

**Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter  
Board of Directors Meeting  
MINUTES  
June 12, 2023 11:00am  
In-Person Meeting – Santa Cruz County BOS Chambers**

VOTING KEY: A=Ainsworth, B=Bush, Co=Coburn, Cn=Connelly, D=Dally, F=Figueroa, S=Schmidt, V=Vides, W=Walpole

First initial indicates maker of motion, second initial indicates the “second”; upper case letter=“yes” vote; lower case letter=“no” ()=abstain; /=absent

Abbreviations: Board Member (BM), General Manager (GM), Field Services Manager (FSM)

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1.0 Called to Order and Roll Call: Meeting was called to order at 11:05 am by ASA Substitute Chairperson Coburn. BM Bush was absent. BM Ainsworth Substituted for BM Clark. BM Connelly substituted for BM Chung.

1.1 BM Coburn requested a motion to authorize her to act as Substitute Chairperson due to the absence of Chairperson Clark and Vice Chairperson Bush.

Vote: S V A /B/ Co Cn D F W

Item approved unanimously.

2.0 Introductions: None.

3.0 Consideration of late additions or changes to the Agenda: None

4.0 Oral Communications:

Olivia Martinez, SEIU 521 Region Director: SCCAS Board of Directors needs to address poor working conditions, most importantly lack of staffing.

Megan Carroll: SCCAS Volunteer Coordinator, stated that the shelter is understaffed, experiencing high turnover, and staff pay is low.

Jill Ganley: SCCAS Animal Services Coordinator: stated that there is a lack of resources and staffing to handle basic shelter activities such as answering phone calls.

Jim Heaney: SEIU 521 Executive Board Secretary, Shop Steward: stated the JPA needs to increase staffing and align SCCAS pay with the seven-step system used for the majority of County employees. Jim also presented an SEIU 521 petition signed by several hundred people urging the JPA Board to provide the shelter with the funding to properly care for animals, hire more staff, and increase staff pay.

Elizabeth Mandranis: County employee: stated SCCAS needs a low-cost spay-neuter program, staff pay should be increased, in particular for Animal Control Officers, staff are making less than their counterparts in other departments, staff turnover is high, staff are too busy to take regular breaks and often don't have time to answer the phones or check e-mails.

Nikki Simpson, SCCAS volunteer: staff pay should be increased; volunteers are asked to complete tasks that staff should complete such as washing laundry, washing dishes, and cleaning kennels; more staff be added; lack of staffing results in staff and volunteer stress and inability for the shelter to provide all the services required by the community.

Kit Hein, SCCAS volunteer: staff and volunteer are stressed due to lack of staffing and funding; volunteers should not be thought of as replacements for staff; and staffing levels should be returned to pre-COVID levels.

Carol Nelson, SCCAS volunteer: helped clean cat kennels due to short staffing prior to Meow Luau; volunteers are frequently asked to jump in to complete tasks that should be done by staff resulting in less time for volunteers spent with animals; more staff are needed.

Jeff Laredo, 30-yr federal civil servant retiree: staff and volunteers are great but need the support of the Board and General Manager to provide necessary resources; staff and volunteers are highly stressed.

Kelly Souza, SCCAS and rescue volunteer: more resources are needed at the shelter, in particular to help with spay/neuter programs.

Lela Dunn, SCCAS volunteer and former SCCAS Benefits Shop manager: SCCAS used to be a world class shelter, but is not anymore due to overwhelmed volunteers, underpaid staff, and the lack of a full-time veterinarian.

Suzanne Samson, County Public Health Nurse: previously collaborated extensively with shelter staff who now can't assist her with spay/neuter and vaccination services for homeless clients as in the past due to lack staff turnover, lack of staff time and resources, and lack of a full-time veterinarian.

## 5.0 Consent Agenda

- 5.1 Approved minutes of the April 10, 2023 board meeting
- 5.2 Accepted reports from the General Manager and Management Team for April and May 2023.
- 5.3 Accepted and filed statistics for April and May 2023
- 5.4 Appointed officers of the Board of Directors for FY 2023-24
- 5.5 Accepted a \$5,000 gift from Altman Plants
- 5.6 Accepted gifts totaling \$11,635 from the SCCAS Foundation
- 5.7 Ratified approval to dispose of two vehicles
- 5.8 Approved the continuing agreements list for FY 2023-24

Board Comment: None

Public Comment: None

Vote: V D A /B/ Co Cn F S W

Item approved unanimously.

