

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD AN INFORMAL REGULAR SESSION ON MONDAY, AUGUST 13, 2012, WITH COMMISSIONERS EDWIN H. HUMPHREY AND DAVID H. UIBLE IN ATTENDANCE. LET THE RECORD SHOW THAT COMMISSIONER ROBERT L. PROUD WAS NOT PRESENT.**

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE WERE STEPHEN H. RABOLT, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR, AND DEBORAH BRITTON, CLERMONT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE. ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES AT THE INFORMAL REGULAR SESSION ARE LISTED ON THE ATTACHED ATTENDANCE SHEET.**

**LET THE RECORD SHOW THAT THE AUGUST 13, 2012 INFORMAL REGULAR SESSION WAS VIDEOTAPED AND IS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 8:00 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M. LOCAL TIME. IN ADDITION, THE INFORMAL REGULAR SESSION IS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC VIEWING THROUGH THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT WEBSITE AT <http://www.clermontcountyohio.gov/videos-bcc.aspx>.**

**THE FOLLOWING ISSUES WERE PRESENTED FOR DISCUSSION:**

**1. Issue - Humane Society – Dog License Fees**

**Discussion** – Molly Geise did introductions for Nadora Hill and Jean Dalhover from the Humane Society. Ms. Geise then gave a brief overview of what the Humane Society does, what the major expenditures are and why fee increases are needed.

Ms. Geise gave a power point presentation describing how dog license sales remain flat. Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) expenses have also been lower at this point so far this year. The presentation included a comparison chart of Clermont County to surrounding counties. Clermont County's are lower than Hamilton, Warren and Montgomery Counties in the percentage of License sales. However we are similar to the other rural counties.

Mr. Uible asked what the Kennel license encompass, and how many dogs do they include? He also asked what our policy was as far as inspections for the Kennels in Clermont County. Mr. Uible stated that if we are going to charge more for a kennel license, the county should inspect kennels once a year.

Ms. Geise explained that due to the economy and recent lack of funding they have had to reduce services. They have chosen not to fill positions to save money. They have reduced the number of hours that the shelter is open; the shelter is currently open from 11:30 to 4:00, from the hours of 11:00 to 4:00 previously.

With the increase in the fees, the Humane Society would like to look into additional sales locations. They feel that the additional sales locations would increase the accessibility and by targeting certain areas or possibly pet stores on weekends; they would be more able to educate citizens about the need for dog licenses and convenience would increase the sales.

Mr. Uible asked if the Humane Society offers microchip services. The Humane Society does offer the service for a minimal fee; however Ms. Geise was unsure of the cost specifically or the number of chips that were sold. Ms. Geise made note to provide those costs and numbers to the Board.

Mr. Humphrey explained that the county and our Office of Public Information implemented several programs over the last few years in push promote dog license awareness and sales. The Humane Society estimates that less than half of the dogs in Clermont County are actually being licensed. A year or so ago the Board extended the time period for people to purchase the license by a month without additional penalty and found that that was also not a viable marketing tool. The Auditor also sends out

reminders to all previous dog license sales, however sales still remain flat.

The question was posed as to the cost to an owner if their dog is picked up due to not having a license? Ms. Geise believed the cost, if the case goes before the court, is generally about \$100. Approximately \$35 of that fine goes to the Humane Society and the remaining \$75 to court costs. The Humane Society has sent a request to the judiciary committee asking that they increase the fines and the portion that goes to the Humane Society for next year, however they have not received a response as of today's date. Mr. Rabolt asked Ms. Geise to provide the Board with a copy of the letter so that we may issue a follow up letter to the Judiciary Committee.

The Board suggested that the Humane Society publish the names of the owners that have had animals picked up that were not licensed, as a way making it publicly known that people have dogs that are not licensed. This would educate people as to the need to license their dogs and the potential fines they could face if they choose not to purchase licenses. Mr. Humphrey asked if the Humane Society could provide the number of dogs picked up last year. Ms. Geise stated she would have to get the information to the Board.

Ms. Geise explained that one of the expenses the Humane Society expects to incur for several more years is the lease payment of a new animal control van. Mr. Rabolt reminded the Board that the county is purchasing the van, which will then be leased back and used by the Humane Society.

There is a minimum of \$2.00 increase each per license as well as a Statute requires that there is a 5 to 1 ratio between the individual and kennel license. If the county increases the individual license fee to \$16.00 there would be an increase to the kennel fees to \$80.00. Ms. Geise explained that this is the first increase since 2006 and she would prefer that the Humane Society not have to come back in two years asking for another increase. She further explained that there is a time constraint; action will need to be taken before the end of August, to affect the 2013 licenses.

Mr. Tilbury from the Auditor's Office stated that they have worked with several dog license vendors and have had some issues with some forwarding the money to us in a timely manner. The vendors that the Auditor's Office and Humane Society are partnered with now are very good at working with us. Mr. Tilbury also stated that there has been some concern expressed by the townships, as to the sales of kennel licenses in their area because it violates the township zoning regulations. The Auditor has seen an increase in internet sales, to which there is an additional interchange fee of \$3.00. The Auditor's Office has sold about 1,900 dog licenses this year via the internet. The interchange fees cover the cost of the services of Official Payments, our current vendor for credit card payments. If the county changes the vendor we use for accepting credit card payments or was able to obtain a lower fee structure with Official Payments, the interchange fee would be lower.

Mr. Humphrey stated that for the past two years the county has promoted sales with the Poster Pooch Contest. He asked if the county would want to reevaluate this program if it is not selling more dog licenses. The Humane Society said that they do not think that this is a cost effective means of promoting dog license sales since there is a cost as well as a significant amount employee time involved. All members of the Humane Society present agreed the program should be discontinued due to the fact that the costs outweigh the benefits.

Mr. Uible encouraged Ms. Geise to talk to the Community Journal and see if they would, as a community service, list the names of owners whose dogs have been picked up with a headline like "DON'T GET BIT, LIKE THESE DOG OWNERS", Mr. Humphrey also encouraged the Humane Society to write a press release about the number of dogs that have been picked up, include the names of the owners, suggesting that once a month or once every other would be a good time frame goal.

**Conclusion/Follow-Up Action Needed** – Mr. Rabolt asked that the Humane Society provide a copy of the letter to the Judiciary asking for the increase in fees so that he can review it with the board. As well as the other items the Board asked for before the Board makes a decision during the last week in August.

Mr. Rabolt also stated that the County will put a form up on the website to get feedback from the public about the increase in fees. (DC# 12-0828-001)

### **Adjournment**

Informal Regular Session was adjourned.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
CLERMONT COUNTY, OHIO**

**ROBERT L. PROUD, PRESIDENT  
EDWIN H. HUMPHREY, VICE PRESIDENT  
DAVID H. UIBLE, MEMBER**

**STEPHEN H. RABOLT, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

**09/26/12  
DATE APPROVED**