



**Animal Shelter Advisory Committee
Minutes
October 8, 2014**

Mayor
Oscar Leeser

City Council

District 1
Ann Morgan Lilly

District 2
Larry Romero

District 3
Emma Acosta

District 4
Carl L. Robinson

District 5
Dr. Michiel R. Noe

District 6
Claudia Ordaz

District 7
Lily Limón

District 8
Cortney C. Niland

City Manager
Tommy Gonzalez

1. A meeting of the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee was held at the Conference Room at the Animal Services Shelter and was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Roger Freund, Chairman.

Board Member A.S.A.C.	Present	Absent
Peggy Edman	X	
Dr. Roger Freund	X	
Patricia Gonzalez		X
Betty Hoover		X
Linda Krasowski	X	
Marcia Margherio	X	
Robert Melson	X	
Rep. Ann Morgan-Lilly	X	
Regina Wagner	X	
Barbara Candelaria	X	
Dr. Guy Johnson	X	

Environmental Services staff present: Dr. Marilyn Christensen, Rose Janice, Kurt Fenstermacher, Maribel Karisch

Public present: List of attendees available upon request.

2. Discussion and action on the approval of the ASAC September 10, 2014 minutes.

Committee members were asked if there were any questions or revisions.

Motion made by Robert Melson and seconded by Marcia Margherio to accept the September 10, 2014 minutes with corrections. Motion passed.

Ayes: Peggy Edman, Dr. Roger Freund, Robert Melson, Regina Wagner, Linda Krasowski, Barbara Candelaria, Rep. Ann-Morgan-Lilly, Marcia Margherio, Guy Johnson

Nays: None

3. Discussion and action on Sub-committees' reports:

a. **Free Roaming Cats – Chairperson Regina Wagner.**

Regina Wagner read a report on recent violent crimes towards free roaming cats throughout El Paso. Sun City Cats is continuing to work with police investigator Abe Gonzalez. A reward is being offered with money raised by concerned citizens. Sun City Cats volunteers will be going door-to-door to educate the community about TNR and at the same time asking for their help towards capturing the person(s) responsible for these crimes. In response to these crimes, Sun City Cats is starting an anti-bullying cat campaign in efforts to stop abuse against animals. Sun City Cats will teach kids to be kind and compassionate to animals with a proposed program. They are planning to be the liaison for schools, libraries, and recreation centers in effort to change old ideas and practices. They are currently in discussion with police area representatives in the efforts to include the message in the school curriculum. Next month, Sun City Cats will be celebrating National Feral Cat day, and volunteers will be going door-to-door passing out flyers. Regina is proposing a recommendation from ASAC to have Animal Services place a security delay on adoptions for white and black cats and white and black dogs from October 20th through November 1st. The proposal is being placed to safeguard the animals' safety around Halloween due to the recent crimes against animals. The recommendation is for a temporary hold on having the approved adopter pick up the animals after November 1st.

Motion: Motion made by Regina Wagner, ASAC recommends to Animal Services that their contractor doing adoptions, that they use extra precautions and follow up forth thoroughly with black and white cat and dogs adopted through the month of October. Motion was seconded by Rep. Ann Morgan-Lily. Motion passed.

Ayes: Peggy Edman, Dr. Freund, Linda Krasowski, Marcia Margherio, Robert Melson, Rep. Ann Morgan-Lily, Regina Wagner, Barbara Candelaria, Dr. Johnsen.

Nayes: None

b. **Public Education, Outreach and Responsible Pet Ownership Chairperson, Patricia Gonzalez.**

Robert Melson proposed to do away with the free-roaming cats and the public education, outreach, and responsible pet ownership sub- committees. He added that they are individual entities not committees. Barbara Candelaria added that she will be joining Patricia in the public education portion to try to implement a curriculum. Dr. Freund mentioned that they should combine their report since ASAC committee is doing the educational campaign with Animal Services. Robert Melson added that his proposal is to do away with the formality of the sub-committees, not the report.

Motion: Robert Melson made the motion and seconded Marcia Margherio to dissolve the sub-committee in lieu of a monthly report from the responsible parties. Motion did not pass.

