

ANIMAL CONTROL ADVISORY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date and Time:	Wednesday, August 21, 2024 *4:30PM
Location:	Saginaw County Animal Care & Control Resource Center 5615 Bay Road, Saginaw, MI 48604
Council Members Present:	Laureen Lutenski, Tom McIntyre, Kelli Scorsone, Alycia Norton, Jonna Scharf, Dr. Mielke, Tracey Slodowski
Council Members Absent:	Cynthia Winiecke, Emilie Lyday, Randy Howard
Others in Attendance:	Mary Catherine Hannah, Rachel Horton, Diane Niederstadt, Pam Goodeyne, Linda Harper, Alissa Specht, Joseph Kline, DVM

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**

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

Member Scorsone made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from June 26, 2024. Member Mielke supported. Motion passed (7-0).
- III. **ELECTION OF SECRETARY**

Member Mielke made a motion to nominate Member Alycia Norton to the position of Secretary. Member Scorsone supported. Motion passed (7-0).
- IV. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
 1. **Shelter Stats** – Stray take in is trending at almost double what it was last year. Strays in the shelter is trending downward. This could be due to the location of the shelter and customer service. Relinquished animals is trending up YOY, this is showing us that citizens are feeling comfortable with the ACO's. Transferred in animals and animals for owner intended euthanasia are on par YOY. Adoptions are increasing. Returned to owner outcomes are on par but looking to increase. Foster program was just started this year and we just started tracking data. We are working hard to reduce the days in shelter to help reduce the shelter euthanasia rates.
 2. **Community Resource Officer Program** – We are adding items to the trucks for increasing community involvement and providing resources closer to home, like food and microchips. These items are paid for with a grant.
 3. **Surgical Center** – The oxygen generator room build out funding was approved. X-ray dosimetry badges were received, and the staff will need training. Remaining equipment has been ordered. Dr. Mielke has been contracted.
 4. **Budget** – FY2025 was presented to the Board of Commissioners by the County Administrator and will be voted on at the September 17th Board Session meeting.
 5. **Shelter Changes** – The current software is being updated to Shelter Love and it will allow volunteers to access more information on the animals and they will be able to assist with adoptions. **Petco Love Lost** - is a facial recognition software that will allow us to help with lost animals being identified more quickly.
 6. **Adoptions** – Chair Slodowski asked if adopting animals was the number one priority and are animals being kept that are hard to adopt out/aggressive? Director Horton responded that adoptions are high on the list, but it is important to have space available. Previously the number of days in the shelter were not tracked, now that

they are the focus is to adopt out animals before they reach the 100 day mark, which is when it has been shown they start to decline.

