

# **Board of County Commissioners**

## **Agenda Request**

Date of Meeting: June 16, 2009

Date Submitted: June 1, 2009

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Major Larry Massa, Wakulla County Sheriff's Department  
Ivanhoe Carroll, Wakulla County Animal Control

Subject: Request Board Consideration and Approval to Establish and Appoint  
Members to the Dangerous Dog Appeals Board

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### **Statement of Issue:**

This agenda item requests the Board to consider appointing five (5) members and five (5) alternates to the Dangerous Dog Appeals Board.

### **Background:**

To protect the public from dangerous animals, the Animal Control authority, after an investigation, may determine that a dog be classified as "dangerous". This determination means that the animal(s) must live the rest of its life under very strict guidelines to protect the public safety. The animals' owner has a right to appeal the dangerous animal classification. Wakulla County Ordinance 08-10, Section 6.010.2 states: "An Appeals Board consisting of five (5) members shall be appointed by the Board of County Commissioners to review the initial classification of a dog as dangerous by the Animal Control authority. The Appeal Board will hear appeals filed pursuant to section 6.010, (c) of the Wakulla County Code. The Appeal Board shall consist of citizens knowledgeable in the areas of animal behavior, law enforcement, and/or public health".

### **Analysis:**

The following ten (10) people are willing to serve as a member or as an alternate member in their respective areas of expertise: (A) designates an Alternate Member

#### **Law Enforcement**

Deputy Sheriff Matt Helms, WCSO, K-9 Unit  
Capt. Steve Ganey, WCSO  
(A) Capt. Bill Poole, WCSO

#### **Animal Behavior**

Jenny Cruse, Certified Veterinary Technician, VSA Wakulla County Animal Hospital  
Dr. Linda Chalker, DVM, VSA Wakulla County Animal Hospital  
(A) Jeannette Gonzalez, Certified Veterinary Technician (pending), VSA Wakulla County Animal  
(A) Stephan Pedler, Bloxham Cut-Off Boarding Kennels (Pit Bull Behavior Specialist)  
(A) Cathy Sherman, President, Paws in Prison

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Public Health

Sherry Calloway, Environmental Specialist 1, Wakulla County Health Department  
(A) Debra Johnson, WCSO, Registered Nurse

The appeal hearing usually lasts approximately one (1) hour and affords the Appeals Board an opportunity to hear both sides of the case. The Board then discusses the appeal and renders a decision. Many times decisions are withheld until the board member(s) visit the animal(s) at the shelter to learn more about its behavior. The Appeals Board then notifies the Animal Control authority of the decision.

Since the Appeals Board is reviewing an appeal of a determination made by Animal Control staff, it is important that Animal Control staff not be involved in the Appeals Board. Animal Control Officers that were involved in the case are present at the hearings to answer questions and provide additional information as needed for the Board Members.

**Options:**

1. Appoint a Dangerous Dog Appeals Board with the 5 members and 5 alternates as listed above.
2. Do not appoint a Dangerous Dog Appeals Board with the 5 members and 5 alternates as listed above.
3. Board direction.

**Recommendation:**

Option #1