David A Ackerman, DVM
Valley River Humane Society
7450 US Highway 19
Marble NC 28906
April 3, 2014

Lee Hunter, DVM, MPH
Director, Animal Welfare Section
North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
1030 Mail Service Center
Raleigh NC 27699-1030

Dear Dr. Lee Hunter:

This letter is in response to your request for a timeline in which the Valley River Humane Society (VRHS) will correct the out of compliance violations (NC statutes in 02 NCAC 52J).

I would like to first note that VRHS staff and board have fully cooperated with Mr. Blatche each time he has visited beginning with the January 24th 2014 visit. The first inspection by Mr. Blatche found VRHS out of compliance in excess of ten regulations. However, in a relatively short amount of time, in collaboration with the board and the staff, we have successfully addressed the majority of the violations.

Upon receiving your letter it was noted VRHS was out of compliance with only four areas involving two statutes. Currently we have only three compliance issues remaining. We now have the hot water system for sanitation on the main kennel floor of VRHS. We are correcting the remaining issues as quickly as economics will allow us. Being a non-profit organization we do not receive funds for any capital needs or upgrades from any local municipalities. We must raise funds from donations and the goodwill of our community. We simply need more time to raise funds to complete the remaining projects.

I have included a timeline for the remaining projects below.

A) The project to replace the moldy ceiling insulation in the main kennel room and a covering that is washable to be added will begin the first week of May 2014. The contractor has ordered the materials and once the project begins will take about a week. It is set about three weeks out because we are still working out the logistics of using a CAMET trailer from Catawba, Mitchell, or Buncombe County. The additional time is also being used to raise the necessary funds for the project. We have 80% of the funding now. However the contractor said that he will work with us as we continue to pursue funding.

B) The puppy room and the cat intake area upgrades will be completed no later than the end of May 2014. It could possibly be sooner if the funds become available.

We felt we needed to focus all our resources on the ceiling, as this and the hot water issues were the highest priorities to our inspector and of course for the well-being of the animals.

C) The runs of the main kennel floor will be painted and resealed by the shelter manager and her staff beginning the week of 4/7/2014 and will take approximately one month to complete.

Once again I would like to thank you for working with the Valley River Humane Society on making these corrections and upgrades to our facility. Our mission is to care for and adopt out the stray animals of our community and we want to do it in the best way possible for the welfare of the animals. I hope this timeline is acceptable. We are open to any suggestions to expedite the process if you have any. Please let me know as soon as possible if you have any questions or suggestions. My phone # is 828-361-6569 and my email is ursine@dnet.net. Otherwise we will continue to proceed with the upgrades to VRHS.

Sincerely,

Dave A. Ackerman, DVM
President of Valley River Humane Society