

# New Animal Shelter & Adoption Center

Shelter Replacement Committee Report:  
Needs, Cost & Funding Recommendations



# Shelter Replacement Committee Members

## Alamance County

**Dan Ingle, Commission Chairman**

**Eddie Boswell, Commission Vice-Chairman**

**Craig Honeycutt, County Manager**

**Terry Johnson, Sheriff**

## City of Graham

**Lee Kimrey, City Council**

## City of Elon

**Ron Klepчек, Alderman**

## Humane Society of Alamance

**Kelly Ronow, Chairman**

## City of Burlington

**Jim Butler, City Council**

**Kathy Hykes, City Council**

**Jeffrey Smythe, Police Chief**

**Harold Owen, Former City Manager**

**Jessica Arias, Director of Animal Services**

**Rachel Kelly, Public Information**

## City of Mebane

**David Cheek, City Manager**

## Friends of Mebane's Animals

**Rene Bartis, Chairman**

## Pet Adoption and Welfare Society

**Perry Nichols, Lisa Nichols, Bill Smith, Sam Hunt, Vicky Hunt, Anita Butler**



## **The committee's charge was to determine the Needs, the Cost and the Funding sources for a new Animal Shelter**

**Meetings held on 9/30 and 10/26 with additional sub committee meetings**

**Needs Sub Committee-** Vicky Hunt, Jessica Arias, Dan Ingle, Eddie Boswell, Lisa Nichols, Renee Bartis, Kelly Ronnow and other staff from the shelter and Sheriff's Department

**Recommendations-** Current Animal Shelter must be replaced - The needs assessment study is the best starting point for designing a replacement building - Must meet the community's needs for the next 25 years. Budget: 5.25 million dollars

**Government Funding Sub Committee-** Harold Owen & Craig Honeycutt

**Recommendations-** 4.5 million government share - all governmental bodies will participate on a per capita basis and would have the option to pay upfront or finance over a multi-year period. A binding memorandum of understanding and agreement will be required from each governmental body.

**Private Fundraising Sub Committee-** Sam Hunt, Perry Nichols and Bill Smith

**Recommendation-** PAWS (Pet Adoption and Welfare Society) will be responsible for raising \$750,000.00 (15%) from the private sector. Proper assurances and guarantees will be provided.



**EXISTING FACILITY DOES NOT MEET MINIMUM REQUIRED STANDARDS  
FOR ANIMAL HOUSING AND DISEASE CONTROL.**

**Deficiencies cited in recent NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services,  
Animal Welfare Section inspection reports:**

December 2015:

\*0202- **Ventilation and odor control** is **not acceptable** in the bottom (intake) building due to poor air flow, and some odor noted. Particularly the cat quarantine I noticed stale, stuffy air and heavy odor. Housing areas are clean and well kept, the building is 55 years old and the ventilation is not sufficient any longer.

\* 0204- **Enclosures in sound repair**, is **not acceptable** due to chewed/ damaged dropdown containment doors in their primary enclosures in the top (adoption) building....

\*0204- **Primary enclosures**, surfaces impervious to moisture is **not acceptable** due to chipped epoxy in the primary enclosures in the bottom (intake) building.....”

December 2014:

“0202} **Indoor facility** deemed **not acceptable** for surfaces impervious to moisture..”

“0202 & 0204 **Primary Enclosures** deemed **not acceptable** for surfaces impervious to moisture ....”

May 2014:

