

NH Governor's Commission on the Humane Treatment of Animals  
Meeting Minutes  
May 17, 2021

**Call to Order: Roll Call**

- Regular meeting of the Governor's Commission on the Humane Treatment of Animals was called to order at 1:02 pm via Zoom by Co-Chairs, Dr. Jeri Zezula and Jennifer Eber.

**Members Present**

- Jozi Best – NH Farm Bureau
- Jane Barlow Roy – NH Veterinary Medical Association
- Cynthia Collins – General Public
- Dr. Stephen Crawford – State Veterinarian
- Jennifer Eber – Co-Chair, General Public
- Kurt Ehrenberg – National Humane Organization
- Heather Faria – NH Federation of Humane Organizations
- Sheila Johannsen – Animal Control Officers Association of NH
- Gary Lambert – NH Sportsmen (phone)
- Wendy Munroe – NH Veterinary Technician Association
- Tom Seymour – General Public
- William Wright – NH Sheriff's Association (late)
- Dr. Jeri Zezula – Co-Chair, General Public

**Members Absent**

- Jeb Bradley – (R-Wolfeboro) NH State Senator
- Barbara Comtois – (R-Center Barnstead) NH State Representative
- George Cook – Dog Owners of the Granite State & NH Musers
- Marga Culp – General Public
- Tom DeRosa – General Public
- Elaina Enzien – UNH Co-Op Extension
- Patricia Morris – Equine Associations
- Dean Rondeau – NH Police Chief's Association
- Steven Sprowl – Humane Cruelty Investigator

**Public Present**

- Nate Bouchard

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## Meeting Minutes

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### Review and Approval of April 19, 2021 Minutes

- Sheila Johannsen made motion to approve the minutes. Kurt Ehrenberg seconded the motion. The vote was 12 for, 0 against, and 1 abstention. Dr. Steve Crawford abstained due to not being at the previous meeting.
- **Next Steps:** Dr. Jeri Zezula to upload minutes to the Commission website.

### Legislation

- Per our discussion on the role of the Commission, we agreed to continue tracking the following bills. Brief discussion summaries are included in the following table.

HB 174	<a href="#">TEXT</a>	<b>Title:</b> Relative to Reporting Cat / Car Collisions	<p>The Governor has authorized the Commission to develop an opinion for this proposed legislation relative to reporting a collision between a cat and a motor vehicle. However, hearing dates have past and only written testimony will now be considered.</p> <p><b><u>To Date:</u></b> House Floor Decision – Ought to Pass as Amended. Senate Transportation Committee – Ought to Pass. Floor Decision Pending.</p>
HB 246	<a href="#">TEXT</a>	<b>Title:</b> Establishing Protective Order for Vulnerable Adults	<p>The Governor has requested the Commission refrain from developing an opinion for this proposed legislation establishing a protective order for vulnerable adults.</p> <p><b><u>To Date:</u></b> House Committee Report – Inexpedient to Legislate House Floor Decision – Indefinitely Postpone</p>
HB 250	<a href="#">TEXT</a>	<b>Title:</b> Relative to Pet Vendors	<p>The Governor has requested the Commission refrain from developing an opinion for this proposed legislation relative to pet vendors.</p> <p>Animal volume has been amended again and now stands at 30 dogs and/or cats.</p> <p><b><u>To Date:</u></b> House Floor Decision – Ought to Pass with Amendment</p>

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<p>HB 338</p>	<p><a href="#">TEXT</a></p>	<p><b>Title:</b> Relative to Penalties for Dog Theft &amp; Tampering with a Dog's Radio Collar</p>	<p>The Governor has authorized the Commission to develop an opinion for this proposed legislation relative to penalties for dog theft and tampering with a dog's radio collar. However, hearing dates have past and only written testimony will be considered.</p> <p>Rep. Comtois advised this bill has had the original penalties reduced. Dr. Jeri Zezula noted there seems to be a disconnect between this bill and current civil and criminal codes. It was further noted that this bill added references specific to tracking collars and microchips.</p> <p><b><u>To Date:</u></b></p> <p>Jennifer Eber and Dr. Jeri Zezula spoke with the bill's sponsor. The prime focus of the bill was the dog collars, not so much the poisoning of dogs. It was greed to work with the sponsor going into the fall of 2021 to further address clarification of the degree of intent, the inclusion of incidental costs, and the manner of animal value determination.</p> <p>Motion made by Heather Faria and seconded by Sheila Johannsen to define broader definitions, move poisoning from HB 338, and combine with RSA 644:8. Vote was unanimous.</p>
<p>HB 532</p>	<p><a href="#">TEXT</a></p>	<p><b>Title:</b> Creating an Animal Records Database</p>	<p>This proposed legislation creating an animal records database has been amended and passed on to Ways &amp; Means. The bill will return to the floor before heading to the Senate.</p> <p><b><u>To Date:</u></b></p> <p>House Environment &amp; Agriculture Committee – Retained in Committee but will be part of HB 2</p>

