

Susan Cappello

From: Laura Battaglia
Sent: Monday, July 12, 2021 6:26 PM
To: askcacc
Subject: Commission meeting 7/15/21

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Good Afternoon
Commission on Chicago Animal Care and Control
and
Department of Chicago Animal Care and Control,

I have some concerns about the pilot program referred to in the May 2021 meeting.

TNR for truly feral cats is an excellent program to reduce unwanted litters and for the well-being of feral cats. But I do not believe the TNR of friendly cats, in hopes of making their way home is a great option. Friendly cats can be lost from their homes but there are many other reasons friendly cats are roaming the streets. Owners move, cats are left behind, they become a burden or are just unwanted for various reasons and are released. These cats do not thrive in the outdoors, especially in an urban area like Chicago.

In March of 2021, a friendly but injured cat was found in the Cook County forest preserves. The cat was limping, infested with fleas, missing patches of hair, and one of his ears was frost bitten (the other TNR snipped). This cat immediately jumped into a car and enjoyed human contact. The cat was scanned and had a microchip. His name was The Don. The finder was so excited to reunite this friendly cat with his owner. Only to find out, The Don was chipped to a colony in Northfield. This was a Treehouse Cats At Work, working cat who escaped his acclimation cage. He was found 4.5 miles away from his colony location. The Don was failed by the TNR ordinance and by Treehouse.

Why would CACC knowingly violate the Cook County TNR ordinance which is specifically for unsocialized, feral cats and not for friendly, possibly lost cats?

With CACC having a 95% live outcome rate for cats, why would they want to eliminate the transfer of friendly cats to their Homeward Bound partners or for their own adoption program?

What research study is being used to create these policies? And was this research study conducted in a large urban city like Chicago?

Thank you for your time,
Laura Battaglia

This is a picture of The Don when he was found at the forest preserves.



Susan Cappello

From: j joyce
Sent: Tuesday, July 13, 2021 3:24 PM
To: askcacc
Subject: For July 15 CACC Board Meeting - Helping Owners of Lost pets

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Please request that 311 make some needed changes to the information available to residents online on CHI311.

- (1). Include SPECIES of deceased animal in the SRs. This info is available to 311 operators on their screens but they are not interested or allowed to tell us when we call and ask for more information.
- (2). Include descriptive information of deceased animals picked up (species - breed - size - color - distinguishing marks) on SR action taken by S and S.
- (3). Include SR NUMBER and FOUND location on CACC intake /Petharbor photo record when an animal is impounded in response to a Service Request (SR).

Thank you for your help and please commend the CACC staff on their very good work .

Sincerely,

Joanne Joyce

Susan Cappello

From: Amy Teister
Sent: Tuesday, July 13, 2021 5:56 PM
To: askcacc
Subject: Commission Meeting 7/15/21

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To:

Commission on Chicago Animal Care and Control
Department of Chicago Animal Care and Control

Regarding: Proposed plan for release of friendly domesticated cats

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed plan for release of Friendly cats to the streets. It is a violation of the Cook County TNR Ordinance to release friendly domesticated cats. These friendly cats do not have the survival skills as feral cats, and would not fare well in the streets. They may become ill, injured and malnourished. To die from any of these things is a far worse fate than euthanization. The assumption these cats will likely find their way home does not take into consideration that some of these cats may no longer have a home. They may have been abandoned, their owner incarcerated or deceased. They may be too lost to find their way, ill, or injured. Given CACC takes pride in a live outcome rate of 95% for cats, it seems unnecessary to abandon adoption and homeward bound rescue options. This type of plan is far from progressive in regards to animal welfare and I do not support this type of program.

Thank you, Amy Teister

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

Susan Cappello

From: Elly Greenspahn
Sent: Tuesday, July 13, 2021 5:56 PM
To: askcacc
Subject: For CACC Commission & Dept of Animal Care and Control - Commission meeting 7/15/21

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Dear Commission on Chicago Animal Care and Control and the Department of Chicago Animal Care and Control,

I thank you for your service and commitment to helping Chicago's homeless and stray animal population. In the past ten years, I have fostered several hundred cats and kittens that have either been pulled by homeward bound partners from CACC or have come from TNR projects in Chicago. I have been devoted and committed in my efforts to help CACC cats. After watching the last CACC Commission meeting on 5/20/21, I have serious concerns and questions regarding the content of that meeting. I am hoping you can bring some clarity to these issues.

