

Free Roaming Cats Workgroup
September 9, 2021
Meeting Minutes

The Free Roaming Cats Stakeholder Workgroup met on September 9, 2021 in Senate Room 3 of the Capitol Building at 10am. It was a “hybrid” meeting in which most of the stakeholders attended in person and several attended virtually.

Laura Hungerford, Molly Armus, Heidi Meinzer, Michelle Dosson, Dr. Angela Ivey, Jen Riley, Sharon Quillen Adams, Kathy Strouse, Paulette Dean, Daphna Nachminovitschjhsd, Grant Sizemore, Julie Murphy, Charlie Broaddus, Ed Clark, Sarah Karpanty, and Becky Gwynn attended in person. Marge Hackett and Teresa Dockery attended virtually.

The meeting began with an introduction of a new member, Kathy Strouse from the Virginia Animal Control Association. The meeting was recorded and reference should be made to the recording for details of the discussion.

The facilitator began the meeting by reiterating the purpose of facilitation. He then began a discussion on “big picture” items: how to meet the charge of Chairman Plum to reduce and control the population of free roaming cats and to mitigate the impact of free roaming cats on the Commonwealth’s native wildlife, natural resources and public health. Members of the group had distributed specific proposals to be discussed prior to the meeting.

Members began by discussing proposals from the American Veterinary Medicine Association’s policies on free roaming and feral cats. The group agreed on pre-existing local ordinances on sterilization and vaccinations, micro-chipping, ear tipping, and encouraging owners to keep cats indoors. Members had some discussion regarding colony management and preventing colonies in wildlife-sensitive ecosystems. Members agreed to have a more in-depth discussion of these issues at a later date.

Next the members discussed policy recommendations from TNR advocates. Members found points of agreement and dissention while discussing regulations for TNR practitioners and colony caregivers. Members agreed to continue discussions regarding TNR regulations at the next meeting.

The facilitator requested that members consider studies or pilot programs, and possible partnerships between agencies.

Members separated into groups to bring recommendations on specific language on several topics prior to the next meeting.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 3:20.