

accept the contract. She stated 28 cats from Putnam Valley were taken in by the Humane Society in 2018. She stated if they receive a phone call from someone who says they have a stray dog or they found a dog, the dog control officer for that town will respond and take the dog to the holding facility. She stated in regards to owner surrenders, the Humane Society will accept them, but towns they are contracted with take precedent over those without a contract if space is limited.

Legislator Gouldman questioned if it is possible that an animal from Putnam Valley may have not been accepted.

Shelter Manager Du Plessis stated when space is an issue in other shelters they may euthanize animals to make space. She stated the Putnam Humane Society does not euthanize for this reason. She stated if space is unavailable, animals cannot be taken in.

President Dugan restated that the Humane Society is a no-kill facility; they do not euthanize for space.

Legislator Scuccimarra questioned how many dogs the Humane Society currently has.

President Dugan stated there are currently 30 dogs. She stated the Humane Society is currently being renovated; the outside runs are being redone 12 units at a time. She stated while they are being redone, the Humane Society can accept 12 less dogs than usual capacity. She stated in this case, if a surrender comes in they will ask the individual to wait until there is space; however there is no one currently waiting. She stated they also have a surrender book where they help the individual rehome the animal directly from their home to another home.

Legislator Scuccimarra questioned if the Humane Society fosters animals out until they can be placed.

President Dugan stated they only foster out sick animals or animals recovering from surgery to keep the other animals safe until they are healthy. She stated the reason for this is to have the adoptable animals at the facility so anyone coming to look can see them in person.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated every time she drives by the shelter she is happy to see the volunteers walking the dogs.

President Dugan stated there is dog walking from 10:30am to 12:30pm and 1:30pm to 2:30pm each day. She stated the dogs are also walked by the staff in the morning and before they go in for the night.

Legislator Scuccimarra questioned how many Pitbulls the Humane Society has.

President Dugan stated there are a lot of Pitbulls and Pitbull mixes. She stated if a shelter does not have any Pitbulls, it often means they are a kill shelter. She stated there are many success stories with Pitbulls and it is important to be educated about the breed you are adopting.

Legislator Gouldman questioned what the procedure is for adoption. He stated he has heard from different people throughout the County that the adoption process is complicated.

President Dugan stated there is currently an application process to adopt an animal. She stated on the application, it requests veterinarian information for prior animals. She stated with this information they look at things such as how often an animal has been brought to the vet or if it was vaccinated. She stated another thing they check for is if the individual is able to afford vet care for the animal. She stated often times, it is not a matter of turning down an application, but it is a matter of matching up a person with an animal. She stated recently, a person came in and wanted a specific dog that was at the Humane Society. She stated the person had not met the dog or spent any time with him, had not submitted an application, and became aggressive and unwilling to follow the proper procedure. She stated in this situation, it would be irresponsible for the Humane Society to have adopted the dog to this person.

Legislator Gouldman questioned when the adoption procedure was changed.

Shelter Manager Du Plessis stated she has been at the Humane Society for 15 years and has worked within the kennels and in a management position. She stated when she first started working at the Humane Society the adoption process was lenient and she saw many dogs that were adopted out return a short time later. She stated she has been the Shelter Manager for five (5) years. She stated she fields phone calls regarding applications and she is the person who reviews applications and asks questions pertaining to the information submitted on them. She cited an example of a person interested in adopting a dog that did not get along well with cats. She stated this person said they would put their cat outside in order to adopt the dog. She stated in this case, she would not allow this person to adopt this specific dog because it would mean that another animal would be put out of their home. She stated they must be very careful when placing any dog as they do not always know its background. She stated for example, they have a dog right now that came from Putnam Valley that when he was dropped off the person said he found the dog, but the behavior of the dog made her think otherwise. She stated the dog was barking at her and the workers at the Humane Society, although he appeared comfortable with person who dropped him off. She stated she brought the dog in and it took a few days for the dog to be comfortable at the shelter. She stated the background and history of this dog was unknown therefore they must be careful when trying to place him in a home within the community. She stated when she started at the Humane Society the normal amount of dogs was about 120, which was then lowered to 75 because the dogs were being kept longer and they became more careful in the adoption process.

Legislator Gouldman questioned how many animals have been adopted.

President Dugan stated she does not have the list with her tonight. She stated she would like the Legislators to come tour the Humane Society. She stated she hears many people say they dislike going to the shelter because it upsets them to see the animals. She stated she used to avoid going to the shelter as well because it would upset her, but in 2000 she saw a dog in the newspaper and went to the Humane Society to see it. She stated she left upset after seeing the animals, but she returned to volunteer as a dog walker. She stated she encourages people like this to come into the shelter because the animals are there no matter what. She stated she has been at the Humane Society for a long time because she wandered in after seeing the newspaper.