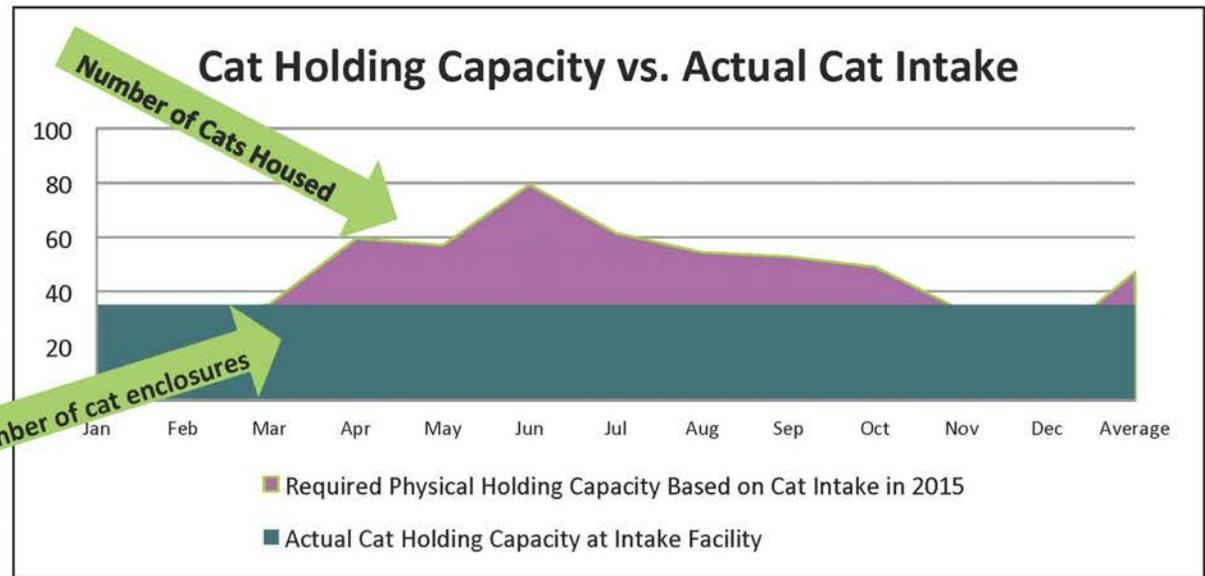
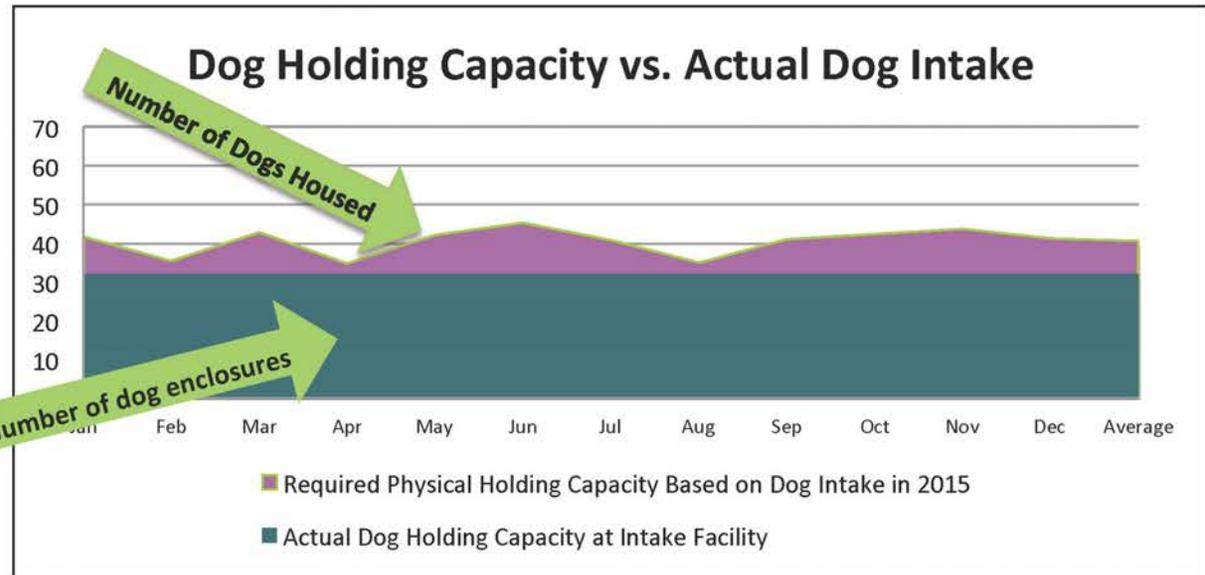
“0202} **Indoor facilities** deemed **not acceptable** for surfaces impervious to moisture ...”

“0202 & 0204} **Primary Enclosures** deemed **not acceptable** for surfaces impervious to moisture..”

December 2013:

“ 0204} **Primary enclosures** deemed **not acceptable** for surfaces impervious to moisture....”

