

Ollie's Law Advisory Committee Meeting
DRAFT Minutes April 8, 2025 | 9 AM – 10:30 AM
Approved 4/30/25

Advisory Committee Attendance

Mike Cahill
Louis Pacheco joined
Jeni Mather
Kathy MacKenzie
Mark Hogan
Carmen Rustenbeck
Dr. Erin Doyle
Amy Baxter
Noelle Wilson
Francine Coughlin
Debra Cameron
Kara Holmquist

Advisory Committee Absence

Kevin Sullivan-absent for meeting

MDAR Attendees

Jessica Burgess
Katherine Foote
Sheri Gustafson

Public Attendees

28 additional ZOOM attendees

This open meeting was held virtually over the ZOOM webinar platform.
Meeting ID: 844 2710 2301 Passcode: animal

I. AC Attendance Roll Call

Mathers started meeting at 9:02 AM by roll call.
Cahill-present, Pacheco-present, Hogan-present, Doyle-present, Baxter-present, Coughlin-present, Cameron-present, Holmquist- present.

MacKenzie-missing at roll call joined 9:04 AM Rustenbeck- missing at roll call, joined 9:05 AM, Wilson- missing at roll call joined 9:05 AM.

II. Minutes Review for March 26, 2025

Holmquist asked for clarification on tags in the minutes. Do rabies and licensing tags need to be worn? Cahill said that yes, license and rabies tags need to be worn. Kennel owners are

exempt from having to individually license their own dogs, so only rabies tags need to be worn.

Mahers asked about Chapter 140 sec. 137 (c).

Burgess stated the purpose of approving the minutes is to make sure that they accurately reflect what was discussed and that it is not a time to ask for clarification on the laws.

Burgess asked Cahill if the minutes reflected what was discussed? Cahill- yes.

Doyle motioned to accept the minutes from the AC meeting on 4/8/25 as written. Pacheco-second. Roll call: Doyle-yes, Cahill-yes, Pacheco-yes, MacKenzie-yes, Hogan-yes, Rustenbeck-yes, Baxter-yes, Wilson-yes, Coughlin-yes, Cameron-yes, Holmquist-yes.

III. Discussion Topics

1. AC Topic Poll Results

Mather asked Gustafson to do a screen share of the AC Topic Poll results and to explain the results.

Gustafson shared a document "Survey Results .pdf" on screen and explained that she ranked the poll results that she received from 12 of the 13 committee members in two different ways. AC members were asked to rank the topics in order of importance from 1-23, with 1 being the most important. The first block of rankings was determined by the lowest average score for the topic. The second group of rankings was determined by the number of times the topic was placed in the top five (1-5). In the charts, items highlighted in bright green received top scores in both ranking methods and those were: supervision, proper education and training of staff, care requirements, provider and staff-to-animal ratios, use of best practices, group sizes, and operational safety standards. Gustafson mentioned that the last grouping was topics that were ranked the least important by the average score given.

Mather stated that she felt the top 7 topics are very important to discuss and to place into groupings but that it is important to remember that when creating regulations a one size fits all approach may not work and that the goal is not to put facilities out of business.

Coughlin stated that she noticed that beyond the top three topics, she did not see the other topics reflected in other states' regulations and posed the question that if they create regulations on all of the topics listed would it be overreaching?

2. Topic Grouping

Rustenbeck mentioned that looking through the topics there are several different groupings that could happen but that boarding facility size should be considered first.

Burgess asked the public member with the AI notetaker on to disable it since AI notetaking is not allowed at the meeting.

Gustafson removed the AI notetaker from the meeting at 9:31 AM.

3. Staffing/Adequate Supervision

Mather commented that she liked the idea of looking at bare bones first, then expanding from there.

Rustenbeck asked to define facility categories and then look at safety guidance and ratios for them separately.

IV. Material Review

1. Dog Licensing

Holmquist stated that dog licensing requirements are statutory items that can not be changed by regulations.

Cahill said that any changes to dog licensing requirements would need to be done by the legislature and that the department has no authority to make changes.

2. Animal/ Shelter Regulations

<https://www.mass.gov/regulations/330-CMR-3000-animal-rescue-and-shelter-organization-regulations>

Baxter asked how the department or any other states handled developing regulations for different sizes of organizations or shelter/rescue groups.

