES

As the manager of Fulton County Animal Services since 2013, LifeLine Animal Project serves both the people and pets of Fulton County while working to comprehensively address the multiple causes of shelter overpopulation. Our management has resulted in lifesaving at unprecedented rates.



The Fulton County shelter is an open admission shelter with an average intake of 30 new animals per day. We welcome adopters and rescue groups to our facility to support our efforts.

LifeLine manages the Fulton County shelter and provides animal control services to the citizens and pets of Fulton County.

LifeLine's shelter operations in Fulton County ensure humane care for the animals at the shelter, veterinary care including spays/neuters, pet adoptions, animal reclaims, volunteer and foster care opportunities and rescue group engagement.

LifeLine's Fulton County Animal Control Officers (ACOs) enforce local and state laws regarding animals including handling complaints about animals, rabies control, vicious and dangerous animals and cruelty or neglect of animals. Our ACOs interact with the community and serve as our first responders in animal care.

LifeLine also offers resources and programs to keep pets in their owner's care and reduce overpopulation. LifeLine has experienced personnel at the Fulton shelter to help struggling owners find alternatives to surrendering their pets. Programs like our "Healthy Pets" events help prevent unwanted litters through free and reduced-cost spay/neuter services. Much of this work is largely funded by donations from our generous supporters.

LifeLine at Fulton County Animal Services  
860 Marietta Blvd NW,  
Atlanta, GA 30318  
(404) 613-0358  
FultonAnimalServices.com  
[Like LifeLine at Fulton's Facebook Page](#)

## ABOUT LIFELINE ANIMAL PROJECT

Founded in 2002, LifeLine Animal Project (LifeLine) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Atlanta, Georgia. LifeLine is working to end the euthanasia of healthy and treatable dogs and cats in metro Atlanta shelters and is the managing organization of Fulton County Animal Services and the DeKalb County Animal Services shelter.

From the very beginning, LifeLine has worked to assess the needs of Atlanta's animal welfare community and provide innovative, strategic resources in support of its mission to end shelter euthanasia of homeless animals. Rather than reinforce traditional models of animal control and sheltering, which historically have not served the animals well, LifeLine has focused on community-driven approaches to neighborhood reinvestment and public safety through programs designed to increase both human and animal welfare.

LifeLine has run its own private shelter in Avondale Estates, GA since 2003, focusing primarily on animals who have been victims of abuse or neglect, and seeing approximately 500 dogs and cats come through its doors each year. At the two LifeLine Spay & Neuter Clinics (one in Avondale Estates and one in College Park), LifeLine has fixed over 85,000 dogs and cats at low or no cost to owners who, in many cases, would not have been able to prioritize the expense. Through its volunteer-driven trap-neuter-return program, Atlanta, the lives of over 27,000 feral and community cats have been saved. Further, at LifeLine community pet wellness days each year, thousands of underserved pet owners receive free vaccinations and other much-needed resources.

In early 2013, LifeLine took action in order to have an even broader impact on Atlanta's homeless pet population. The organization submitted bids for and was awarded the contracts to manage both Fulton County Animal Services and DeKalb County Animal Services.

LifeLine is already making tremendous and measurable progress at both county facilities, having lowered the euthanasia rate at each by over 50% in a short period of time. Over 12,000 animals were adopted, rescued or returned to their owners from the Fulton and DeKalb shelters in 2014! LifeLine is actively on its way to making its ultimate goal a reality: transforming metro Atlanta into a no-kill community that prioritizes saving the lives of its homeless pets by 2016.

### Our Cause, Our Community

Throughout the United States, select communities have reduced the number of animals being euthanized in their shelters to less than 10% by making a fundamental shift toward lifesaving. LifeLine firmly believes that Atlanta can and should be one of these cities and is committed to making that vision a reality by aggressively promoting homeless pet adoption, providing affordable spay/neuter services, increasing public awareness, and advocating for lifesaving public policy. LifeLine is transforming a city with a troubled animal welfare legacy into a compassionate community deeply rooted in a culture of lifesaving that will create a model to be emulated nationwide. LifeLine is actively on its way to making its ultimate goal a reality: transforming metro Atlanta into a no-kill community that prioritizes saving the lives of its homeless pets in 2016.

