



**ANIMAL MATTERS HEARING BOARD  
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** Board of County Commissioners  
**VIA:** Mark Willis, County Administrator  
**FROM:** Laurel M. Matthews, Member, Animal Matters Hearing Board  
**DATE:** February 15, 2024  
**SUBJECT:** Annual Report for Animal Matters Hearing Board

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**Background:**

The Board of County Commissioners as authorized by Maryland Annotated Code, Local Government Article, §13-115(d) created the Animal Matters Hearing Board by Ordinance No. 02-17.

**Annual Report Fiscal Year**

Budget: None

Actual: None

**Purpose**

The Board of County Commissioners hereby establishes the Animal Matters Hearing Board (AMHB) and vests authority within that Board to: (1) hear and decide administrative appeals pertaining to the enforcement of the provisions of this Chapter; and (2) the only advisory board to make recommendations for the amendment of this Chapter 7.

**Past Accomplishments**

- Nine (9) meetings held during September 2022 -December 2023;
- All meetings were held in person;
- Heard nineteen (19) Appeals – six (6) appeals for Potentially Dangerous denied; two (2) appeals for Dangerous denied; seven (7) appeals downgraded from Dangerous to Potentially Dangerous; seven (7) appeals for Potentially Dangerous removed; and one (1) appeal for Potentially Dangerous extended one (1) year;
- Filled 2 vacancies on the board (with members Dawn Shonkwiler and Erin Farley), and 2 board members (Thomas Phelps and Laurel Matthews) were re-appointed by BOCC;
- One vacancy remains; there is a pending recommendation to the BOCC to appoint Jacqueline Vaughan as the seventh board member;
- Continued to review and revise the regulations;
- Prepared a spreadsheet to track appeal and potentially dangerous removal case outcomes and meetings for ease in preparation of the annual report.

**Current Projects**

- Continue to review and make recommended appropriate revisions to additional sections of the Animal Control Ordinance; and
- Continue to hear cases brought in front of the Animal Matters Hearing Board for potentially dangerous and dangerous animal appeals.

## **Future Goals**

- Continue to coordinate efforts of the revisions to the Calvert County Animal Control Ordinance and recommend appropriate revisions to the BOCC; and
- Obtain BOCC approval of recommended amendments to the Calvert County Animal Control Ordinance in its entirety.
- Review and revise Approved List of Trainers as well as revising language on the list.

Thank you for your continued support.