

**Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter
Board of Directors Meeting
MINUTES
February 12, 2024 11:00 am
In-Person Meeting – Watsonville City Council Chambers**

VOTING KEY: A=Ainsworth, B=Bush, Co=Coburn, Con=Connelly, D=Dally, G=Garner, R=Radich, S=Schmidt, V=Vides

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: Chairperson Jon Bush called the meeting to order at 11:03 am. BM Chung was absent and was replaced by Pam Conelly, BM Dally was absent and unreplaced, BM Figueroa was absent and was replaced by Radovan Radich, BM Walpole was absent and was replaced by Scott Garner.
 - 2.0 Introductions: The three substitute board members were announced.
 - 3.0 Consideration of Late Additions or Changes to the Agenda: None.
 - 4.0 Oral Communications:

Sarah Goldberg, SCCAS Employee: Advocated for spay/neuter services including the use of the Planned Pethood Fund (PPH). Sarah recommended a voucher program be restarted to subsidize spay/neuter services for the low-income community. Friends of Watsonville Animal Shelter (FOWAS) has spayed/neutered many animals and the shelter should be doing similar activities using the PPH fund. Sarah stated there is a crisis at the shelter and a lack of communication and a lack of community programs.

Karen Coullahan, SCCAS Employee: New leadership has resulted in an environment of chaos and exhaustion. Karen expressed concern that the shelters will become “no kill” which she feels would be a mistake. There is a lack of transparency from leadership.

Jill Ganley, SCCAS Employee: Stated that the shelter is in shambles and out of control. We have voiced our concern to the Board and there has been no change. We are losing hope. Jill encouraged the Board to reach out to staff members for more information and not rely on management alone.

5.0 Consent Agenda

- 5.1 Approved minutes of the December 11, 2023 regular Board meeting

- 5.2 Accepted reports of the General Manager and Management Team for December 2023 and January 2024
- 5.3 Accepted and file statistics for December 2023 and January 2024
- 5.4 Approved the second quarter report of all claims under \$10,000
- 5.5 Approved the second quarter journal entry payments with the County of Santa Cruz
- 5.6 Accepted gifts totaling \$26,356.50 from the SCCAS Foundation

Public Comment: None

Board Comment: None

Vote: Co V A Con B /D/ G R S

Item approved unanimously.

6.0 Regular Agenda

- 6.1 General Manager's Report – GM Rowland's summarized comments:
 - Animal Control vehicle badging has been updated to soften our presentation
 - Animal Control continues to interface frequently with the unhoused community particularly around working to spay/neuter their animals
 - The volunteer program is up and running for the Watsonville Shelter which will be a huge help as intakes rise in the spring and summer
 - Grant-funded cat portals will be installed at Watsonville Shelter soon
 - SCCAS Foundation has funded new fencing, a high-capacity washer, and clinic diagnostic equipment for the Santa Cruz Shelter
 - 261 spay/neuter surgeries were completed at the Santa Cruz Shelter in the month of January as compared to only 89 completed in January 2023. 30 of the surgeries were for privately-owned pets.
 - Our vet clinic has also been able to complete hundreds of specialty surgeries and treatments this fiscal year.
 - Procedures regarding surrendering large animals have been adjusted to allow them to not enter the shelter at all but be transferred directly to fosters or other rescue partners
 - Staff worked hard to find placement for animals in rescues and fosters and we appreciate their support
 - The Barn Cat program placed over 100 unsocial cats
 - We anticipate our salaries and benefits and services and supplies costs will be over budget this year due to high intake and shelter population stats. We will not be able to cover those overages with salary savings as we are fully staffed.