In the 5/20/21 Commission meeting, the concept of "return to field" of friendly stray cats was the predominant topic. Your spokesperson, Dr Newberry mentioned a study in Ohio that claimed cats were 13% more likely to find their way home if left alone. That 7 out of 10 lost cats will make their way home. In a webinar on 3/19/21, hosted by CACC for the Chicagoland Life Saving Coalition, this same data was also stated. However, the research was not cited in either of these CACC meetings.

I sent a FOIA request to CACC on 5/24/21 to request a link to the specific study that CACC is using as a guideline for formulating policies on stray friendly cats. My FOIA was sent back as declined because "CACC has no responsive records or such policy". I am not sure how that is possible. This study has been mentioned by CACC employees at CACC sponsored events. The practice of "returning friendly stray cats to field" was thoroughly discussed in the last commission meeting. CACC should have a record of this data since CACC is quoting it.

I have been in search of this Ohio study that CACC staff and Dr. Newberry keep quoting. Based on the data in this study, I believe the study that keeps being quoted is this:

Lord, L.K., et al., Search and identification methods that owners use to find a lost cat. J Am Vet Med Assoc, 2007. 230(2): p. 217-20. This was a four month study conducted in 2005 across Montgomery County, Ohio. While this study touts the same data stated at the last CACC Commission meeting and the Chicagoland Life Saving Coalition presentation, this study **ONLY** involved 138 pet cats that had been reported as lost, as the subjects of this study. Data was gathered through phone interviews. All data was gathered through the method of self-report from each cat's guardians. Self-report is widely known as the least statistically significant data. This data is also out of date, as it is 16 years old. It was conducted in an area where free roaming of friendly cats is legally permitted, and a more rural environment vs urban setting. Do you have a study that is more up to date, with parameters that are more statistically significant to back CACC's claim that "7 out of 10 lost cats will find their way home?" If CACC is going to continue to make this claim, then there needs to be statistically significant data that backs this statement. Please be transparent with the data you are using to set policy and guidelines that directly impact the welfare of these friendly stray cats.

Dr Newberry also stated on 5/20/21 that: "If you see a friendly cat, you have two options. Either leave it alone and let the cat find its way home or steal someone's cat." I respectfully disagree that these are the only two options.

There are many inherent problems with this conclusion. First of all, you have not provided statistically significant data to demonstrate that all friendly cats on the street are lost cats and have a home to search for, or have the capabilities to find their way home. Sometimes cats are abandoned. Guardians can be evicted, imprisoned, move, pass away, or no longer want the animal. Sometimes they are intentionally abandoned in areas far from where they originally lived. A friendly cat that once lived indoors and is suddenly displaced without a caretaker or regular source of food and shelter is subject to many dangers and the elements of surviving on Chicago streets. Those dangers can include residents in the area who do not want them there and leave rat poison out, wildlife attacks, cruelty, being hit by a vehicle, etc. I believe that feral cats can survive and thrive on the streets of Chicago in a way that friendly cats can not.

In the scenario that Dr Newberry describes, she encourages us to leave a friendly cat on the street, even if friendly enough to pick up. She encourages you to walk away. What if you are that cat's only option and last hope of being reunited with their family? If a cat is friendly enough to pick up, why not take the cat to be scanned for a microchip? Why wouldn't a microchip scan be the first course of action vs walking away? CACC and all of their homeward bound partners microchip all animals. There are several free microchip clinics each year in Chicago. What is the point of the push to microchip pets if we are not advocating for scanning microchips? If my own cats (CACC alumni) were to get lost, I do not believe my strictly indoor cats would find their way home so easily. If someone were to see them and could pick them up, I pray with all my heart they would be taken in for a microchip scan. I check their microchip registrations annually and make sure they are up to date. If someone were to find them and walk away because they were advised by authorities, that is the best thing to do ...my cats would never find their way home. That microchip is their only hope!!!

