

Veterinarian: Claire Porter, DVM (MD License #7445)

Facility: Warrior Canine Connection
14934 Schaeffer Rd
Boys, MD 20841

Point of Contact: Molly Morelli
Director of Dog Program
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On 04/26/17, I visited the facility for Warrior Canine Connection located in Boys, MD with the purpose of evaluating the health of their fourteen on-site dogs and the facilities in which they are housed. The Director of Dog Program, Molly Morelli led me through the facility and explained their health protocols. Full medical records for each dog were provided prior to my visit.

Facility

The building the dogs are housed in is close to the main house/offices on the property. The dog program director lives in the main house full-time. The dog area is warehouse-like with solid walls and roof and non-porous concrete flooring. There are secure doors allowing access to the building. Garage-style doors on one side were partially open to allow fresh air to circulate. There is a large central area where handlers and dogs can interact. There is a scale and raised bathing tub to the right of the entrance. Grooming supplies are neatly organized next to the tub. At one end of the room is a large white board with the dogs' names and locations. There is also small storage room with a filing cabinet. There is a long counter with overhead cabinets for storage. Overall, the facility was in good condition, clean, organized and odor-free.

Fourteen dogs were in the building at time of visit. They were housed in pens made of coated metal fencing material at least 8' in height, well-secured doors and no sharp areas where the dogs might injure themselves. Each pen was labeled with the dogs' names and collar identification. They were housed in compatible groups of approximately three dogs each. The two youngest puppies were housed together in a large crate. Each dog had plenty of space to move around within their pen. The dogs were calm and bright when I came in.

There is a trailer on the property, separate from the main building, where pregnant dams and newborn puppies are housed. There is a well-secured main entrance, a main room and two separate bedrooms. The first bedroom contains a nesting box appropriately furnished with blankets. There is also a cot where a volunteer sleeps to monitor the puppies and dam. The second bedroom is for storage. The trailer is clean, well-lit and odor-free.

There is also a large, grassy, fenced-in outdoor area with various toys and enrichment where dogs can exercise and play freely. The fence was well-kept and the toys were in good condition.

Supplies

One of the overhead cabinets houses commonly used medications including anti-inflammatory/pain medication, steroids, anti-histamines, antacids and ear cleaner. This cabinet is securely locked. Controlled substances such as tramadol are only used via prescription when recommended by the dogs' regular veterinarian and are not routinely kept on-site. Vaccinations are stored appropriately in a refrigerator. Medical supplies are ordered from a reputable company through a veterinarian. There are filing cabinets for records.

Veterinary Care

The dogs' primary care veterinarian is Dr. Joellen Gregory of Olney-Sandy Spring Veterinary Hospital. The records provided by Ms. Morelli show that they have a close working relationship with Dr. Gregory and contact her in a timely fashion with any health concerns. Appropriate testing and treatment has been pursued with all issues; there are no current concerns at this time. The dogs are up to date on vaccines (Dr. Gregory administers rabies vaccinations and Ms. Morelli administers all other appropriate vaccines). The dogs are given regular flea/tick and heartworm preventative. A board-certified ophthalmologist and board-certified cardiologist evaluate the dogs regularly and the dogs have had joint evaluations performed for elbows and hips. Ms. Morelli has an online database to track which dogs are coming due for veterinary services so that they are performed in a timely fashion. Individual examinations are attached.

Assessment

My overall impression while working with Warrior Canine Connection is that their dogs are all well cared for. The organization goes above and beyond to address any potential health concerns (even seeking a veterinary dental specialist for one particular dog with oral abnormalities). They also are very selective with their breeding dogs to minimize the chance of any genetic issues being passed along. It is clear that they work very closely with Dr. Gregory to keep the dogs healthy.

I did not find any major health issues with any of the dogs at the time of examination; the few minor issues were relayed to Ms. Morelli who has a plan for addressing them. I do not feel that these minor problems will affect the dogs' ability to be capable service dogs and/or companions in the future and I do not have any further recommendations for their veterinary care.