7. **Reporting** – Member Lutenski stated she liked seeing the numbers chart, but shouldn't it state live intakes/live outtakes? Director Horton stated there is a variable because animals go to foster which is technically leaving. It will balance with all other outcomes.
8. **Shiawassee Animal Control** – Member Lutenski asked about intake of animals from Shiawassee County. Director Horton stated that previously Shiawassee used the Humane Society for housing but has ended the contract. They have also contracted with other Counties. Since June there have been 5 animals and we do have the right to turn them away. Mary Catherine stated that the Board of Commissioners authorizes the Administrator to approve contracts and send through for signatures without going in front of the board. Acknowledging the impact it has had she would have been more proactive around the communication regarding the contract. Director Horton added that responsibilities of Animal Control have shifted from a year ago when resources were directed largely to animal cruelty cases, and it has been a difficult balance to manage. Chair Slodowski stated that Saginaw is not a rich community, like Midland and does not have the resources to house the needs. Member Lutenski stated that she has never seen a report that says we are under capacity so how can we take other animals. Director Horton responded that since June we have taken in 5 animals, but it's not a stretch for capacity, we also look at live outcomes. Chair Slodowski stated that there is a direct correlation between revenue and resources. Director Horton stated, yes, we need to be able to show that we can bring in revenue to justify the cost of resources, staffing etc.
9. **Pathway Planning** – Member Lutenski asked if we are euthanizing animals over 100 days. Director Horton stated that we are not, we are utilizing pathway planning that will address and assess the quality of life throughout their stay at the shelter.
10. **Veterinarian Services** – Member Lutenski asked if Dr. Kline was still contracted with the addition of Dr. Mielke. Dr. Kline stated that he has been the veterinarian of record for last 5 years of SCACC, volunteered with it since it was in Carrollton. He has trained dozens of shelter workers and done surgeries that have never been done at animal care and control (listed the multiple types of surgeries that he has performed that were firsts at the shelter including detailed description of surgeries). He has done late-night surgeries. Euthanasia is too easy of an option, and he feels that his goodwill has gone down the drain. He bought an oxygen generator from an estate sale of someone with COPD for the surgical room. Court case dogs are now in the surgical area. Can't work in that type of chaos. Parvo dogs have been euthanized, but there is a monoclonal antibody that will solve. The company (a subsidiary of Eli Lilly) will donate the drug. He was supposed to have rounds today from 8-10am at the shelter, but he was not communicated with, and those 2 hours were wasted. Member Norton stated that at the last meeting operational items were to be discussed with Director Horton, not at the meeting level as the Council does not interfere with the shelter operationally. Chair Slodowski stated that Dr. Kline asked her to speak, and she will allow it. Dr. Kline stated that MSU and the veterinary school of medicine had a 'deal'. Some sort of history with Robert Bellman and that Dr. Cline who was previously on the council, a former executive that did not have the credentials stated on their resume. Dr. Kline reached out to the Dean of the school and found out there was no agreement, which is what the previous director had alleged to. Chair Slodowski thanked Dr. Kline for what he has done for the animals, the passion and empathy that

he has had for the animals in addition to the passion for training the next generation of shelter technicians.

V. REPORT OF SUB-COMMITTEES

1. **Fundraising** – Member Norton – Elected officers have had changes in their availability and the group is assessing needs and membership. Looking for those familiar with non-profit management and board membership. Ideally there could be a 401 functioning to facilitate with the surgical center ribbon cutting and obtaining donations. In the meantime, there is support by researching grants and making community connections.
2. **Training Room** – There is a contract with civil counsel now for review. Director Horton stated that to date the Medical Examiner has used the room for training, a county employee had a wedding shower (before the agreement was in place), Michigan Humane and MDARD has also contacted SCACC to use the space. Chair Slodowski stated that during the election season they could use the space to train poll workers. Member Lutenski stated that she has a concern with employees using it for private events. Mary Catherine stated that the County does not have a facility use contract in place to refer to so this agreement will be the first. Private entities rent space at the Dow all the time, the room can be used for private purposes as long as it's in line with the contract.

VI. OPEN ISSUES - N/A

VII. NEW ISSUES

1. **Council Seat** – Please submit application to Chair Slodowski and Jaime for processing.
2. **Commissioner Meeting** – Member Norton stated that she spoke at the public comment section of a meeting and encouraged commissioners to hold vendors accountable for incomplete work. Mary Catherine stated that the building is out of the warranty period, and they will not be following up with the original vendors more than what they already have.
3. Chair Slodowski commended Rachel on her work obtaining grants and communicating with Commissioners.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Alissa Specht - Numbers in the Director's report are not correct – took 5 dogs in from Shiawassee, the report says they transferred in 4. Dogs from Saginaw were being turned away, she has a stray in her rescue that was turned away from SCACC because they don't have space but, they took a pregnant dog from Shiawassee that was on stray hold still. Dog on Dixie in front of Candlelite had been there for a week, she went out to rescue the dog after a week when SCACC had not picked up the dog. They are turning away dogs. The ACO's are great, and they will say that animals are being turned away too. The taxpayer money is for Saginaw County animals, not Shiawassee animals.

IX. NEXT MEETING

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

X. ADJOURNMENT

1. Member McIntyre made a motion to adjourn, motion was supported by Member Scorsone. Meeting adjourned at 5:55PM.