Last month, an elderly woman opened her front door and a stray cat walked right into her home and cowered in the corner. She called one of your Homeward bound partners for assistance. The rescue came to her home with a microchip scanner. The cat was microchipped. After researching the chip, it was discovered that the cat was reported lost to the microchip company EIGHT years ago! After eight years of everyone walking past this cat and assuming he will find his way home, he was finally scanned for a chip and reunited with his family that missed him and searched for him for years. This story is not the exception. I can tell you MANY other stories similar to this. There is not evidence of statistically significant data to prove that all friendly cats on the street are safe and will find their way home. With the lack of data, there are no exceptions!! What you have is a multitude of possibilities as to why that friendly cat is on the street. Nothing should be assumed, it should be investigated. There are not ONLY the two choices, "to walk away or steal someone's cat." It is not that simple and should not be simplified in a way that lacks empathy for the fact that you do not know if that cat is in need of emergency assistance until the finder does their due diligence.

While I fully support feral cats being TNR'd, I do not agree with the movement to return friendly cats to the field. CACC and their homeward bound partners have worked hard to establish a 95% live outcome rate for cats. With a 95% live outcome rate, the rescue and adoption program at CACC are effectively working for friendly cats within this community. Return to field of friendly cats is not necessary or warranted. Feral cats belong outside in a registered colony. This is how they thrive and survive. A friendly cat does not belong outside. Purposefully placing a friendly cat outside is in direct violation of the Cook County TNR ordinance, section 10-96. We do not get to pick and choose the laws that we will follow. Creating a return to field for friendly cats program, puts effective TNR programs for ferals in jeopardy and can create legal nightmares.

See example of what is happening in San Diego: https://www.animals24-7.org/2021/05/25/san-diego-showdown-trap-neuter-return-advocates-sue-vs-return-to-field/?fbclid=IwAR1kBwXbLYSZ53_tXQMYjpnvE8bMh8cxLCVTt5ZGnv5GYo8BdTg-yALvNs0

It was discussed in the last commission meeting on 5/20/21 that CACC initiated a pilot program last February for returning friendlies to the field. However, the description of the pilot program left me with more questions than answers. The information given in the meeting was confusing and contradicting. I would like to know the following: 1)

What services are being offered through the pilot program? 2) Who is eligible for these services? 3) How do eligible candidates request services? I FOIA'd this information on 5/24/21 and my FOIA was rejected. This was the reason given:

"Please be advised the Department is withholding the responsive records in compliance with FOIA. Specifically, documents on the pilot program were withheld. Section 7(1)(f) exempts from disclosure, "preliminary drafts, notes, recommendations, memoranda and other records in which opinions are expressed, or policies or actions are formulated, except that a specific record or relevant portion of a record shall not be exempt when the record is publicly cited and identified by the head of the public body." 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(f). **[BECAUSE THE RECORDS REFLECT THE OPINIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS/ DRAFTS DURING THE DELIBERATIVE PROCESS, THEY WERE PROPERLY WITHHELD PURSAUNT TO SECTION 7(1)(f).]**"

My FOIA request should not have been rejected, because as stated above..." A record can not be exempt when the record is publicly cited and identified by the head of the public body." This pilot program was discussed as public record in a publicly recorded forum of the CACC Commission meeting and acknowledged publicly by CACC Executive Director Mamadou Dakhate on 5/20/21. Therefore, these questions warrant response.

This is no longer a draft, as publicly stated by Mamadou Dakhate that this return to field program began in February. It is in progress and being managed by a taxpayer funded organization. If you have been operating a Return to field of friendly cats program for the past six months, this information should be accessible and transparent to the community.

I look forward to your response to my concerns and questions. I appreciate your time and thank you for your service.

Sincerely
Elly Greenspahn

Susan Cappello

From: Dawn Glunz
Sent: Tuesday, July 13, 2021 6:33 PM
To: askcacc
Subject: Relocating Strays After Spay/Neuter

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To Commission on Chicago Animal Care and Control,

Cacc is moving in a direction where they want to spay/neuter friendly stray cats and return them back to the outdoor location to where they were found. Friendly cats do not thrive/survive outdoors in the way that feral cats do. This is a step backwards and violates the cook county tnr ordinance. They also are planning on moving in this direction for dogs too.

This plan can not move forward and alternate ideas and supports need to be implemented.

Please be sure that the cacc commission hears my opposition to this.