Ayes: Marcia Margherio; Robert Melson; Peggy Edman;

Opposed: Ann Morgan-Lily, Regina Wagner, Barbara Candelaria, Linda Krasowski, Dr. Johnsen

4. Old Business

a. **Lower Valley Spay and Neuter Clinic follow up**

Kurt Fenstermacher expressed that there is movement on the Lower Valley Spay and Neuter Clinic. City Council approved the contract with the lowest bid on September 30th, 2014. There was a pre-construction meeting held on October 8th, with the vendor. The contractor will be on a 90 day schedule starting November 1st or November 15th. The clinic should be completed by the end of January 2015. Kurt added that it will take time in February to set-up and staff the clinic. The clinic will be open and operating in March 2015. City Council also approved the hiring of an office assistant and kennel attendants. The clinic will charge \$72.00 per surgery and hours of operation have not been established.

Motion: No action taken.

b. Golden Retriever Rescue will give an overview of their organization presented by Connie Jimenez.

Connie Jimenez, president and founder of Golden Retriever Rescue mentioned the organization has been in operation since 2009 and was incorporated in 2010. The organization is foster-based and has eleven fosters which are set up to take in Golden Retriever mixes. They will take Lab Retrievers depending on availability of space. Connie added that they prefer to go through the adoption center where dogs have been spayed, neutered, and micro-chipped before leaving the facility. She mentioned that since 2010 about 500-600 dogs have been adopted. She added that they also offer online adoptions. The organization works with vets from east, west, and north El Paso. By average, Golden Retrievers are adopted in two to three weeks. The adoption prices include micro-chipping information, micro-chip transfer, and adoption agreement. About 60% of applicants are from New Mexico. The organization is part of the national Golden Retriever committee that is part of The National Golden Retriever Club of America. There are 8 Golden Retriever Rescues in Texas.

Motion: No action taken.

c. Animal Services monthly operations report.

Dr. Christensen reported that Animal Services received a \$150,000 grant for a mobile adoption van from the Stanton Foundation in Boston. The van is about 26 ft. long and has approximately 30 cages. Dr. Christensen also mentioned that 119 fee waived cat adoptions were made in the latter half of September, compared to 15, of which fees were not waived, in the same period of time. Animal Services held their second micro-chipping and rabies clinic on September 28th in which 210 animals were micro-chipped and vaccinated within four hours. In continuation with The Vet Message of the Month, the message for October was: What to do to Prepare for a Disaster Ahead of Time. The message for November will be: The Steps to Take in Case you Lose your Pet. Animal Services has also started working on the Title VII Ordinance

reviews in order to make it more workable. Dr. Christensen would like to separate the licensing and rabies vaccination. Dr. Christensen added that to celebrate National Feral Cat Day, only Feral Cats will have surgery on October 16th. Animal Services began discussion with Pet Smart on October 6th for the Trap-Neuter-Return to Field grant. The program consists of trapping, neutering/spaying, and releasing the cats to the field instead of the colony managers. She believes this program will be very successful in getting feral cats out alive and eventually decreasing the shelter intake. Regina Wagner requested to have a meeting with Dr. Christensen regarding the TN Return to Field at a later date. Linda Krasowski inquired about items on the tracking tool log from last month; the Spay and Neuter Grant Program and the Reasons for Relinquishment survey form. After discussion, Linda suggested having the form revised and to present it to next month's meeting for the committee to review. Dr. Christensen will work on the revised form and Luis Rios will translate it to Spanish.

Motion: Motion made by Regina Wagner and seconded by Peggy Edman to have a revision of the survey, for Dr. Christensen to complete and forward to ASAC members and then forward to all rescues and those taking in animals across the city and county and to be presented to ASAC meeting next month. Motion passed.

Ayes: Peggy Edman, Dr. Freund, Linda Krisowski, Marcia Margherio, Robert Melson, Rep Ann Morgan Lily, Regina Wagner, Barbara Candelaria, and Dr. Johnsen.