LifeLine Animal Project  
P.O. Box 15466  
Atlanta, GA 30333  
404.292.8800  
info@lifelineanimal.org

A PUBLICATION OF THE NO KILL ADVOCACY CENTER

# No Kill 101



A Primer on No Kill Animal Control  
Sheltering for Public Officials

# NO KILL 101:

## A Primer on No Kill Animal Control Sheltering for Public Officials

### A Revolution Begins

In the last decade and a half, several shelters in numerous communities have comprehensively implemented a bold series of programs and services to reduce birthrates, increase placements, and keep animals with their responsible caretakers. As a result, they are achieving unprecedented results, saving upwards of 99 percent of all impounded animals in open admission animal control facilities. Some of these communities are urban, others rural, some are politically liberal, and others are very conservative. Some are in municipalities with high per capita incomes, and others are in those known for high rates of poverty. These communities share very little demographically. What they do share is leadership at their shelters who have comprehensively implemented a key series of programs and services, collectively referred to as the “No Kill Equation.”

The fundamental lesson from the experiences of these communities is that the choices made by shelter managers are the most significant variables in whether animals live or die. Several communities are more than doubling adoptions and cutting killing by as much as 75 percent—and it isn’t taking them five years or more to do it. They are doing it virtually over-night. In Reno, Nevada, local shelters initiated an incredible lifesaving initiative that saw adoptions

increase as much as 80 percent and deaths decline by 51 percent in one year, despite taking in a combined 16,000 dogs and cats.

In addition to the speed with which it was attained, what also makes Reno’s success so impressive is that the community takes in over two times the number of animals per capita than the U.S. national average and as much as five times the rate of neighboring communities and major U.S. cities. In 2012, 94 percent of dogs and cats were saved, despite an economic and foreclosure crisis that has gripped the region. They are proving that communities can quickly save the vast majority of animals once they commit to do so, even in the face of public irresponsibility or economic crisis. This is consistent with the results in hundreds of cities and towns across America.

Unfortunately, many shelter directors remain steadfast in their refusal to embrace the No Kill paradigm. Among the various excuses for why it cannot be done, the three most common are that there are simply too many animals for the available homes (“pet overpopulation”), that shelters are not given adequate

Communities can quickly save the vast majority of animals once they commit to do so, even in the face of public irresponsibility or economic crisis.

funding by local governments to get the job done without killing, and that the No Kill philosophy is inconsistent with their public safety obligations.

Many of the programs identified as key components of saving lives are more cost-effective than killing animals.

## Rethinking Conventional Wisdom

In the United States, however, review of the data, as well as the experiences of the most innovative, progressive, and best performing shelters nationwide, prove that our movement needs to re-evaluate both the notion as to “who is to blame” as well as “what shelters can do about it.” To put it bluntly, shelters have the ability to save animals who are not irremediably suffering, hopelessly ill, or truly vicious dogs (which, combined, apprise less than ten percent of all impounds), and they can do so very quickly. And the two most often cited reasons—pet overpopulation and lack of resources—have not shown to be true barriers to success.

### **No Kill Is Cost Effective**

To begin with, many of the programs identified as key components of saving lives are more cost-effective than impounding, warehousing, and then killing animals. Some rely on private philanthropy, as in the use of rescue groups, which shifts costs of care from public taxpayers to private individuals and groups. Others, such as the use of volunteers, augment paid human resources. Still others, such as adoptions, bring in revenue. And, finally, some, such as neutering rather than killing feral cats, are simply less expensive, with exponential savings in terms of reducing births.

