

Richmond Animal Care & Control

Public Safety Committee

Presented by Christie Chipps Peters, Director
October 22, 2024

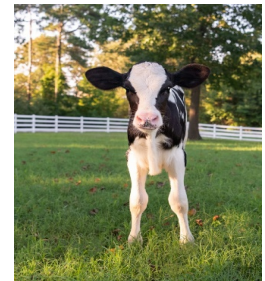
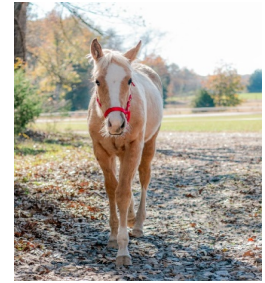


DEPARTMENT OF
**ANIMAL CARE
AND CONTROL**



Richmond Animal Care & Control at a glance

- Richmond Animal Care & Control (RACC) **provides care to an average of 3,000 animals each year**
- RACC provides an important public safety role in the City in addition to rehabilitation and life saving interventions for abused, neglected and sick animals in need.
- In 2023, 8 Animal Control officers responded to over **12,000 calls for service**
 - Bite calls through 2024: **545**
- **Goal: 90% save rate**
 - Prior to 2013: annual number of animals euthanized was 1,500
 - Current average is 300 per year
 - 850,000 animals were euthanized in shelters in 2023, a rise of 15 percent when compared to 2022. Shelters are striving to minimize euthanasia rates by promoting adoption, spay/neuter programs, and behavior rehabilitation.

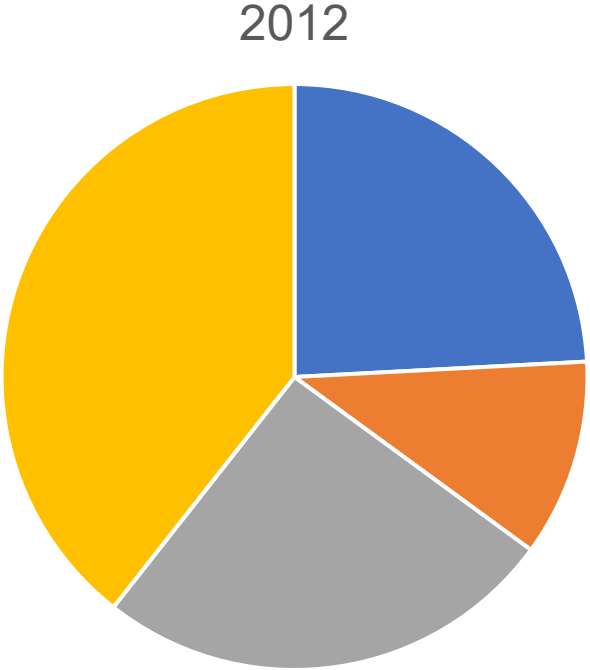


History

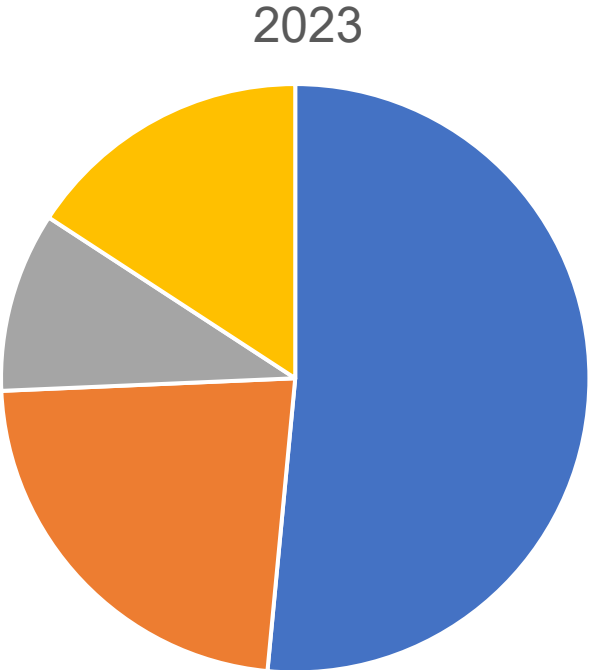
- Richmond Animal Care & Control (RACC) was established as the first city pound on **June 5, 1902**
- Since then, it has served as the **only** open-admission public animal shelter in the City of Richmond. We take in every animal in need regardless of health or temperament
- Animal Control fell under many departments over the years and in 2013 became a stand alone City department 😊