- **Next Steps:** Subcommittee 5 to keep up with any changes and have an updated tracking sheet for the next meeting.

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**DOJ Involvement in Animal Cruelty Reporting**

- Discussions have opened opportunities to conduct presentations to county attorneys with the objective of increasing understanding and knowledge of animal cruelty cases and resources. Commission members are encouraged to provide input for the presentations and / or volunteer to assist with the presentations.
- **Next Steps:** Jennifer Eber and Dr. Jeri Zezula to follow up and advise Commission of proposed date(s) and time(s).

**New Cruelty Cases**

- Jozi Best reported that she was informed of a small group of horses that were starving, or had the appearance of starving. Jozi was informed that the State Veterinarian's office was contacted. However, Dr. Steve Crawford did not have information or records of such an event. Dr. Crawford also reminded everyone that his office does not have the authority granted to them to act upon such a report as it falls under NH criminal codes. Local law enforcement must be contacted as they have the authority to act. Jozi said she would follow up with the individual that reported to her.
- Dr. Jeri Zezula spoke of an event that took place at the recent meeting of the NH House of Representatives at the Bedford Sports Complex. A complaint was made against one of the representatives for having a dog in their car through the day. Calls for help were made and the State police responded. Bedford PD's investigation found that the car windows were open, ample water was provided, and the dog was not distressed. No charges resulted.

**Member/guest comments/questions**

- Dr. Jeri Zezula advised the Commission that when the Commission reconvenes in the fall of 2021 meetings may be transitioned back to in-person sessions. An informal poll of Commission members had mixed results regarding in-person versus remote meetings. Pros and cons of both were discussed. It was noted that by the time the fall arrives, decisions made by the State may dictate how the meetings will take place.
- Jennifer Eber told the Commission that Marga Coulp, also a Commission member, had a friend who offered printing services (brochures, the manual, etc.) to the Commission. No action was taken regarding the offer but the Commission will continue to discuss opportunities for publication of resources.

**Subcommittees Reports**

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- Subcommittee #1 – Data & Laws: Heather Faria, Chair.
  - Report submitted in the format used in the last report. No further action required.
- Subcommittee #2 – Propose Legislation: No Chair.
  - 10 specific items identified as potential legislative proposals.
  - To increase the likelihood of successfully gaining passage of proposed legislation, Commission members should prioritize the list. The top 1-2 will be selected as target legislation.
- Subcommittee #3 – Reporting: Wendy Munroe, Chair.
  - The Commission recommended editing the following:
    - Goal 1: Add “Enforce”.
    - Goal 1-Paragraph 2: Change “never” to “may not be”.
  - Suggested further clarification of the differences between “incidents” and “cases”.
  - Dr. Steve Crawford volunteered to make the discussed edits and submit to Wendy Munroe.
- Subcommittee #4 – Training: No Chair.
  - Commission determined section is fine and no further action is required.
- Subcommittee #5 – Legislation Tracking: George Cook, Chair.
  - Tom DeRosa continues updating the legislative bill tracking spreadsheet the results of which are defined earlier in this report. Updates to include those bills having been passed and their related NH statutes.
- **Next Steps:** Subcommittees send any changes to Jeri. Jennifer and Jeri will put together a draft document to the governor for the Commission to review at the June meeting Commission members are to prioritize proposed legislation, as discussed under Subcommittee #2 and be prepared to discuss at the next scheduled meeting.

### **Adjournment**

- Jozi Best moved to adjourn the meeting. Wendy Munroe seconded. Vote was unanimous.
- Dr. Jeri Zezula adjourned the meeting at 2:47 pm.

### **Next Meeting**

- Scheduled for Monday, June 21, 2021 at 1:00 pm via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

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Tom Seymour  
Secretary