

Committee: **Animal Welfare Advisory Committee**

Organization/Sector represented: **No organization/ Member at Large position**

Name: **Vicki Van Linden**

Address:

**431 Ridgewood Crescent
London, ON, N6J 3H2**

Occupation: **Retired**

Work experience: **Have worked a variety of service industry jobs from courier driver to customer service representative in a variety of businesses.**

Education: **Honours BA in Communications Studies.**

Skills: **-Have worked in hands-on cat rescue for about 20 years. -Co-founded a grassroots London group called FOCA-Friends of Captive Animals that advocates for captive wild animals. -Previous member of the AWAC for 7 years, and according to city policy am eligible to serve for one additional year. -Chaired the AWAC during 2014, during which time we made considerable effort to engage local rescue groups in policy discussions, and promoted harmonious relationships between the animal rescue/advocacy community, civic administration and council. -Currently a non-voting member of the Companion Animal Sub-committee of the AWAC. -Am a member of the board of directors of Animal Alliance of Canada, an animal protection group, and do online research and writing for that group.**

Interest reason: **At present, the current AWAC is composed of mostly new or very recent members. There is a considerable learning curve involved in understanding how to promote the goals of the group. I believe it would be helpful for new committee members to have the benefit of an experienced member to help with transition. There are many processes that took previous committee members like myself years to learn, and the participation of an experienced member could help to shorten that learning curve for the newer members and increase effectiveness. Therefore, I would like to be a voting member at the committee table to provide support to the current Chair and members.**

Contributions: **My previous experience in how to prepare material to present to the Standing committee will be helpful. I have a good understanding of current ideas on best practices concerning animal welfare, and a good general understanding of the way that municipal governance works. I am well versed in the differing responsibilities of elected representatives, civic administration and advisory committees, and how these entities can best interact. I know that these will be helpful to the committee as they research and develop policy recommendations.**

Past contributions: **As previously mentioned, I was a previous member of this committee for 7 years, and was a successful and hard-working Chair for the last year, 2014. Under my direction, the AWAC was able to complete work on concerns that had been outstanding for several years, concerning both companion and wild animals. As a member of the Board of Directors of an animal protection group called Animal Alliance of Canada, I asked our group to bring to London an expert on non-lethal management of beaver activity in urban waterways. We introduced this expert contractor to members of civic administration and the UTRCA. In this way, I encouraged our group to use our own resources to promote 'best practices' methods of managing conflicts with urban wildlife, and we did so in a co-operative and friendly way.**

Interpersonal: **I am confident that the way that I lead discussion at the AWAC meetings during my year as Chair demonstrated a respect for others, even in the face of disagreement. At a time when civic administration suggested a method of regulating animal rescue groups in a way, that though well intentioned, I knew would be unwelcome by the rescue community, I promoted and then arranged a large meeting between members of civic administration and the directors of several of the area rescue groups. That was an extremely helpful exchange and resulted in civic administration adapting their initial recommendation to one that was considered suitable by the rescue group directors. I believe that by my effort to bring the different parties to the table to express ideas together that a potential crisis was averted. The result of these interactions was that civic administration developed a criteria for what standards a group would have to meet to be considered an 'approved' rescue group which has been accepted within the community.**

Interview interest: **Yes**