- A salary study was completed. Negotiations between County and SEUI will start in late Spring and be completed in the fall. The salary study results will be discussed with the Board in closed session today.
- Donations are down a bit from last year during this period and we've had no large bequests recently. Will exploring with JPA member organizations how to increase shelter visibility
- Care and Clinic teams are meeting regularly to prepare for higher-intake season with improved foster and medical systems and support materials
- We are partnering with Project Purr to intervene in a Boulder Creek case to alter 25-30 cats at Pet Maintenance & Repair clinic using Foundation funding, and will work with partners and the caretaker to re-home many/most of those cats
- Euthanasia certification training was recently provided to 5 staff members & Dr. Brenn-White with plans to offer introductory training to more personnel.
- Admin has begun work with the CAOs office to develop templates for policy & procedure documents and are drafting some high-priority P&Ps

Board Comment:

BM Garner: requested GM Rowland repeat Planned Pethood stats for January.

GM Rowland: 30 PPH surgeries were completed in January. We are exploring re-opening our Annex space to complete larger-scale surgery days due to the limited space in the main vet clinic.

BM Coburn: Are we still utilizing contract vets now that we have a full-time employee vet?

GM Rowland: Yes, we still use contracted vets to assist with spay/neuter surgery days.

6.2 Considered and approved the financial reports for December 2023 and January 2024.

GM Rowland: GM Rowland read the written financial report.

Public Comment: None

Board Comment:

BM Coburn: Are you planning to return to the Board to realign appropriations? Do you expect to use fund balance or to receive additional revenues?

Clerk Phares: We will request to transfer our contingency funds as needed at the April or June Board meeting.

Vote: V S A B Co Con /D/ G R

Item approved unanimously.

6.3 Considered and approved the establishment of a technical advisory sub-committee comprised one Board member each from the County, the City of

Watsonville, and the City of Santa Cruz plus one additional public safety representative Board member from one of the member agencies, for the purpose of analyzing service delivery and organizational change opportunities and recommend focus areas for further action and direct the subcommittee to return with interim reports at five months and twelve months.

BM Schmidt: based on feedback received from staff and the community, the Board has decided to establish a technical advisory subcommittee for the purpose of analyzing service delivery and organizational change opportunities and recommend focus areas for further action and direct the subcommittee to return with interim reports at five months and twelve months. Professional consulting services may be required which would necessitate the appropriation of additional one-time funds.

BM Coburn: There are slides in the packet providing an overview of the scope of the Shelter's operation. The Shelter has been impacted by a variety of challenges and events including natural disasters, access to low cost spay/neuter, veterinary shortages, a structural deficit and many others. The Board felt it would be a good opportunity to initiate a subcommittee to explore opportunities and challenges.

BM Schmidt: The subcommittee would be composed of members from the County, the City of Watsonville, and the City of Santa Cruz plus one additional public safety representative from one of the member agencies.

BM Bush: requested volunteer for the public safety representative for the subcommittee. BM Bush volunteered.

Public Comment:

Joan DeNeffe: expressed excitement about the formation of the technical advisory subcommittee. She recommended staff and not management be included in the subcommittee, which would be really valuable. Recommended that observers be allowed as she would like to participate. The breakdown between management and employees and the lack of communication needs to be addressed.

Jill Ganley: recommended the committee look at job duties. Supervisors and subordinates are pulling a lot of weight at the Shelter and covering the lack of knowledge and skills that some of management bring to the Shelter. Please identify holes in the system and consider staff input.

BM Coburn: moved approval of the recommended action to establish the technical advisory subcommittee comprised of representatives from the County, City of Santa Cruz, City of Watsonville, and Chief Deputy Jon Bush.

BM Schmidt: seconded motion and clarified the subcommittee will return at five months and twelve months coinciding with regular Board meetings.

Vote: Co S A B Con /D/ G R V

Item approved unanimously.

7.0 Adjourned to Closed Session at 11:34 a.m.

7.1 Conference with labor negotiator (Government Code Section 54957.6)

Agency Negotiator: Director of Personnel

Employee Organization: Service Employees International Union (SEIU)

7.2 Public Employee Performance Evaluation [Cal. Govt. Code §54957(b)]

Joint Powers Authority Board's Performance Evaluation of General Manager

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jon bush 4/15/2024
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ATTEST: _____
Chairperson Bush

DocuSigned by:
Joe Phares 4/15/2024
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Clerk Phares