Animal holding space remains critically inadequate at the shelter for both dogs and cats, despite declining intake numbers.



# **Burlington Shelter Staff and Volunteer Survey**

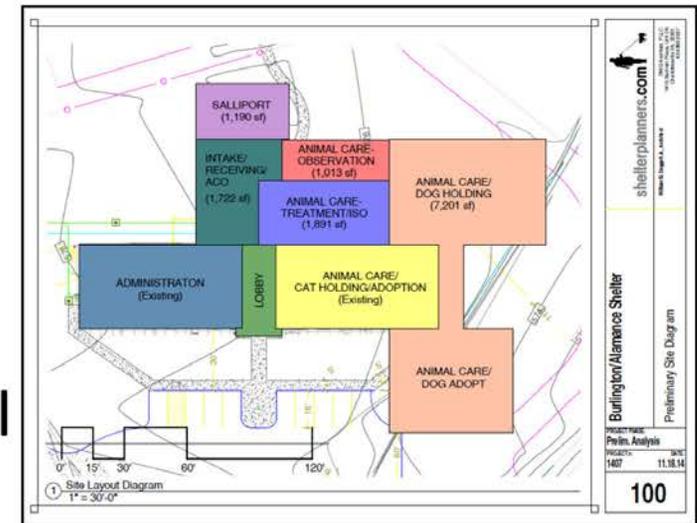
## **CHALLENGES WE FACE WITH THE CURRENT INTAKE FACILITY**

- Not enough animal holding spaces; overcrowding
- Not having a dedicated workspace for ACO's makes it difficult to have phone conversations with the public due to noise from others in the shared space which is also used as the staff break room.
- Difficult to get dogs out of runs due to poor design (have to cross over trench and walk by other dogs)
- Increased stress in dogs and cats (dogs face each other in kennels and cats can hear barking dogs)
- Poor ventilation and lighting
  - Poorly ventilated cat rooms increase disease occurrence and spread
- Lack of proper heating/cooling in animal areas creates issues for meeting minimum and maximum temperature threshold required by law.
- Poor drainage, increased moisture/dampness
  - Noise level is overwhelming and off-putting to visitors
- No separate intake areas
  - Inadequate isolation area for cats
  - Cat enclosures are too small
- No isolation area for dogs
  - Inadequate workspace for staff
  - Cat and dogs areas are too close together
- Inadequate storage
  - No dedicated medical treatment areas
  - No space for grooming/bathing animals

## **WHAT WE NEED IN OUR FACILITY**

- Additional Kennel Space; Designed to decrease stress - dogs not facing each other
  - Separate intake area for newly arriving animals
- Cat area separate from dog areas so cats can't hear barking dogs
  - More welcoming to public
- Secure sally port with automatic gates and indoor unloading area that is separate from kennels
  - No unpleasant animal odors
- Dedicated office space for ACO's to conduct business (phone calls, reports, writing, etc.)
  - Better designed dog runs
- More adoption space so that more animals can be in adoption area
  - Better air quality
- Different layout for dog runs and cat enclosures
  - More play areas for cats
  - Smaller outdoor play yards
- Better security/control over access to animals
  - Better lighting with more natural lighting
  - Dedicated medical treatment area
- Larger cat enclosures and more space for cats
  - More storage space (indoor, climate controlled)
  - Outdoor play areas
- Designated bathing/grooming area
  - Separate holding space that is secure for court hold, quarantined animals
- Central storage for cleaning supplies
  - More visiting rooms for adopters
  - A larger conference room for training/meetings
- A larger surgery suite with separate prep area that is located away from the public areas and general animal population

The recommendation of a facility needs assessment (that was completed by an independent animal shelter architectural firm) and the Shelter Replacement Study Committee is to renovate and expand the existing adoption center to bring all animal services operations under one roof.