## 6.0 Regular Agenda

6.1 General Manager's Report – GM Rowland summarized comments:

- thanked everyone for attending and speaking in support of the shelter
- assessing organizational structure and operational details;

- near full staffing; several positions in final stages of hiring process;
- completed salary study for veterinarian position and initiating veterinarian recruitment asap;
- increase in shelter animal population in April and May compared to both year-over-year and over previous months; adoptions have also increased; resources need to be increased if shelter population continues to increase;
- hosted reduced fee adoption event for dogs to help reduce shelter population and hosted Meow Luau June 10;
- there are nominal increases to various fees including adoption and spay-neuter fees;
- the shelter hopes to restart Planned Pethood spay-neuter services as well as One Stop vaccination services once vet and RVT positions are filled;
- management team is updating policies and procedures and evaluation the shelter management database for potential improvements;
- interviewed with many media sources over the past two months;
- continuing to meet with various community stakeholders
- working closely with SCCAS Foundation

Board Comment:

BM Coburn: Are increased strays and owner surrenders consistent with what other shelters are experiencing? GM Rowland: Yes – economic issues, changes in lifestyle and relocations due to the pandemic, and there is a nationwide shortage of veterinarians which is impacting SCCAS significantly. Lack of spay-neuter services has also led to increased population of pets.

Public Comment:

Nancie Newby, SCCAS volunteer: our shelters are receiving lots of out-of-county surrenders which has also contributed to increased shelter population.

Jill Ganley, SCCAS Animal Services Coordinator: What is the plan for staffing once programs such as Planned Pethood and One Stop reopen? Existing staff don't have the capacity to complete current tasks let alone taking on new ones.

Megan Carroll, SCCAS Animal Services Coordinator: We shouldn't turn out-of- county surrenders away, we should increase resources.

6.2 Considered and approved financial report for April and May 2023.

Board Comment: None

Public Comment: None

Vote: S D A /B/ Co Cn F V W

Item approved unanimously.

6.3 Approved an AUD74 authorizing the General Manager to transfer appropriations in the amount of \$336,954

Staff Report: GM Rowland reviewed the written report delineating the various services and supplies budget line items that were short on funding and required the appropriations transfer.

Board Comment: None

Public Comment:

Sarah Goldberg, SCCAS Animal Services Coordinator: requested more detail on why there are salary savings if we are short on staffing. Clerk Phares explained salary savings were primarily the result of the vacancy in the Program and Development Manager position which management has elected to keep vacant to offset other costs. The position is unfunded for FY 23-24.

Vote: D W A /B/ Co Cn F V W

Item approved unanimously

6.4 Approved an agreement with the County in the estimated amount of \$10,000 for provision of payroll and accounts payable processing services and authorized the General Manager to sign the agreement.

Staff Report: Clerk Phares explained that SCCAS utilizes the County for payroll and accounts payable processing. For FY 23-24, the County has requested to enter into a contractual agreement with SCCAS for these services.

Board Comment: None

Public Comment: None

Vote: V F /B/ A Co Cn D S W

Item approved unanimously

6.5 Considered and approved the General Manager's proposed budget for FY 2023-24 and directed the SCCAS General Manager to work with County Personnel to complete a comprehensive salary study and return at the August meeting to provide a timeline for completion of the study.

Staff Report: GM Rowland reviewed the written budget report highlighting SCCAS funding request for FY 23-24.

Board Comment:

BM Coburn: Commented that funded positions are back up to pre-COVID levels.

BM Schmidt: Inquired about the status of the salary study. GM Rowland indicated a salary study was completed for the Veterinarian position and that she is working with County Personnel to plan a study of the general rep. positions.

Public Comment:

Linda Bottarini: Asked who received the 3% pay increase and also if larger increases would be approved if the salary study results reviewed pay disparities. Also, Linda

expressed concern that any action would not be taken expeditiously. GM Rowland: the 3% increase pay increase applied to both management and general rep. positions. BM Coburn: the JPA Board would need to evaluate the results and would work with Personnel on any proposed pay increases. The JPA Board would need to vote to adjust the budget and approve any proposed pay increase.

Sarah Golberg, SCCAS Animal Services Coordinator: Disputed that staffing was up to pre-COVID level.

Jill Ganley, SCCAS Animal Services Coordinator: Commented that lack of front-line staffing has resulted in staff skipping lunches, skipping breaks, and working overtime and that management has responded by capping overtime. Jill requests that the Board consider what the appropriate level of staffing should be for the shelter.

Megan Carroll: Requested that as part of the salary study, comparable positions within the County should be considered and not just other animal services agencies.

Ian Newman, SEIU employee: Stated that there are numerous previously completed salary studies available, and a new study is not necessary to know that staff are underpaid. A new study simply delays any potential pay increases.

BM Coburn: recommended that a time frame be established at the next Board meeting on obtaining a salary study.

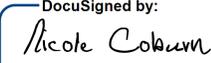
BM Schmidt: requested that in addition to the motion to approve the budget, the motion be amended to also direct the General Manager to return in August to report on the timeline for completion of the compensation study.

Vote: S A /B/ Co Cn D F V W

Item approved unanimously.

7.0 Adjourned Regular Meeting at 12:05 pm

The next regular meeting is scheduled for 11:00 am on August 14, 2023 and will be held at the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors Chambers located at 701 Ocean St., 5th floor, Santa Cruz. The meeting will be held in person.

ATTEST:  10/4/2023  
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Substitute Chairperson Coburn

 10/4/2023  
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Clerk Phares