In addition, a 2009 multi-state study found no correlation between per capita

funding for animal control and save rates. One community saved 90 percent of the animals, while another saved only 40 percent despite four times the per capita rate of spending on animal control. One community has seen killing rates increase over 30 percent despite one of the best-funded shelter systems in the nation. Another has caused death rates to drop by 50 percent despite cutting spending. In other words, there was no correlation between success/failure and per capita spending on animal control. The difference between those shelters that succeeded and those that failed was not the size of the budget, but the programmatic effort of its leadership.

In other words, the amount of per capita spending did not seem to make a difference. What did make a difference was leadership: the commitment of shelter managers to implement a key series of necessary programs.

### **The Data Disproves Overpopulation**

The second reason often cited for failure to embrace and/or achieve No Kill is the idea of pet overpopulation, but the data here has also not borne out the claim. It is important to note that the argument that there are enough homes for shelter animals does not also include any claims that some people aren't irresponsible with animals. It doesn't mean it wouldn't be better if there were fewer of them being impounded. Nor does it mean that shelters don't have institutional obstacles to success. But it does mean that these problems are not insurmountable. And it

does mean shelters can do something other than killing for the vast majority of animals.

In the United States, current estimates from a wide range of groups indicate that approximately four million dogs and cats are killed in shelters every year. Of these, given data on the incidence of aggression in dogs (based on dog bite extrapolation) and save rates at the best performing shelters in the country from diverse regions and demographics, better than 90 percent of all shelter animals are "savable." The remainder consists of hopelessly ill or injured animals and vicious dogs whose prognosis for rehabilitation is poor or grave. That would put the number of savable dogs and cats at roughly 3.6 million.

These same demographics also tell us that every year, roughly 23 million Americans are considering bringing a new dog or cat into their home, and 17 million of those households have not decided where they will get that animal and can be influenced to adopt from a shelter. Even if the vast majority of those 17 million (upwards of 80 percent) got a dog or cat from somewhere other than a shelter, U.S.

shelters could still zero out the deaths of savable animals. On top of that, not all animals entering shelters need adoption: Some will be lost strays who will be reclaimed by their family (shelters which are comprehensive in their lost pet reclaim efforts, for example, have demonstrated that as many as two-thirds of stray dogs can be reunited with their families). Others are unsocialized feral

cats who need neuter and release. Some will be vicious dogs or are irremediably suffering and will be killed. In the end, a shelter only needs to find new homes for roughly half of all incoming animals.

From the perspective of achievability, therefore, the prognosis for widespread No Kill success is very good. But let's put all this aside. Let's assume "pet overpopulation" is real and insurmountable. To do that, we have to ignore the data. We also have to ignore the experiences of successful communities. In the United States, to accept the "No Kill is impossible" argument requires pretending the knowledge and the results do not exist.

How does this change our support for the No Kill philosophy and the programs and services that make it possible? Even if "pet overpopulation" were true, it doesn't

change the calculus. In the United States, shelters nationally are killing roughly half or more of all incoming animals. To borrow an overused sports analogy: that puts the save rate at the 50-yard line. And although the evidence is overwhelming to the contrary, let's say that shelters can never cross the 90% save-rate goal

The data shows that every year there are six times more people looking to acquire an animal than there are animals being killed in shelters.

line because of "pet overpopulation."

What is wrong with moving the ball forward? If all shelters put in place the programs and services that brought rates of shelter killing to all-time lows in communities throughout the United States, they can save millions of additional lives nationally, regardless of whether they ever achieve an entirely No Kill community. That is worth doing and worth

doing without delay. Because every year they delay, indeed every day they delay, the body count increases.

### **No Kill Is Consistent with Public Safety**

And finally, a No Kill community is one where no savable animals are killed. Unfortunately, there are some animals who are hopelessly ill or injured, irremediably suffering, or in the case of dogs, vicious with a poor prognosis for rehabilitation. These animals are not adoption candidates and sadly, at this time in history, they are often killed, unless hospice care and sanctuaries are available. But since the No Kill philosophy does not mandate that vicious dogs or irremediably sick animals be made available for adoption, it is wholly consistent with public health and safety.

