

**MINUTES OF  
JOINT WORK SESSION**

**Spalding County Board of Commissioners  
ACCAB (Animal Care & Control Advisory Board)**

Monday, October 24, 2011  
Meeting Room 108  
Spalding County Courthouse Annex  
4:00 P. M.

County Commissioners present: Chairman Eddie Freeman, Gwen Flowers-Taylor, Chipper Gardner, Bob Gilreath, and Raymond Ray. County Manager William P. Wilson, Jr., Deputy County Manager Virginia Beams and Attorney Jim Fortune were also present. Executive Secretary, Ricky L. Clark, Jr. was present to record the minutes.

ACCAB Members present: Chairperson Kelly Palmatier, Christine Greene

Chairman Freeman called the joint work session to order and introduced the following agenda.

1. Discussion relative to ACCAB Animal Living Conditions Ordinance Proposal.

Mrs. Kelly Palmatier, ACCAB Chairperson presented the changes made in the Animal Living Conditions ordinance. Mrs. Palmatier advised adjustments made consisted of changes to pin sizes and tethering of dogs. Mrs. Palmatier added that the term special occurrences would also be addressed. Commissioner Flowers commented that she liked the idea of tethering.

Commissioner Gilreath voiced his concern with dogs riding on the back of moving trucks. Mr. Gilreath advised that he would like to see provisions made to prohibit this practice. Mrs. Palmatier advised that ACCAB has not received enough complaints concerning dogs on the back of trucks to see where it poses a problem. Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that the owner should be able to judge the temperament of the dog. Mrs. Flowers-Taylor noted she does not see this as a problem.

Commissioner Gilreath left the meeting at 4:10 stating "I don't think you guys need me here so I will leave."

After question from Commissioner Flowers-Taylor, Mrs. Palmatier advised that the proposed ordinance allows dog owners a grace period of eighteen months to purchase and install fencing. Chairman Freeman questioned the amount of dog owners that have fencing in the County. Keith Bradford, Animal Control Officer advised that mostly fencing is in areas that have Home Owner Associations in place. He advised that in rural areas there are not as many complaints about fencing.

Commissioner Gardner advised that he would like to see the ordinance enforced by complaint driven only. He advised that in his rural area, neighbors don't complain about dogs on each other's property. Mr. Bradford advised that if they see a dog without the proper tags they are picked up. The Animal Control officer will attempt to locate a owner, if no owner is located then the dog is taken to the shelter.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor advised that she doesn't see a reason to enforce a restraint district around the entire County if complaints are only coming within more populated areas. Chairman Freeman stated that now is opportune time to enforce a County Wide Animal

Restraint district. Mr. Bradford advised that any property that has more than an acre is already considered a restraint district under the current ordinance.

Chairman Freeman noted that citizens have no problem with a County Wide restraint they just don't want to see certain street restraint districts and the others not. Commissioner Flowers-Taylor stated that Animal Control should only enforce the ordinance when complaints are generated. Mr. Bradford advised that if the area is identified as a restraint district and the dog is not tethered then the owner is issued a citation and the dog is impounded. County Attorney Jim Fortune advised that if an ordinance is passed requiring all animals to be restrained you cannot pick and choose which streets you want to enforce.

Commissioner Ray questioned the cost of the entire County being a restraint district. Mr. Wilson advised that the majority of the cost would come from signage. If the entire County was a restraint district you would not need the signage.

After substantial discussion on different ideas and possibilities, a consensus was made for the entire County being restrained. There was also a consensus of the Board members willing to allow tethering with the inclusion of a runner. Mrs. Palmatier noted that the Board should inform citizens that there would be no additional patrolling by Animal Control. Mr. Wilson advised due to staffing levels, Animal Control could not provide around the clock patrolling.

Mr. Fortune advised the ordinance should be amended to exclude the term tethering to include a run where the dog has adequate shelter, food, etc. The ordinance also would not be complaint driven to allow Animal Control to properly enforce violations.

Mr. Wilson advised of the complaints from citizens regarding cats. Mrs. Palmatier advised that all issues with cats should be addressed under the nuisance law. Mr. Wilson advised that the County has not adopted a nuisance law. Mr. Wilson advised that the County has implemented certain areas as restraint districts in which include cats and dogs. Commissioner Flowers-Taylor advised she doesn't agree with cats being restrained. Deputy County Manager Virginia Beams commented that cats and dogs should fall up under the same guidelines for restraint districts. Chairman Freeman & Commissioner Gardner both did not agree with a cat being restrained. After a relative amount of discussion no consensus was formed.

Mr. Wilson polled the Board to see if a consensus could be form to identify the number of animals per property. Commissioner Flowers-Taylor noted that the City Ordinance does not allow for more than four animals per property.

Commissioner Gardner thanked ACCAB for their continued work on the proposed ordinance.

Chairman Freeman echoed stating that he thanked ACCAB as well for their work.

Motion to adjourn by Freeman/Gardner at 6:15 p.m. Motion carried by all.

The meeting was adjourned.

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Eddie Freeman, Chairman

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William P. Wilson, Jr.- County Clerk

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