Animal Disposition History



■ Adoptions ■ Return to Owner
■ Transfer to Rescue ■ Euthanized



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Shelter

- **2005:** Current shelter (1600 Chamberlayne Ave) gifted to the City after serviceable life was expired by the Richmond SPCA
- **2012/13:** Shelter renovations brought dog kennels into compliance but did not increase number
- The Shelter has capacity to house 90 large dogs, 166 small dogs/cats
 - Operate with a daily in-care number of over 200
- **Shelter is staffed 24/7 365.**
 - Administration 8-5pm 7 days a week
 - Officers on duty 7-7pm 7pm-7am-on call
 - Open to the public for adoptions:
 - Wed--Fri 12-6pm
 - Sat 12-5pm
 - Sun 12-4pm
 - appointment based adoption Mon & Tues

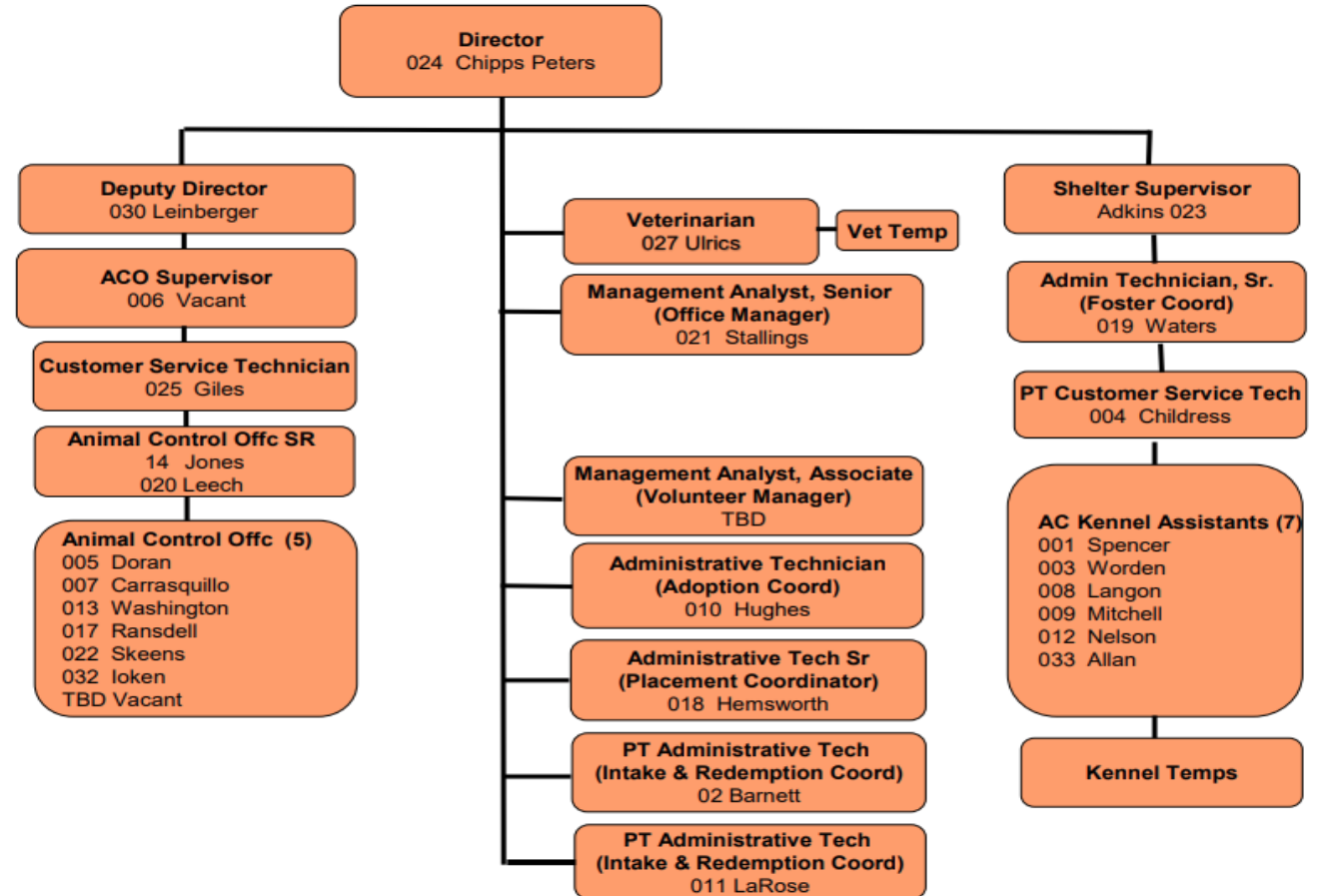


Staff

33 Full Time Employees
4 Temporary Employees



DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL Organization Chart



Officer Responsibilities

- Patrol/respond to on average 30 calls for service per day
 - Ranges from stray animals to severe abuse/neglect to dogfighting (and everything in between)
- Enforcement/prosecution includes all levels of code/law violation, conduct search warrants and evidence gathering for investigations
- Respond to all injured/sick wildlife calls
- Respond and facilitate each bite/exposure, report (quarantine and release)
- Coordinate pick up dead animals on the roadways
- Immediate response with Sherriff for evictions and RPD for homicides/suicides/arrests where animals are in residence with out care or next of kin (2-5 times a week)



Shelter Staff Responsibilities

- Provide sanitary and compassionate care to more than 200 animals in house per day
- All animals cages/kennels are cleaned twice per day and dogs are walked three times per day
- Part time shelter vet provides oversight and direct animal care interventions
- Staff the front desk and respond to all citizen calls
- Conduct adoptions/redemption/foster/rescue coordination
- Coordinate in house volunteers



RACC Community Outreach

- Officer outreach/food /dog house/ straw/dog pen delivery and set up (RACC Foundation pays for this)
- Community food/supply pantry 8-5pm 7 days for any resident in need
- FREE vaccine clinics through Jones Vet Care
- FREE spay/neuter through Kara & Eden Project
- Reduced fee reclaims/adoption case by case for anyone in financial need



RACC Foundation

- Established in 2005 as the “Friends of RACC”
- 2013-YTD the Foundation has raised and spent \$3,409,983k subsidizing our City budget to cover emergency medical veterinary care.
- In 2022 the Foundation gifted the City with a Spay/Neuter Mobile unit ☺
- This funding is crucial to elevated life saving measures for the animals in our care.



RACC Tommie Fund