In fact, today, No Kill is a humane, sustainable, cost-effective model that works hand in hand with public health and safety, while fulfilling a fiscal responsibility to taxpayers. The success of this approach across the country proves the viability of the No Kill model and the above principles.

## **The No Kill Equation**

Two decades ago, the concept of a No Kill community was little more than a dream. Today, it is a reality in many cities and counties nationwide and the numbers continue to grow. And the first step is a decision, a commitment to reject kill-oriented ways of doing business. No Kill starts as an act of will.

Following a commitment to No Kill is the need for accountability. Accountability requires clear definitions, a lifesaving plan, and protocols and procedures oriented toward preserving life. But accountability

No Kill is a humane, sustainable, cost-effective model that works hand in hand with public health and safety, while fulfilling a fiscal responsibility to taxpayers.

also allows, indeed requires, flexibility. Too many shelters lose sight of this principle, staying rigid with shelter protocols, believing these are engraved in stone. They are not. Protocols are important because they ensure accountability from staff. But inflexible protocols can have the opposite effect: stifling innovation, causing lives to be needlessly lost, and allowing shelter employees who fail to save lives to hide behind a paper trail.

The decision to end an animal's life is extremely serious, and should always be treated as such. No matter how many animals a shelter kills, each and every animal is an individual, and each deserves individual consideration.

And finally, to meet the challenge that No Kill entails, shelter leadership needs to get the community excited, to energize people for the task at hand. By working with people, implementing lifesaving programs, and treating each life as precious, a shelter can transform a community.

The Mandatory programs and services include:

### **TNR Program**

Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) programs for free-living cats allow shelters to reduce death rates.

### **High-Volume, Low-Cost Spay/Neuter**

No- and low-cost, high-volume spay/neuter reduces the number of animals entering the shelter system, allowing more resources to be allocated toward saving lives.

### **Rescue Groups**

An adoption or transfer to a rescue group frees up scarce cage and kennel space, reduces expenses for feeding, cleaning, and killing, and improves a community's rate of lifesaving. Because millions of dogs and cats are killed in shelters annually, rare is the circumstance in which a rescue group should be denied an animal.

### **Foster Care**

Volunteer foster care is a low-cost, and often no-cost way of increasing a shelter's capacity, caring for sick and injured or behaviorally challenged animals, and thus saving more lives.

### **Comprehensive Adoption Programs**

Adoptions are vital to an agency's lifesaving mission. The quantity and quality of shelter adoptions is in shelter management's hands, making lifesaving a direct function of shelter policies and practice. If shelters better promoted their animals and had adoption programs responsive to community needs, including public access hours for working people, offsite adoptions, adoption incentives, and effective marketing, they could increase the number of homes available and replace killing with adoptions. Contrary to conventional wisdom, shelters can adopt their way out of killing.

### **Pet Retention**

While some surrenders of animals to shelters are unavoidable, others can be prevented—but only if shelters work with

people to help them solve their problems. Saving animals requires shelters to develop innovative strategies for keeping people and their companion animals together. And the more a community sees its shelters as a place to turn for advice and assistance, the easier this job will be.

### **Medical & Behavior Programs**

To meet its commitment to a lifesaving guarantee for all savable animals, shelters need to keep animals happy and healthy and keep animals moving efficiently through the system. To do this, shelters must put in place comprehensive vaccination, handling, cleaning, socialization, and care policies before animals get sick and rehabilitative efforts for those who come in sick, injured, unweaned, or traumatized.

### **Public Relations/Community Development**

Increasing adoptions, maximizing donations, recruiting volunteers and partnering with community agencies comes down to increasing the shelter's public exposure. And that means consistent marketing and public relations. Public relations and marketing are the foundation of a shelter's activities and success.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers are a dedicated "army of compassion" and the backbone of a successful No Kill effort. There is never enough staff, never enough dollars to hire more staff, and always more needs than paid human resources. That is where volunteers make the difference between success and failure and, for the animals, life and death.