- Renovation/ Expansion will be less costly and have more benefit than a separate new building
- Consolidation of operations into one facility will increase quality and efficiency of operations, reduce maintenance/ utility costs
- Ensures adequate and appropriate spaces for animals as well as staff for next 20+ years.
- Facilitates customer oriented approach to services and encourages community involvement

# Letter from Jess Arias - Animal Services Director to Staff and Volunteers

Attached you will find Animal Services' statistical reports for the month of December as well as for calendar year 2015. We had an incredibly successful year with intake reduced by 14% compared to last year, euthanasia reduced by 48% and live releases (adoption, transfers to rescues and owner recoveries) increased by 30%. When compared with the averages during the previous 5 years, these percentages are even greater in each category. We held twelve (12) fee-reduced adoption promotion events this year. These fun themed events help to generate public interest and increase the number of pets adopted.

This year we made significant developments to our program for spay/neuter through a new partnership with the non-profit organizations Animal Kind and PAWS to implement programs that will assist low-income pet owners in Alamance County with getting their pet spayed or neutered. These programs will help to further reduce the number of unwanted pets that enter the shelter system each year.

After the new tethering ordinance was passed in the fall of 2014, our field staff have been working to ensure city residents with tethered dogs are informed of the new ordinance and receive information and resource referrals to help with the transition. Our non-profit partner, Friends of Mebane's Animals (FoMA) began their "Freedom Fences" program after the ordinance was passed to assist owners of tethered dogs that have a financial need with fencing and spay/neuter services.

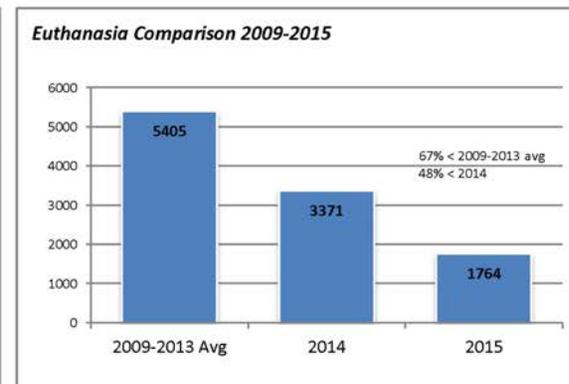
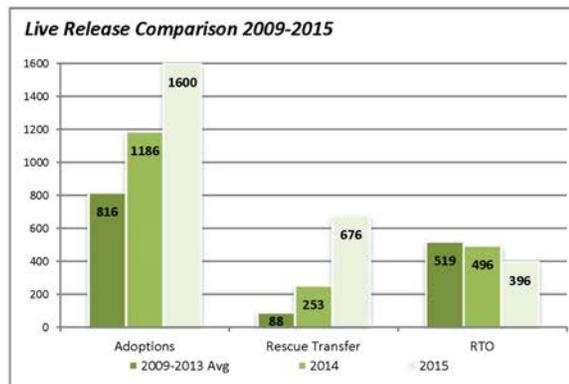
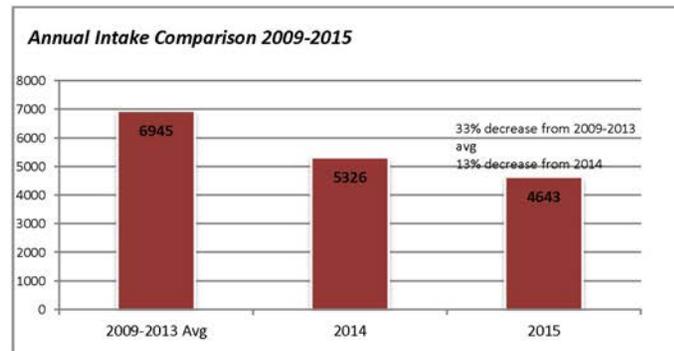
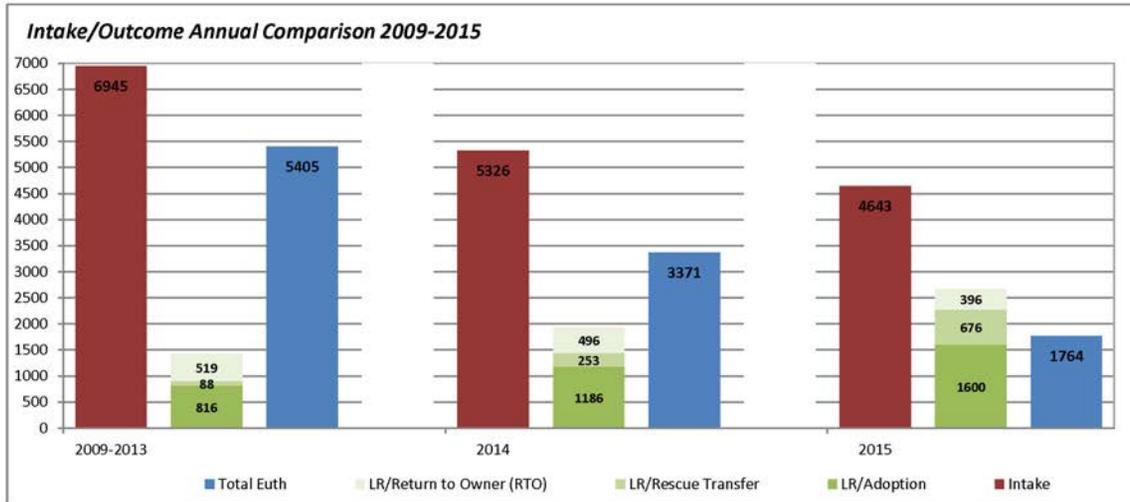
The first multi-agency "Pet Resource and Awareness Day" was held this spring at the Elmira Center in Burlington and made possible by grants and donations from the Humane Society of the United States and other local agencies. Over 400 pets from our underserved communities received basic preventative wellness services, food, supplies, spay/neuter and anti-tethering resources. We were a lead agency in organizing this event along with several local non-profit animal welfare and rescue partners (Humane Society of Alamance County, Friends of Mebane's Animals, Sparkle Cat Rescue, Pet Adoption and Welfare Society). Other participating agencies included Animal Kind, Alamance County's Environmental Health Department, Piedmont Veterinary Clinic, Iron Will Veterinary Services, Creekside Animal Clinic. It was an incredible effort and we hope to organize another event in the coming year.