County Executive MaryEllen Odell stated the Legislators have a responsibility to go see the organizations that are being provided County funding. She stated the questions being asked tonight are great and the conversation should be continued throughout the year. She stated the Humane Society has many events and fundraisers to participate in.

Chairman Sullivan questioned how many animals are taken in and adopted out each year.

President Dugan stated a report is submitted to the County each year with all the numbers in it.

County Executive Odell stated the report is submitted for the State of the County. She stated each department and outside agency submits a report.

Shelter Manager Du Plessis stated she does not have exact numbers, but this is the first time in a long time that there have been only 30 dogs. She stated the average amount of dogs is 47-50. She stated a trainer comes to the shelter, which is beneficial in many ways. She stated the trainer allows various issues with a dog to be identified. She stated the trainer will also work with people who come in to surrender their dog to try to identify and work on the issue so the dog can stay in their home. She stated this service is free of charge, as it keeps more dogs in their homes, which frees more space within the shelter.

President Dugan stated the trainer is at the Humane Society every Wednesday and they are working on having him come another day as well.

Legislator Addonizio questioned how it is determined that a potential adopter is unable to afford their vet bills.

President Dugan stated once the application is submitted and reviewed, a phone call is made to the veterinarian to inquire about their visits. She stated this will tell the Humane Society if the individual has a history of bringing their pet to the vet.

Legislator Addonizio questioned what if the person has not had an animal before.

President Dugan stated that application could not be judged by their veterinarian history. She stated they speak with applicants and do home visits to ensure the animal is going to a good home. She stated they try to match animals with a proper family. She stated she is aware of an older gentleman who complained about his experience at the Humane Society. She stated there was a very active Chocolate Lab that came in that the man was interested in adopting, however he did not get approval from his wife. She stated they have each family member come to the shelter to meet the animal; they do not allow animals to be adopted as a gift.

Legislator Sayegh questioned what the Humane Society's capacity is for cats and dogs.

President Dugan stated if all dogs are going to be put inside, there are 48 runs but two (2) are kept for dog control at night if they need to come after hours. She stated they also have rooms that can be used if necessary. She stated they can have about 51 dogs at once. She stated there are outside pens, but the dogs are not kept outside at night.

Shelter Manager Du Plessis stated the highest amount of cats they have had is 180, which is over capacity. She stated when the numbers get that high they depend on people to foster the animals.

Legislator Sayegh questioned what the procedure is when an animal is brought in but the shelter is at capacity.

President Dugan stated the person is asked to wait.

Shelter Manager Du Plessis stated three (3) weeks ago two (2) litters came in from feral colonies with distemper, which is extremely deadly. She stated because there were deaths among the cats, they went into quarantine. She stated during this time, they have been depending on the community for their help with animals that would have otherwise been brought into the shelter. She stated for example, someone called during the quarantine and said they had a litter of five (5) kittens to bring to the Humane Society. She stated that person was supplied with a dog crate, litter box, and food and asked to care for the kittens until the quarantine was over. She stated the quarantine lasted two (2) to three (3) weeks when no cats could come in or out.

Legislator Sayegh requested clarification on feral cats being brought to the Humane Society.

President Dugan stated Shelter Manager Du Plessis was referring to kittens only. She stated they do not take in feral adults. She stated they do provide financial assistance for the TNR (Trap, Neuter, Return) of feral adult cats.

Legislator Sayegh questioned if the Humane Society charges to drop off an animal.

President Dugan stated if the animal is not up to date on their rabies shot, they will charge them for the shot. She stated if the person is unable to afford the shot, they will still help them.

Legislator Jonke stated last week the SPCA was present at the Rules Budget Meeting and the relationship between the SPCA and the Humane Society was discussed. He questioned why the SPCA does not bring animals to the Humane Society.

President Dugan stated the SPCA responds to cases of abuse and neglect and the Humane Society is an adoption facility. She stated they do not have the capacity to house seized animals that are waiting on a court case. She stated she would like to have information about the SPCA and the Humane Society side by side so people can see the differences in the organizations.

Chairman Sullivan made a motion to move the \$143,739 allocated for the Putnam Humane Society into subcontingency; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Item #4 - Other Business – None

Item #5 - Adjournment

There being no further business at 6:30pm, Chairman Sullivan made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.