### **Proactive Redemptions**

One of the most overlooked areas for

reducing killing in animal control shelters are lost animal reclaims. Shifting from a passive to a more proactive approach has allowed shelters to return a large percentage of lost animals to their families.

### **A Compassionate Director**

The final element of the No Kill Equation is the most important of all, without which all other elements are thwarted—a hard working, compassionate animal control or shelter director not content to continue killing, while regurgitating tired clichés about “public irresponsibility” or hiding behind the myth of “too many animals, not enough homes.”

No Kill is simply not achievable without rigorous implementation of these programs. They provide the only model that ever created No Kill communities. It is up to us in the humane movement to demand them of our local shelters, and no longer to settle for the excuses that shelters often put up in order to avoid implementing them.

## **Comprehensive Implementation**

To succeed fully, however, shelters should not implement the programs piecemeal or in a limited manner. If they are sincere in their desire to stop the killing, animal shelters will implement and expand programs to the point that they replace killing entirely. Combining rigorous, comprehensive implementation of the No Kill Equation with best practices and accountability of staff in cleaning, handling, and care of animals, must be the standard.

In 2004, for example, one SPCA in a city of 1.5 million people conducted fewer than 200 free spay/neuter surgeries for the pets

of the community's low-income population. Shelter leaders can boast of a low-cost and free spay/neuter program, but 200 surgeries in a large city, with one in four people below the federal poverty line, will not impact the numbers of animals entering city shelters. By contrast, another city with roughly half the population performed approximately 9,000 surgeries a year throughout the late 1990s, roughly 84 percent of them were free.

Similarly, animal control in yet another community allowed only employees to participate in its foster care program. The shelter can say it is implementing the programs of the No Kill Equation, but it is excluding thousands of animal lovers from participating in the effort, seriously limiting its lifesaving potential.

A shelter committed to No Kill does not send neonatal orphaned kittens into foster care “sometimes,” but rather every time. A shelter committed to No Kill does not merely allow rescue groups access to animals “some of the time,” but every time a legitimate rescue group is willing to take over care and custody of the animal. Indeed, a No Kill shelter actively seeks these groups out and contacts a particular rescue organization whenever an animal meets its criteria.

In short, shelters must take killing off the table for savable animals, and utilize the No Kill Equation not sometimes, not merely when it is convenient or politically expedient to do so, but for every single animal, every single time. A half-hearted effort isn't enough. It is primarily the shift from a reactive to proactive orientation and from a casual, ad-hoc, limited implementation to a comprehensive one, which will lead to the greatest declines in killing, and fix our broken animal shelter system.

To the Burke County Animal Services Advisory Board:

I am here to present to you some powerful information from a well-known and well-respected group in regards to the possibility of a NO-KILL animal shelter establishment in Burke County. We know that the daily needs of animals in Burke are not being addressed as the local law enforcement chooses not to address these issues as, quite frankly, there are no parameters in place for further enforcement of the existing law.

This is part of the need for a no-kill shelter in Burke. The need for a shelter, first and foremost, is important in order to get the neglected, abused, stray and abandoned animals off the streets and away from popular dumping grounds in this county. I could certainly show you today, if you are already not aware, where these places are because I and other rescuers receive calls DAILY about the fact that there are animals who have been dumped or abandoned around the county and there are not enough resources to get these animals off the street, provide proper veterinary care, and then find suitable homes for each of them. When we can get these animals off the streets into a safe place, evaluate their needs and get them the assistance that is necessary and coordinate efforts to find new homes, we can and will be successful as a community—hence the need for a no-kill shelter.

Part of this is the fact that a no-kill shelter is certainly a sustainable, humanitarian, forward-thinking option for our county. The cooperation of shelter developers, officials, employees and the community as well as law enforcement is a vital team effort to making these efforts worthwhile.