Our volunteer program has also continued to grow this year with expanded opportunities and activities. Volunteers are an incredible and vital asset to our agency. They support our staff and do many things to help pets at our facilities. Volunteers help exercise the dogs and enrichment each day which is vital to the mental health to help them be adoptable; fostering and helping pets find adoptive homes; professional photography and promotion of pets on social media; assisting with offsite adoption and other events. Most of our offsite events would not be possible without the help of volunteers. Earlier this year with the help of volunteers, we began a new partnership with the City Recreation and Parks Department to create the "Hikes with Hounds" program. This has been an incredibly popular and fun activity during which volunteers take shelter pets for walks at one of our area's many beautiful parks.

This year we also began seriously discussing the replacement of our aged shelter facility. A new shelter committed was formed and plans to address this dire need are being developed. This will become an even more important focus for our agency in the coming year. We have added a new tab on our website that contains information about the project, which will be updated as the process progresses: <http://www.ci.burlington.nc.us/1827/Facility-Expansion-Renovation>

Thank you for the incredible contributions you made towards helping people and pets in our community. Your amazing dedication and terrific work are apparent in the many positive outcomes we have had this year as well as the increased level of interest and involvement in what we do from our community. I am very grateful to work with such an outstanding group of staff and volunteers. I look forward to what exciting things that together we will accomplish for our community and pets in 2016.

# Intake/Outcome Comparison Statistics



# Alamance County Public Opinion Survey Summary

PET ADOPTION AND WELFARE SOCIETY SURVEY

## Survey Summary

*About two-thirds of the survey respondents own a pet.*

*Seven out of ten pet owners consider their pet to be a member of the family.*

Overall, the results of this survey indicate that residents of Alamance County share a concern for the proper treatment and well-being of animals. Whether an animal has a loving home or whether the animal is unfortunate in that it does not have a suitable living environment, the public believes that animals deserve to be treated and cared for in a humane manner. They also believe that public leaders have a role to play in the issue of animal welfare.

### Pet Ownership

Nearly two-thirds of the respondents taking part in the survey (64%) currently own a pet. About four out of ten pet owners tell us they have a dog, while one-quarter are cat owners. Most of the households surveyed that own pets have one or two animals at this time.

#### Own a Pet?

Own a Pet?	
Yes	64%
No	36%

Among the households surveyed that do not own a pet, the reasons for non-pet ownership are nearly equally mixed between those who do not want to own a pet (47%) and those who would like to but their current circumstances do not allow for pet ownership (53%).