- 2019: A sad criminal case brought in hundreds of thousands of dollars in donations
- 2020: The RACC Foundation established the Tommie Fund to help offset the costs of emergency medical care services at municipal shelters and public animal control agencies in Virginia who have stray, unclaimed and/or abandoned animals in need of emergency medical care services.
- 2021: Created the Team Tommie license plate through DMV to generate revenue from plate sales to support the Tommie Fund
- 2024: Revenue from license program was \$122,070



RACC “In the News”

National Media Coverage:

- ABC World News Tonight with David Muir
 - The Kelly Clarkson Show
 - Good Morning America
 - The Today Show (Digital)
 - Washington Post
 - Drew Barrymore Show
 - Fox News
 - New York Post
 - NPR
 - Southern Living
 - LadBible (Manchester, England)
 - Amore A Zampe (Italian digital new source)
 - Newsweek
- Local press is consistent and our social media followers (FB & IG=175,000+)
 - RACC hosts two closed FB Groups; RACC Medical Pics (11.1k) and RACC Team Tommie (6.9k)



RACC Challenges

- Increased call volume
- Record breaking intake numbers (160 more than last YTD)
- No isolation space/bursting at the seams in current shelter
- Shelter stress resulting in behavior euthanasia
- Increased number of sick/abandoned/abused cases (30 parvo cases & Flu)
- Cannot respond quickly to low level priority calls (off leash dogs, stray etc)
- We are drowning 😊



RACC New Adoption Space

- Papers (ORD. 2024-251/252) on consent agenda 11/12 to acquire new shelter space at 3210 W Cary. RACC adoptable animals will move out alleviating space burden at 1600 Chamberlayne Ave.
- Space Constraints-State code requires RACC to hold each stray animal for 6 days (with ID) and 10 days (no ID). Bite quarantine pets are held for 10 days. Court cases a can be held for months. The City population has grown 12% in 10 years, our shelter space has remained the same. We are BURSTING at the seams.
- RACC currently does not have large dog isolation space. Sick dogs are moved temporarily into the least filled space to mitigate spread of disease, which violates state code.
- With new space, our current shelter will have room to isolate, provide a less stressful environment and help more pet owners in crisis. We hope to provide emergency boarding options for those facing homelessness, eviction and incarceration. Additionally, (in 3/5 years) we want to convert our current conference room to a free/low-cost clinic for all at risk pet owners in RVA.
- RACC will need a new shelter space in the future to remain compliant. Pricing for a new or renovated shelter will be \$10-25M. This acquisition at \$2M is the most cost-effective solution to acquire space and extend operations. RACC Foundation will cover the costs of all upfit expenses.