Dawn M. Glunz

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Susan Cappello

From: Katie C
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 8:24 AM
To: askcacc
Subject: Commission Meeting 7/15/21

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Good morning, Commission on Chicago Animal Care and Control and the Department of Chicago Animal Care and Control,

Thank you the continued allowance of letters to the Commission and Department. Thank you to Director Mamadou who has assisted several times this past month when there have been issues with intake and the public. We are a better city when we work together to keep the animals and people on our streets safe.

I would like to touch on a few subjects:

First, in the March 2021 Commission Meeting, I had expressed concern with the lack of liaison with the Chicago Police Department. Is there an update on this?

Next, in the March 2021 Commission Meeting, I had also addressed the issue of Chicago Police Department Districts and the use and/or lack of microchip scanners to assist in helping get lost pets home. In the response dated 4/23/21, the Commission stated the "Commission members will contact or coordinate contacting CPD and discuss in the coming weeks how to ensure that every district has at least two operational microchip scanners and to ask for a list of their location and responsible parties along with a copy of their policy/ orders for scanning animals brought to CPD facilities". What is the progress on this matter? Have the alderman wards also been contacted as suggested in the response?

Third, I'm looking for some clarification on response calls for stray animals. Many are coded as "stray at large/unable to approach" then closed out with no further plan. Sometimes the animal was not even spotted. If an animal is not on scene why isn't it being coded out as gone on arrival? If an animal is "stray at large" why are there no further plans for those who have several calls made about them?

Next, can CACC ensure that those who are turned away from CACC due to lack of appointment or hours of service still sign log book with security for further follow up by a staff member? The log book is currently being used for people coming in during business hours, not those turned away by security.

Lastly, can the Commission discuss the importance of a response time for letters to the Commission so that the citizen can have ample time to review the response from the commission and formulate their own before the next meeting?

Thanks for your time,
Katie Campbell

Have a heart that never hardens,
a temper that never tires,

Susan Cappello

From: Heather Weidmann
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 8:32 AM
To: askcacc
Subject: Questions for Commission Meeting

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Dear Commission on Chicago Animal Care and Control and Department of Chicago Animal Care and Control,

Whiskers & Tails Rescue Foundation's sole mission is working with the cats on the streets in our communities (TNR & TNA). We personally see first hand the effects of what life is like for a cat on the street, both feral and friendly as we are in the trenches. As a Homeward Bound partner of CACC's, we are truly saddened to see some of the directives and practices being taken by CACC, one of those being; **CACC not only practicing, but promoting the practice of leaving friendly cats out on the streets to the public.**

Therefore, we ask the following questions and make the following statements:

- Is there a reason why CACC didn't hold a Rescue meeting with ALL of it's Homeward Bound cat partners to ask for their input and thoughts about the pilot program before it was put into place?
- Why didn't CACC notify ALL of their Homeward Bound cat partners once CACC started practicing this "new" pilot program since it directly affects us and potentially any of our lost cats? How many cats will not be reunited with owners because they were advised to "just leave the cat and he will find his way home"? Not all cats "find their way home". We receive phone calls and emails daily from pet parents asking for advice and wanting to borrow humane cat traps from us to help locate their cats. Some owners are able to successfully get their cat back, but most of them do not.
- Does CACC realize by allowing friendly cats to remain on the streets that they are more susceptible to being at the hand of abuse?
- **Is CACC assuming that the public is or has been properly trained to know whether or not a cat is in distress? Each individual cat shows stress in a variety of different ways.**
- Is CACC stating that any member of the public can properly assess and know when a cat needs medical attention/help by looking at it from afar and not by having a physical exam done by a vet? Let us remind you of one specific horrible criminal abuse case of Driver who made national news. He was an adopted CACC cat, that was left out on the street and had boiling water poured on him, who was rescued and trapped by Whiskers & Tails. By the human eye, when we trapped him, he would have appeared fine. However, within 4 days his fur and skin were completely burned off. The analogy "Looks can be deceiving" comes into play here, isn't this why we promote annual wellness checks for all, humans and pets alike?

