

ANIMAL CONTROL ADVISORY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date and Time:	Wednesday, May 21, 2025 *4:30PM
Location:	Saginaw County Animal Care & Control Resource Center 5615 Bay Road, Saginaw, MI 48604
Council Members Present:	Dr. Mielke, Tracey Slodowski, Cynthia Winiecke, Kelli Scorsone, Carol Pickelmann, Jonna Godley, Laureen Lutenski, Tom McIntyre, Demetrios Scott
Council Members Absent:	Emilie Lyday, Sharon Maher
Others in Attendance:	Rachel Horton, Jaime Ceja, Pam Goodeyne, Alycia Norton, Jen Speckhard, Sue Foerster, Felicia Horton, Roselyn Argyle

- 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 April 16, 2025. Member Lutenski supported. Motion passed (9-0).
- III. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT, RACHEL HORTON, DIRECTOR**
 - a. **Surgical Center** – Director Horton thanked the Council for their help at the grand opening. There was a great turnout to the day before when local vets and staff were invited to the shelter. There were questions about the differences in services the surgical center will offer and how it will differ from a traditional vet practice. There have been multiple vets who have reached out to offer services and sponsorship for a vaccine, spay/neuter clinic. Working on the contracts now with civil counsel. Member Lutenski asked how the search for a new vet and vet techs was going. Director Horton stated that there are applicants currently doing interviews. The vet position has been extended as there was only 1 applicant. The surgical center will do part-time positions if necessary and may not be able to be open 5 days a week, but maybe 2 days a week.
 - b. **Shelterluv** – Started using ShelterLuv on May 6 and it has been a quick transition. Benefits include volunteers as well as staff having access to notes, ACO's have quick access on their phones in the field. Adoption applications and payment can be processed from handheld devices when in the field. There is also a donation management software so when someone adopts they can choose to donate and be on the mailing list. The software allows the blocking of sensitive information when necessary. All of this is in real time, while Dr. Mielke is doing surgery her entered notes can immediately be read and seen by staff off-site.
 - c. **Staff/Volunteers** – We started playgroups a month ago and they are going very well. There were a lot of skeptical people when groups started but it was wonderful for the kennel aids to work with the dogs and make notes about behavior. Dogs have fewer behavioral issues; they are tired at the end of the day. We start with a base group and then determine the group speed, then add dogs who may do well in that group. If dogs don't do well, they get moved to another group. There used to be a lot of single dog family recommendations, but now that we can see what dogs behave like in a group setting that is becoming less and less. This is making for better adoptions. We are looking at starting a new panel of volunteers

who will oversee the new volunteer process. We feel that there needs to be a group, and it cannot be just one person's responsibility. We started using "Better Impact" for communication, messages, and tracking time.

- d. **Events** – There is currently a microchip event/contest going on now, a mini-vaccine clinic on June 10th. Training room rental is taking off with MMRMA using the room on May 29th. Member Maher asked Rachel if she could work with SCACC at an adoption event and offer some training demonstrations and consultations. Working with her to set it up now. July 23rd there is a Loons game that adoptable dogs will be attending, a portion of ticket sales will benefit SCACC. Chair Slodowski asked if anyone could attend the microchip event and pay for a microchip. Director Horton stated, yes. Member Godley asked about the PR firm that was hired and the reason. Director Horton stated that they were hired on a short-term basis to help with the event promotion and marketing. They are also contacting vets and shelters to establish communication and relationships. It is a three-month contract and comes out of the professional services budget line.

IV. AGENDA

- a. **Educational Outreach** – Vice Chair Scorsone stated that she believes we need to focus on education of school age kids and getting into the community to assisted living homes, shelters or any business that would like to host the shelter. Member Godley added the VA would be good to reach out to. Director Horton stated that taking animals into business and schools may require certifications and specific liability insurance and she would have to check with Kelly in risk management. Chair Slodowski asked about bringing the groups to the shelter where a Council member could do the entire program. Director Horton asked for an outline of what information the Council would want to present. It would have to be age specific. When she does a presentation, she could have coloring pages, reading a book, or talking about the laws around animal control, it really depends on the group. Chair Slodowski stated that there will be a separate meeting when the Council can talk it through and have a program ready for the fall when kids are back in school.
- b. **Additional Projects** – Chair Slodowski wants to keep the Council active and really try to fill gaps that Director Horton sees. Three areas of focus would be improving animal welfare, enhancing community engagement and increasing fundraising, Director Horton is doing these things already and we can help enhance those offerings. Member Lutenski stated that the mission of the Council is to be a liaison between the shelter and the community. Member McIntyre stated that he believes the training room is also a great source of revenue. Director Horton stated that external outreach is a great place for the Council to start, you need to identify what your passion is. Chair Slodowski stated that she would like to educate on TNR. Director Horton stated that All About Animals in Flint has a program to educate all about humane trapping, and once completed they allow you to bring unlimited cats at \$25.00 each. Dr. Mielke stated that anyone can call them and schedule a tour to see what a high-volume low-cost clinic looks like and how they operate.
- c. **Enrichment** – Member Godley asked if volunteers still do enrichment with the dogs. Director Horton stated, yes, sometimes they work on projects at home and drop them off or sometimes they come to the shelter. There was an enrichment calendar at one time and Becky Boensch updated it.
- d. **Dog Park** – Vice Chair Scorsone asked what the status of the Dog Park was, is there a plan to open it and if so, how would it work, key sign out or open all hours? Director Horton stated that the issue right now is that the soil has glass and metal in it, and she believes it needs to be cleaned and refilled with clean dirt. The

second issue would be who oversees the park, who stops people from dumping animals there overnight, making sure it's clean and free of disease? Vice Chair Scorsone asked if she could have someone come and look at it to see what a dirt refill might cost. Chair Slodowski asked if we could repurpose it as an agility course? Kelli also recommended Rachel speak to Brian Lechel with Parks as he manages the dog park at Imerman Park.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Felicia Horton and Roselyn Argyle – Saginaw Township and Freemont Township. There are currently a colony of cats at Lawndale estates, two moms and 11 cats. The concern is that we do not want them to be caged and want to find homes for them. It is expensive to feed them all. Member Godley asked if they had connected with Undercover Angels, Shannon Pine is an excellent resource. Felicia stated that she was told that they cannot be spayed/neutered until September/October and she fears they will be pregnant by then. Dr. Mielke stated that the goal to spay/neuter cats is 5 months/5 pounds, but she wants to be clear that TNR involves releasing the cats back to their home area after surgery, they are not usually put up for adoption.
- b. Jen Speckhard – Playgroups – If anyone wants to come and be a runner at playgroups, please do! It is a fun experience, and you don't do anything but bring dogs out and put them back in their kennels. Very skeptical of playgroups when they started but so supportive now. The Great Lakes Loons game is also fun, please come!

VI. NEXT MEETING

1. Next meeting will be held Wednesday, June 18, 2025.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

1. Member Winiecke made a motion to adjourn. Member McIntyre supported. The meeting adjourned at 5:40PM.