

Animal Cruelty Investigations Advisory Board Meeting
January 16, 2024
2 PM
Via Zoom

MINUTES

Member Attendees

Erika Holm
Pam Brown (until 11:29 AM)
Trevor Whipple
John McCallum
Mary McFaun
Jennifer Firpo
Kristin Haas
Thomas M. "Mike" Scott

Other Attendees

Dana Dean
Wilda L. White

I. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mary McFaun made a motion to approve the August 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes; the motion was seconded by Trevor Whipple. The motion passed 5-0-3.

Mary McFaun made a motion to approve the August 31, 2023, Meeting Minutes; the motion was seconded by Pam Brown. The motion passed 5-0-3.

Mary McFaun made a motion to approve the September 6, 2023, Meeting Minutes; the motion was seconded by Kristin Haas. The motion passed 3-0-5.

Mary McFaun made a motion to approve the January 11, 2024, Meeting Minutes; the motion was seconded by Pam Brown. The Chair's friendly amendment to approve the Minutes with the inclusion of the updated Zoom meeting information was accepted. The motion passed 3-0-5.

II. Annual Report

Without taking a formal vote, board members approved the Annual Report, which will be submitted to the appropriate entities on the board's behalf by the Department of Public Safety.

Chair Holm noted that because of the varied interests represented on the ACIAB, the report does not take a position on H.626, an act relating to animal welfare.

III. H.626, An act relating to animal welfare

Chair Holm updated board members about the status of H.626 procedurally and logistically. Chair Holm reported that the Vermont Humane Federation has retained The Necrason Group, as its lobbyist. The assigned lobbyist is Teo Zagar, who issued a press release today, January 16, 2024. Chair Holm is listed as a contact in the press release.

Chair Holm indicated that she may be contacted by media and that she would do her best to walk a very fine line about whether she is speaking on behalf of the humane society, the Vermont Humane Federation or ACIAB. Chair Holm said generally she will speak to the work the ACIAB has done in the past.

To date, the bill has not been scheduled for a hearing.

The Senate companion bill has yet to be introduced.

Thomas “Mike” Scott reported that the Department of Fish and Wildlife has not taken a position on the H.626.

Kristin Haas reported that to date the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets has not taken a position on H.626, although, the Agency’s leadership is meeting on January 17, 2024, to discuss the bill.

IV. Public Comment

Dana Dean, Vice President, Vermont Federation of Dog Clubs, thanked the Board for allowing her to attend the meeting, looks forward to working with Mary McFaun and the Board on H.626.

V. Future Meetings

Chair Holm raised the issue of setting a March meeting date. Board members suggested the meeting date should be set before the legislature’s crossover deadline. The House crossover deadline is March 29, 2024.

No future meeting dates were scheduled.

VI. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded and approved by acclamation.