The findings of this study clearly suggest that there is a strong emotional bond between members of a household and their pets. Seventy-one percent of the households owning a pet consider the pet to be "a member of the family."

#### Families and Their Pets

Families and Their Pets	
A member of the family	71%
Somewhere in the middle	20%
Just a pet	9%

Another indication of the emotional linkage between people and their pets is the proportion of pets who live inside their master's home. One-third of the households with a dog (34%) and 40% of homes with a cat indicate that the pet lives inside exclusively. Thirty-seven percent of households with dogs and 43% that have cats say their pets spend time both inside and outside the house.

#### Where Pets Live

	Dogs	Cats	Other Pets
Inside	34%	40%	52%
Outside	29%	17%	28%
Combination	37%	43%	20%

# Alamance County Public Opinion Survey Summary

## PET ADOPTION AND WELFARE SOCIETY SURVEY

### Well-Being of Pets

The discussion to this point has focused on pets who have a home. Much of the survey's intent was to measure the attitudes of the public with respect to animals who are mistreated, lost, or without a home. Data from area animal shelters shows that more than 5,000 dogs and cats came to the Alamance County shelter last year. Of these animals, 415 were returned to their owners and 194 were adopted. The balance, or about 88%, had to be euthanized. In contrast, more than one-half of the animals that came to the Guilford County shelter last year were adopted.

When given this information, fully three-quarters of the survey respondents (75%) say they were not aware that Alamance County adopts out such a small number of pets and, consequently, has to destroy so many. Moreover, 80% think local city and county officials should do whatever is necessary to increase the number of pets being adopted and reduce the rate at which animals are being destroyed, similar to what is being experienced in Guilford County. Taken a step further, 88% of the survey respondents feel *somewhat* or *very* strongly that local officials should be doing more to increase the pet adoption rate.

*Seventy-five percent of survey respondents were not aware that a substantial number of pets are put to sleep before they can be adopted.*

### Pet Adoption

	Yes	No
Aware of low adoption/ high destroy rate?	22%	75%
Should public officials work to change these numbers?	80%	7%

Several reasons exist that help explain why Alamance County is forced to destroy so many animals. One reason is that the local shelter is able to house only 125 dogs and cats at any given time. In addition, the county has a 21-day quarantine policy that must be observed before a pet becomes eligible for adoption, something no other jurisdiction in the state has. Add to this the fact that the shelter is required to hold the animal for only three days, and the result is that a strong majority of dogs and cats are destroyed before they have a chance to be adopted.

Eighty-nine percent of the sample agree that Alamance County should have an animal shelter large enough to handle the needs of a county its size. Eighty-two percent agree that the county shelter should change its 21-day quarantine policy and its 3-day holding requirement so that more pets will have an opportunity to find a home. A larger proportion of respondents (92%) favors a strong volunteer program as part of a proactive adoption program at the Alamance County animal shelter, and 88% agree that Alamance County should have a proactive adoption program that includes a pet adoption center.

*Nine out of ten respondents think Alamance County should have a shelter large enough to handle the needs of a county its size.*

# Alamance County Public Opinion Survey Summary

PET ADOPTION AND WELFARE SOCIETY SURVEY

## Reducing Number of Pets Destroyed

	Agree	Disagree
County should have a shelter large enough to meet its needs.	89%	6%
County should change 21-day quarantine/3-day hold policies.	82%	6%
County should have a strong volunteer program as part of a proactive adoption program.	92%	3%
County should have a proactive adoption program that includes a pet adoption center.	88%	5%

*More respondents favor enforcing current animal cruelty laws over newer and tougher laws.*

## Potential Solutions

Any number of solutions can be explored for helping to minimize the level of mistreatment inflicted upon animals as well as controlling their population. Several were tested in this study. Sixty-two percent of the sample say that enforcement of current laws and the subsequent prosecution of offenders is a better way to protect pets rather than writing stronger and tougher ordinances beyond those that are currently on the books (24%).