- Does CACC realize that by telling the public that if the cat "looks" okay to just leave it, that this is actually educating the public to not help an animal in need? We already have a tough time getting people to notice and help with cat's on the streets. If we start telling the public to "just leave them", we are ensuring that they aren't worth it.
- Does CACC realize that by telling the public to just leave the friendly cat on the street, that they are advocating that it's okay to allow their own friendly cats outdoors free to roam? This will indeed cause confusion. There is already a huge misconception that all cats on the streets are feral, especially cats with eartips because some individuals who are doing TNR and putting friendlies back out there and using friendly cats as ferals.
- Isn't telling people to just leave them another way of advocating the "dumping" of animals which is against the city law?
- Is CACC and its staff's affiliates going to tell the public to leave friendly cats or kittens on the streets if they look healthy and do not look in distress, when CACC is low on "adoptable" cats and their adoption room is empty?
- What is the exact protocol/message that CACC/311 dispatch is advising the public to do when they call about finding friendly cat(s)?
- Will CACC be advocating for the public to at least put the cat in a carrier and bring it to the nearest vet to check for a microchip and advocate to see if another rescue would be willing to intake if CACC does not want to do so?

While we understand that we want to be a progressive city, putting the animals on our streets in danger is not the way of doing it. There are better ways.

Warm Regards,

Heather Weidmann
 Founder & President



Phone: .

Facebook: www.facebook.com/whiskersandtailsrescuefoundation | Web: www.whiskersandtailsfoundation.org

Susan Cappello

From: Amaliya Deluxx
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 12:32 PM
To: askcacc
Subject: Feral Cats

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To the Commission of Chicago Animal Care and Control and the Department of Chicago Animal Care and Control;

I am with a HomewardBound approved 501c3 rescue at Chicago Animal Care and Control as well as a volunteer with Illinois Microchip Hunters.

I understand that approval is being sought to spay/ neuter all feral cats and return them to wherever outdoor locations they were found.

Although I am in support of TNR practices, I do not support returning "friendly" adoptable cats outdoors.

In my position as a licensed rescuer and as a Microchip Hunter, I have come across too many "lost" not stray cats. I have also come across too many abandoned cats.

I stand firm in my belief that friendly and domesticated cats do not thrive well on their own.

Sincerely,

Amy Levandowsky

Making A Difference Rescue

Intake and Adoption Coordinator



***Saving just one dog won't save the world,
but surely it will change the world for that one dog.
OPT to ADOPT!***

Susan Cappello

From: Stephanie Samuel
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 7:32 PM
To: askcacc
Subject: Re: Cat Lead Referral Program Feedback

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Dear CACC,

I would like to provide feedback on the cat lead referral program ahead of your meeting.

I am a Chicago resident and as you know, we have quite a few feral cats here in Ward 39. Due to a home under long-term construction with an empty garage out back, there were several intact female cats that had been living there for some time. A few neighbors on the block had been offering them food. However, the arrival of a male cat led to a few litters of kittens being born. We're happy with the cats in the neighborhood, as we are close to a park, forest preserve, and fast food restaurants, and have never experienced a mice or rat problem. But we wanted stop new litters of kittens being born.

We were unprepared on how to trap cats or care for them once trapped, so I contacted Alderman Samantha Nugent for assistance and her office contacted CACC on my behalf. CACC brought out three traps to set up near the garage the cats lived in, and three adult females were trapped within a few hours. CACC returned to take them in to be spayed. CACC followed up with me regarding the surgery and release process and I gave permission for my information to be shared with one of their volunteers who was local to me and could offer more help.

Liz Houtz contacted me and talked me through the entire TNR process, as she would be the one to return the three cats to the neighborhood. She gave me the paperwork to register as a colony caretaker. She also returned all three cats after they had been spayed and vaccinated. Since there was another female cat that had yet to be caught along with her three kittens, Liz was able to lend me four traps to catch these remaining cats, and provided additional trapping information to make the process easier. The adult female was trapped and spayed at Tree House and I was able to release her, and the kittens were admitted to be placed for adoption.

I have found the cat lead referral program to be an invaluable resource. Due to the hours and resource limitations, I was not always able to contact CACC for help. Having a local coordinator who is knowledgeable in the needs of these cats has proven very useful, because I did not have any prior knowledge on cat care. It is important to me to keep these cats healthy and the neighborhood clean, so having assistance with the TNR process was key.

Thank you for your time,
Stephanie Samuel