3. Pet Shop Regulations

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/330-cmr-12-licensing-and-operation-of-pet-shops/download>

Cahill responded that in general pet shops all have the same facility requirements. For shelter/rescue organizations minimum standards of care were considered since those are universal. Beyond that, the specific activities of the group are taken into account, for example, a small foster-based cat rescue group couldn't meet all the same facilities standards of a large shelter-based group. Cahill suggested that looking at the bare minimum can help establish expectations and then the focus can expand from there.

Holmquist said basic care requirements as access to fresh water, adequate food could be easy to establish.

Mather asked if they could start looking at the existing regulations to pull out things that might be helpful.

Doyle stated that basic needs are defined in the shelter/ rescue regs in sec. 5 and should be looked at.

4. Other State Regulations

a. Colorado

<https://ag.colorado.gov/animal-welfare/pet-animal-care-and-facilities-act>

b. California

<https://www.animallaw.info/statute/ca-pet-boarding-facilities-chapter-11-pet-boarding-facilities#s1>

c. Connecticut

“Commercial Kennel Regulations 2021. Pdf”

Holmquist stated that she had begun sorting some of the material by outlining and capturing segments that are helpful. She asked if that outline could be shared with the reference material outside of the meeting?

Burgess clarified that in general minutes are taken of the meeting but sharing of an outline created by the AC outside of the meeting could be seen as deliberation, since opinions and notes are in the document.

Coughlin suggested that the Committee create a document during the meeting in a screen share that they all could give input on.

Burgess stated that someone from the AC could volunteer to be the clerk during the meetings for that purpose.

Mather asked for a volunteer clerk for the next meeting.

Holmquist volunteered to take notes on screen during the next meeting and suggested starting with working off the existing shelter/rescue regulations.

Mather asked the AC to do homework by reviewing the facility sections of the pet shop regulations, shelter/rescue regs and regulations from CA, CO, and CT so that they can start outlining a facilities section.

Holmquist stated that she would look at the regulations and start to highlight the sections that focus on facilities.

Coughlin shared a resource in the chat and announced that it was the ASPCA Five Freedoms guideline.

https://www.asPCA.org/sites/default/files/upload/images/asPCA_asv_five_freedoms_final1.ashx_.pdf

Holmquist asked if she could make a list of broad topic areas under the sections and highlight the sections in the documents.

Burgess stated that would be allowed.

Doyle mentioned that the ASPCA revised their guidelines and they are no longer referred to as the 5 freedoms but are now known as the 5 domains. Doyle stated that she would send a link to Sheri before the next meeting for distribution.

Rustenbeck asked Gustafson to share a screenshot of “ Industry Standards. Pdf” so that it can be distributed to the AC after the meeting. Rustenbeck explained that it was a facility management document created by the IBPSA and that she also worked on the material.

Mather stated that for the next meeting she hopes the Committee can focus on trying to define types and address potential facility requirements.

V. New Business

Mathers asked if there were additional materials to be looked at prior to the next meeting.

Burgess asked the Committee how they would like us to handle documents and input sent in from the public and if the department should distribute that material to the Committee?

Mather replied that the material should be distributed to the Committee if possible.

Burgess let the Committee know that an invite to the AC from a private facebook group was sent in, and that we will be distributing the information along with a link to the guidance on open meeting law electronic communication.

Mather stated that it may be helpful to develop a timeline for the rest of the year and it will list when they are addressing various topics.

Burgess stated that the timeline will need to be discussed during the meetings.

VI Future Meeting Schedule

Mather asked the Committee to consider moving the next meeting out three weeks.

Cahill stated that the department had some conflicts with the previously mentioned May AC meeting dates and is requesting alternate dates be considered.

The Committee agreed that the next meeting will be held in three weeks on Wednesday, April, 30th and the May meetings will be held on Wednesday, May 14th, and Wednesday, May 28th.

At 10:28 AM Mathers motioned to adjourn the meeting by roll call. Baxter-yes, Rustenbeck-yes, Cameron-yes, Doyle-yes, Caoughlin-yes, Mather-yes, Holmquist-yes, Mackenzie-yes, Pachecho-yes, Hogan-yes, Cahill-yes, Wilson-yes.

10:29 meeting adjoined.