**IT CAN HAPPEN IN BURKE.**

Handed to me from Samantha Holden

Thank you all for your service to the future of animal humanitarian care in Burke County.

Please consider my, and countless other's, plea for consideration of a Tethering Ordinance here in Burke County, I would like to start by pointing out that Burke touches Richmond County.

Richmond recently passed a Tethering Ordinance recently due to continuous citizen concern over the treatment of animals in the county where large numbers of dogs are chained.

Many people who have argued against tethering in the past, have feared that the animal control officers would get inundated with calls once this rule is placed in effect. I urge you to look at the facts: the number of calls already coming in by concerned citizens to address cases of neglect, or dogs barking incessantly, disturbing the peace, because they are going nuts on a chain, are probably already high in volume. Once an ordinance is passed, instead of a concerned citizen, like me, calling 10 times on the same dog, those calls will be reduced, as they may result in action, rather than just constant complaints. Many people feel that the future shelter numbers would rise due to these ordinances being put into place. But because the dog will be enclosed, making it less vulnerable to become impregnated & reproduce, common sense tells us will indeed reduce the numbers in shelters. Many in Burke County know that there are far too many who are currently chained in poor circumstances and are left outside, regardless of weather conditions, without adequate food or water. This has got to stop. Chaining is not a harmless way to keep an animal—we have seen here, in our county, where dogs have been left on chains to starve. They have been left on chains to be attacked by other animals. They have been left on chains and are impregnated to reproduce and make more puppies that will be discarded at our dumpsters—it happens DAILY.

Having a dog is an elective choice – nobody is forcing anyone to have a dog. Yes, people have the right to have a horse, or a llama, but do they have a right to have a horse if they **don't have an adequate place to keep one?**

And we already know that if the owners don't have proper containment, they likely don't have vet care. Look at how many on chains are not fixed and do not receive proper veterinary care.

Calls to law enforcement won't go up—the number of calls are already up

due to the number of people in this county that are sick of seeing neglect and abuse and NOTHING being done to stop it. (Countless calls on the dog sitting in the rain, or the 110 degree sun, or the lightning, already coming in, will be eliminated)

If a chaining ordinance is passed, there will be some who fall through the cracks. This will NOT be a perfect solution. However, with the changing times, the constant spread of graphic photos of dogs chained, embedded collars, and scenes of abuse, have shed light into the dark world of animal cruelty, including chaining, making a demand for this type of ordinance more popular. We have to start being the voice for those who cannot be heard, and be the educators for those who believe that this is the way to keep an animal. It is they year 2016—this is NOT acceptable.

The invention & availability of electronic fence collars, and other types of inexpensive means of containment, not available years ago, has made this idea more feasible.

And the simple fact that property is difficult to sell within sight of a chained dog, and the safety of the Citizens of Burke County should be enough, but if it isn't, the fact that a smaller county that touch Burke, being Richmond, as well as at least 5 – 10 new municipalities or Counties across the country, EACH DAY, have decided to make this a moral & public obligation & commitment. This should indeed be enough to make the case for a tethering ordinance here in Burke County. Nobody wants to buy property next door to a chained dog. This is not a theory, it is a fact. Thus the property values of Burke County, and the safety of the Public is highly diminished by this practice.

Why would businesses and hotels want to put their establishment near a trailer park or house with chained animals? THEY WON'T.

Again, thank you to the group for having the courage needed to fulfill your commitment to the citizens of Burke County. I hope we can get something in motion soon.

Senate House Bill 354 passed in 2010 includes that "torture" of an animal is now a Class H Felony. Chaining a dog 24/7 around the clock, should classify as torture of an animal.

**You have the power to end a lifetime of suffering for thousands of dogs, and improve the quality of life for all in this County. It is time that Burke stepped up to the plate, acknowledge that we are not doing what needs to be done for the animals of Burke, and MAKE CHANGES NOW.**