

Animal Welfare Committee Meeting October 16, 2014, 12-00pm, COA at VMCC

Attending were MacDonald, Brec, Murphy, Brooke. Excused, O'Neil. Unexcused, Cook.

Ruth Ann Cowing, ACO

Public: Pat Franzese, Candace Nagle, Elizabeth C. Brooke, Marsha Sirota, Laurie Roles

Public Comments:

Pat Franzese, an abutter stated that there were rabbits being raised for meat and fur at Flying Changes Farm. She had drafted, and was circulating, a petition that demanding immediate action to remove the rabbit farm from Provincetown. The Farm is owned by Ted Malone, it is leased to Kerry Castle, who sub-leased 2 stalls to Kenneth Abert, who was raising the rabbits.

Candace Nagle has been in touch with PETA. Stated that the AWC had, in the past, presented and got approval of numerous articles at Town Meeting. She suggested that we look for any municipalities in MA that already have by-laws on the books regarding the humane raising of animals for meat or other purposes. She offered her services to help draft the document(s).

Laurie Roles, an abutter, called for expediency in shutting down the rabbit farm.

Public Comments Portion Closed

1. The minutes of 9/18/14 were approved.
2. Rabbit Farm: Ruth Ann stated there were approximately 50 rabbits living in what she considered less than favorable conditions. She contacted the MSPCA, who came to inspect, and found the conditions adequate. Ruth Ann has no grounds to issue a citation. Ruth Ann told Ken that he needed to clean the area more often. She will continue to monitor. Stated the rabbits were being sent to a slaughterhouse in Bridgewater that was not licensed to slaughter rabbits. She asked Ken not to send any more rabbits out. She spoke with the USDA, things are moving very slowly. Town Building Commissioner had sent a letter to Ken Apert on 10/15/14 stating that there was a possible zoning violation, and he had 7 days to provide information to the Building Department.

Elizabeth was outraged. She posted photos of the rabbits on her Facebook page. She feels the rabbit's quality of life was being compromised. Wants the AWC to draft something to bring to Town Meeting that would be acceptable.

Some suggestions were made to have Ken surrender the rabbits to Ruth Ann or have AWC to purchase the rabbits. In either scenario, homes would need to be found for the rabbits.

All members of the committee were tasked to find out as much information, from as many resources as possible, including meeting with Town Officials, researching our Town zoning by-laws, seeing if by-laws had been adopted in other towns in State, and animal welfare internet resources.

If was decided to have another meeting on 10/23/14 to specifically discuss actions taken regarding the rabbit farm.

3. A new microchip scanner was purchased for the ACO, and in her possession.
4. The alleged bee spraying at the B-Street garden was actually spraying of a dead stump across the street that had an active hive, and was impeding the tree trimming in that area by the DPW.
5. Susan Cook has had three consecutive unexcused meeting absences, with no contact with the Committee. Sherry will let Doug know, who will in turn (after approval of these minutes) send a letter to Susan explaining that she is no longer a committee member.
6. Pet Emergency Shelter (information emailed from Morgan Clark, who was unable to attend the meeting. Dr. Sadie Hutchings of Herring Cove Animal Clinic has agreed to volunteer at the PES. She will be participating in key planning meetings with the local emergency planning committee and will staff the shelter in an emergency. She also is looking into the possibility of offering rabies vaccinations on site for animals that do not have records or are not up to date. The people from the Nauset Animal Shelter would like to coordinate with the AWC about animal emergency shelter planning and volunteer recruitment and training. They would like to meet with us. Sherry to coordinate. The Town Clerk's office has agreed to include the question "would you like to register your dog for the PES?" to its' annual dog registration process.
7. Next meeting 10/23/14 at 10-00am

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sherry Brec  
Clerk pro tempore