

# ANIMAL CONTROL ADVISORY COUNCIL

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date and Time:	Wednesday, November 20, 2024 *4:30PM
Location:	Saginaw County Animal Care & Control Resource Center 5615 Bay Road, Saginaw, MI 48604
Council Members Present:	Tom McIntyre, Jonna Scharf, Dr. Mielke, Tracey Slodowski, Cynthia Winiecke (Left at 5:05PM), Laureen Lutenski, Alycia Norton,
Council Members Absent:	Randy Howard, Kelli Scorsone, Emilie Lyday
Others in Attendance:	Christopher Boyd, Mary Catherine Hannah, Rachel Horton, Jaime Ceja, Diane Niederstadt, Mark Piotrowski, Pam Goddeyne, Dolores Kellef, Sharon Maher, Carol Picklemann

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Slodowski called the meeting to order at 4:31PM
- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Member McIntyre made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 16, 2024. Member Winiecke supported. Motion passed (7-0).
- III. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
  1. **Fee Schedule** – There has been a change in the euthanasia fee schedule from \$62.00 to \$150.00 and there has been a bit of backlash from the community. The cost had not been examined in years and due to rising costs, it needed to be raised. Going forward it will be examined at every budget cycle. There was a spike in those wanting to euthanize animals with no medical or quality of life issue as well and hopefully this will help end that issue.
  2. **Cat Feeding** – There has been a change in the feeding schedule for cats and dogs. We changed schedules because we realized that we were over feeding. Ideally you want an empty bowl each day. Now using the Purina Food Chart, this was talked about at training classes and discussed with Dr. Mielke before implementation. If an animal is not losing weight we will continue with this schedule of feeding.
  3. **Best Friends** – Reporting is due to them monthly, and October saw big changes. Not as many owner surrenders and euthanasia's. The save rate was at 81%, previously it was 63%/64%. Offering microchips, food, housing, helped achieve that number. Received a scholarship to the Best Friends conference in February.
  4. **Events** – December 1<sup>st</sup> we will have an event partnering with Chewy, "Home for the Holidays". If we have more adoptions than last year on this date, we will receive grant monies. Bissel event will be December 2-17 with reduced fee adoptions. Bissel also wants to eventually start the "Fix the Future" program which brings their team of vets to the surgical center to perform spays and neuters.
  5. **Surgical Center** – Fireproof door was backordered as soon as that's in we can install the actual generator. Currently working on Standard Operating Procedure's and job descriptions. Chair Slodowski asked how many people will staff the center. Director Horton stated there will be 1 full time vet, 2 technicians and a receptionist and the 4 current kennel techs. Chair Slodowski asked about a grand opening, and

Director Horton stated yes, but we need to get everything build first and then we can plan. Member Scharf asked if we would do feral cats. Director Horton stated that is the plan as is having blocks of time for our rescue partners.

6. **Spay/Neuter** – MSU did 40 free spay/neuter surgeries this month. We also support their cadaver program. We have about 40-45 surgeries to perform and all animals in the shelter will be spayed/neutered. Mercy also did 10 animals at a discounted rate and invited Dr. Mileke to do an on-site visit.
7. **Shelterluv** – IT has sent data to Shelterluv, and the conversion is already taking place. We currently have a test environment for staff and volunteers to test different scenarios. We will be closed the morning of December 4<sup>th</sup> for training. We will be open until 7PM that evening to make up for being closed in the AM.
8. **Grants** – Received a \$10,000 grant from Two Seven Oh and currently working on Rachel Ray grant. Best Friends nominated SCACC for the Rachel Ray grant and it is quite a lengthy process, we have made the first cut.
9. **Other:**
  - a. Member Lutenski asked about the euthanasia fees and what the cost increase was and why. Director Horton stated that we pay \$1000.00 p/ month for disposable no matter how many animals we have. We have also been struggling with owner surrenders for euthanasia because family vets wouldn't euthanize because there was no medical or quality of life issue. Member Lutenski asked if Bissel reimburses for the reduced adoption fees. Director Horton stated they do a certain percent, not the whole amount.
  - b. Member Scharf asked if we vaccinate. Director Horton stated we do, as well as heartworm and parvo test.
  - c. Member Norton stated that she is surprised to hear about volunteer issues with cat feeding. It was discussed and explained in the last volunteer training. She also stated that she was curious if there are more pulls from other shelters/rescues because of Christmas. Director Horton stated no, unfortunately a lot of rescues are still inundated with animals from down south after the hurricanes.

#### IV. **REPORT OF SUB-COMMITTEES**

1. **Fundraising** – Member Norton stated that the bylaws and articles of incorporation are drafted and now working on a vision, plan and purpose. Goal is to launch with the surgical center.
2. **Training Room** – Mary Catherine stated that the board voted and passed a new facilities policy. Rachel will approve applications following the guidelines in the policy. Changes can happen at any time, so if something isn't working or we need to add/delete anything we can do that. Jaime will send policy to all council members.

#### V. **OPEN ISSUES**

1. **Allegations and Investigation** – Mary Catherine wanted to offer an update on the issues that were brought forward in September. When the County does an internal investigation, the results are usually not made public. They fall under attorney client privilege and are not subject to FOIA. Recommendations by Greg Maier included recommendations based on reports, policies and laws. One recommendation was to review the euthanasia policy. Director Horton has already been looking at it and working on revisions. Internally we need to be aware of the current statute and follow all laws. No kill shelter does not mean no euthanasia, this is a vast misconception, and we need to educate on what it means.

2. **No-Kill Shelter** – Member Lutenski asked what is the percentage of animals that can be euthanized in a year to be considered no-kill? Rachel the nationally accepted rate is a 90% save rate. Because we are a municipal shelter that is very difficult to attain because unlike a private shelter/rescue we must take every animal surrendered, injured and strays.
3. **Policy** – Member Norton stated that policy review is good. Mary Catherine stated that the statute does not state that a vet must be consulted before euthanasia. We can include it as a best practice, but it is not necessary. Member Lutenski asked if there will be a euthanasia committee and who has the final approval on a policy. Mary Catherine stated that we can look at this with Dr. Mielke and Rachel is looking at doing a flowchart as a clear way to communicate when a euthanasia is necessary. The BOC would approve the final policy, the council can review. Dr. Mielke stated that euthanasia is never easy, no matter how many times you do it. Every single one is hard.
4. **Shelter** – Chris Boyd stated that Rachel has done an excellent job expanding grant funding and the focus is on spay/neuter and adoption where it should be. As long as we are doing the best job, for the right reasons, we want to work for what is in the best interest of Saginaw County. When we did our investigation, we found that drugs and logs were all kept as they should have been.

**VI. NEW ISSUES- N/A**

1. **Open positions on the Council** – Currently there are 2 open positions, we have an application currently for 1. If you would like to apply, please fill out the application. Sharon Maher asked which positions are open. Chair Slodowski stated member positions.
2. **Member Removal** - Chair Slodowski asked Christopher Boyd if the council must vote to remove members. Mr. Boyd stated no, a letter needs to be sent to him.
3. Meeting Schedule for 2025 – Jaime will email members.

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**VIII. NEXT MEETING**

1. Next meeting will be held Wednesday, December 18, 2024.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

1. Member McIntyre made a motion to adjourn. Member Norton supported. The meeting ended at 5:13PM.