



Chatham County Board of Commissioners

124 Bull Street, Savannah, GA 31401

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

December 31, 2019

Chatham County Animals Services Investigative Findings on Reported Animal Neglect

Chatham County, GA (December 31, 2019) – On Saturday, December 28, 2019, Chatham County Police were called to a residence on the west side of the County for an animal welfare check. The officer found that both animals on the property had proper water, food, and shelter, however, one of the dogs was tethered. A Chatham County Animal Services officer responded to the residence to assist since tethering is a violation of the Animal Services ordinance.

The Animal Services officer noted that the dog on the tether was very thin. She also noted that the dog was otherwise bright, alert and responsive and in no immediate distress. Per protocol, she left a notice at the residence and scheduled a follow-up meeting.

Later that evening a second call for service was received for the same residence. It was reported that the thin dog had gotten loose and was at large. When the Animal Services officer arrived on scene, they were told that the person who found the dog had taken in to Savannah Animal Care, a veterinary clinic.

Upon review of the notes made upon intake at Savannah Animal Care, veterinarian staff at the clinic determined no emergency treatment was needed for the dog. The Animal Services officer responded to Savannah Animal Care and advised staff that the owner had been contacted and would retrieve the dog. Savannah Animal Care released the dog back to its owner.

On Monday Dr. Jake Harper, director of Chatham County Animal Services and a veterinarian, spoke with the dog's owner. The owner, who is an employee of the Chatham County Sheriff's office, stated that the dog had been seen by a veterinarian in September and was and is being treated for multiple health issues. Veterinary records were provided to support this. The

owner was advised that the dog should not be on a tether while repairs and adjustments were made to keep her from getting out.

“After reviewing the facts and speaking with their veterinarian, it has been determined that this is not a case of neglect. The dog has been and continues to undergo treatment for a medical condition which has caused her to be unable to maintain weight. The owners took her to their veterinarian this morning for continued treatment,” says Dr. Harper.

Several social media post surrounding this case have stated that there are horses on this property that have been neglected. There are no horses connected to this incident. However, Dr. Harper states, “I would like to make sure our residents know that found animals that are sick or injured should be reported to Animal Services to help ensure the proper handling of these cases. If anyone suspects that an animal is being neglected or abused, please contact Animal Services or your local police department so it can be investigated.”

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