## More Effective in Protecting Pets:

Enforcement of current laws	62%
Stronger and tougher laws	24%
Not sure	14%

*About one-half of the respondents agree with an ordinance that would prohibit keeping pets tied to a chain, and a similar proportion would support a licensing fee for each pet they own.*

A clear preference does not emerge concerning ways to control the pet population. The largest segment of respondents (34%) believes that a mandatory spay/neutering policy for pets not licensed to breed is the most effective means for controlling the population of pets. Twenty-nine percent say spay/neutering should be at the discretion of the pet owner and, thus, voluntary, while 27% prefer that non-profit agencies and governmental organizations subsidize spay/neuter programs. Nine percent of the sample remains undecided.

Alamance County residents are not especially enthusiastic about two measures tested. Fewer than one-half (48%) either *somewhat* or *strongly* agree that there should be an ordinance that prohibits keeping a pet tied to a chain. Fifty-three percent are *somewhat* or *strongly* in agreement that pet owners in the county should pay an annual fee of between \$3 and \$5 for each pet they own.

According to the survey respondents, some of the responsibility for ensuring the welfare of animals falls on the shoulders of elected officials,

# Alamance County Public Opinion Survey Summary

## PET ADOPTION AND WELFARE SOCIETY SURVEY

making public leaders a key player in finding solutions to animal welfare issues. Two-thirds of the survey panel (64%) are **more likely** to vote for a public official who works to improve the adoption rate of pets. Three out of four (76%) are **more likely** to support public officials who are committed to improving the condition of pets held at animal shelters.

*Respondents are more likely to vote for public officials who support animal welfare issues.*

### Support of Public Officials

	More likely to support	Less likely to support	Would make no difference	Not sure
A public official who works to improve the adoption rate of pets.	64%	3%	28%	5%
A public official who is committed to improving the condition of pets held at animal shelters.	76%	3%	17%	4%

### Other Findings

Nearly one-half of the survey participants (48%) say they have visited the Alamance County animal shelter, and 38% have visited another animal shelter. Among respondents who have never been to a shelter, 37% tell us they would visit one if they were looking to adopt a pet. Thirteen percent would go to a shelter if their pet were missing.

*More than half of the survey respondents are not familiar with the work of the Alamance County Humane Society.*

Much of the survey panel is not particularly familiar with the work carried out by the Alamance County Humane Society. More than one-half of the survey respondents (52%) do not know enough about the Humane Society's mission to be able to provide a rating. Thirty-nine percent have a favorable impression of the work done by this group, while 10% hold an unfavorable impression. Still, 93% of the survey respondents agree that the Alamance County animal shelter should work closely with volunteers of the Humane Society to improve the well-being of animals.

### Closer Working Relationship Between Animal Shelter and Humane Society

Agree	93%
Disagree	1%
Not sure	6%

### Demographics

The study resulted in demographics that are consistent with census data in Alamance County for gender, region, age and income. Slight oversampling resulted for race among whites and for education among college graduates.

# Animal Welfare North Carolina

A Study by the Center for Public Affairs  
Elon University  
February 2003

*Questions associated with this survey should be directed to George Taylor,  
Director Institute for Politics and Public Affairs, Elon University.*

## **Study Conclusions**

Major findings of this survey include:

### *Role of government*

- Animal welfare is an important issue in the state and residents support government efforts to address a wide range of issues associated with animal welfare in the state of North Carolina
- Citizens overwhelmingly view animal welfare policy as a local government issue and not one that should be managed by the state government. This includes the management of shelters, management of stray animals, vaccination policies, licensing and animal cruelty and prevention services.

### *Shelters*

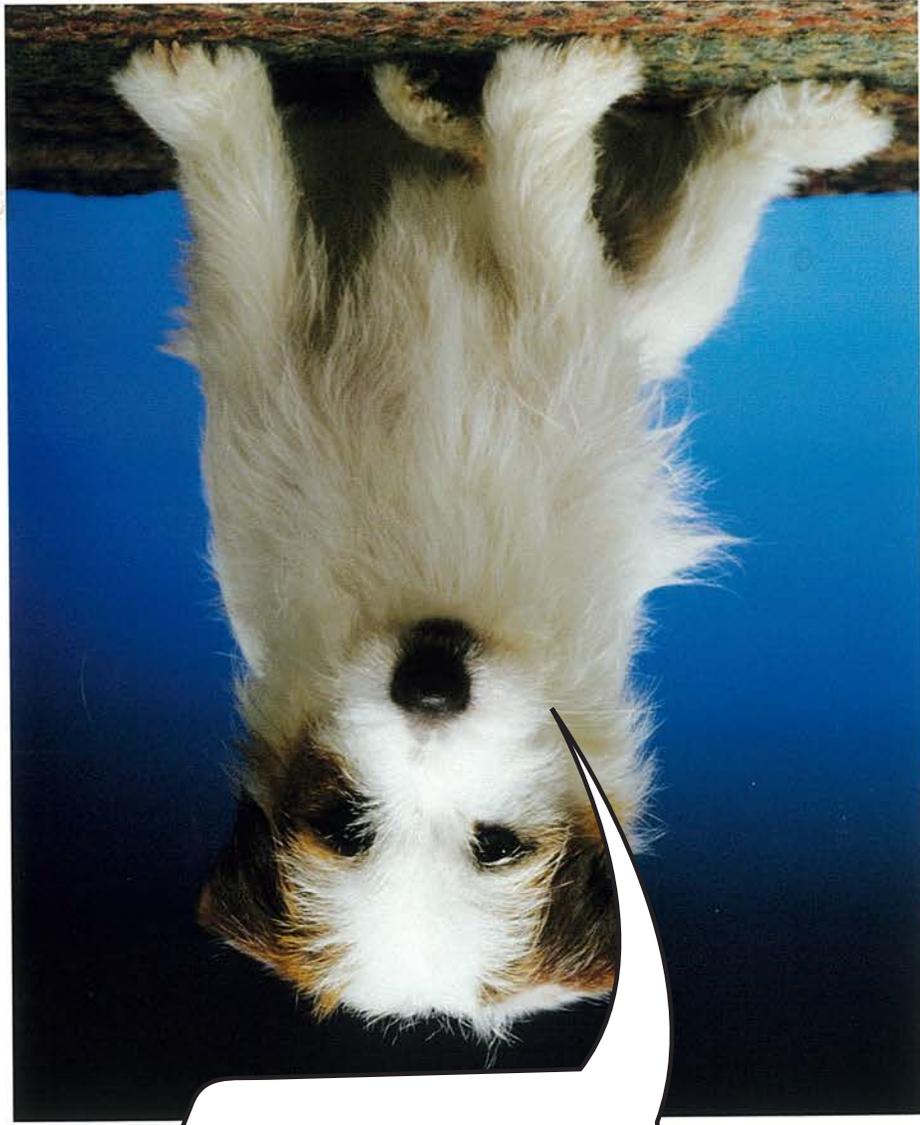
- A majority of North Carolinians have visited an animal shelter in the state. Of those who have visited, a majority found the service and cleanliness of the facilities to be good or excellent.
- Over a third of the survey respondents adopted animals from a shelter and were not deterred from adoption by established fees or issues of convenience associated with operation hours.
- Respondents perceived no differences in the quality of services rendered by publicly managed versus privately managed shelters.
- A third of North Carolinians would like shelters to move to a policy of no euthanasia for unclaimed animals. There is strong evidence in the data that residents are supportive of preventative measures that would decrease the need for euthanasia policies.

### *Animal Control Services, Vaccination and Licensing Policy*

- North Carolinians are relatively satisfied with animal control services in their local communities.
- There is strong support for policies that require animals to be spayed or neutered, and for policies requiring dogs and cats to be licensed.
- North Carolinians would support limited increases in taxes to support better animal control services including shelters, picking up stray animals and enforcement of vaccination and licensing laws.
- Residents want a mandatory rabies vaccination policy supported by fines for non-compliant animal owners.

### *Animal Cruelty and Neglect*

- Public perception of animal cruelty and neglect remains low throughout the state. Most do not see it as a problem.
- North Carolinians would support legislation requiring veterinarians to report suspected cases of animal cruelty and neglect.
- A majority of North Carolinians would support an increase in taxes to enforce new and existing laws to address problems associated with animal cruelty and neglect.
- There is no agreement among residents on which level of government should be in charge of legislation and enforcement of animal cruelty and neglect laws.



**Help us get  
a new shelter**