Nays: None

Dr. Johnsen inquired about the members on the Title VII Ordinance Review Committee. Dr. Christensen added that the Committee consists of herself and ACO Field Operations Manager, Hugo Navarro. The committee is looking at making simple changes to benefit Animal Services. Kurt added that this is an administrative review committee's first phase to clean up the ordinance rather than going through the 1 ½ year lengthy process. Dr. Christensen mentioned that one of the changes is to place feral cats immediately in surgery and release them back to their zip code. Peggy

Edman inquired about the number of Rescue Groups who attended the September 24, 2014 meeting and Linda Krasowski asked about the minutes. Dr. Christensen advised that she would forward the material that was presented and the outcome of the meeting.

d. Discussion and action regarding Goal #1 and letter to City Council

Marcia Margherio mentioned that after 15 years of shelter directors, hundreds of animal deaths, millions of tax payer money wasted, there has been no change. Dr. Freund added that if writing a letter to City Council makes us feel like we are doing something, lets write the letter. Linda Krasowski added that the problem is that there isn't an established processing program to develop programs that will result in reducing euthanasia. It doesn't matter who does the developing as long as there is an established program with guidelines, timelines and reporting. Bob Melson added that the City of El Paso is the main player for the change. Rep. Ann Morgan-Lily added that this problem is a community issue. With a population of 800,000 in El Paso, there is an estimated 107,000 owned dogs and 99,000 owned cats in the community. This is also a moral issue, financial issue, quality of life issue and a public safety and health issue. Rep. Ann Morgan-Lily mentioned that if ASAC wants to do something, she advised to develop a plan of action and present it to City Council.

Motion: Motion was made by Regina Wagner and seconded by Barbara Candelaria to develop a sub-committee chaired by Regina Wagner appointed to work with Catherine and other committee members who wish to be involved to develop a plan of action to be presented to City Council Discussion and action and follow-up on sub-committees and if you want to be in sub-committee, sign-up with Regina and Catherine. Motion passed.

Ayes: Peggy Edman, Dr. Freund, Linda Krasowski, Marcia Margherio, Robert Melson, Rep. Ann Morgan-Lily, Regina Wagner, Barbara Candelaria, Dr. Johnsen.

Nayes: None

e. Discussion on budget for 2014-15.

Kurt Fenstermacher handed out a copy the FY2015 Budget. He mentioned that Animal Services received 1.3 million more for the FY2015. He explained that the significant difference went to the Socorro Rd Project. The budget consists of \$593,000 in salaries/wages, \$323,000 for materials/supplies and 292,000 for operational expenses. Linda Krasowski inquired about FTE and whether the hiring freeze had been lifted. Kurt advised that the approved FY2015 budget included FTE for the Spay and Neuter Clinic on Socorro Rd. He also added that there will be 5 animal control dispatcher positions opening up by November. Kurt shared that the position for the Public Media Specialist was approved by City Council on October 8th.

Motion: No action taken

5. Discussion and vote on changing the schedule and content of the ASAC meeting

Dr. Freund proposed on having quarterly meetings, instead of monthly. He added that ASAC would meet every 4th month for a formal meeting, where they would be able to take action and vote. During the in between months, ASAC would continue to have discussions in an open forum. He added that ASAC would have more time for discussion rather than hurrying up through the agenda items. Kurt explained that the in-between month's meetings are considered public meetings so these meetings would have to be posted. The ASAC committee would be able to meet, however the committee will not be able to take action. Committee member didn't agree with the change. Dr. Freund proposed to continue meeting monthly.

Motion: No action taken

Proposal to change the deadlines when items are needed to be scheduled for discussion in the agendas.

Dr. Freund is requesting to have all agenda items 10 days ahead of time. This time frame will allow for review and postings. Discussion was made on open-ended and open-focused

agendas. Dr. Freund proposed to continue having monthly meeting, putting time limits as far as what time limit is placed on the agenda. The agenda will be sent the Friday before the ASAC meeting. He will have the final say as to what will be discussed in the meetings. The committee will aim to finish the meeting by eight o'clock. ASAC members all agreed on this change.

Motion: No action taken

7. Discussion on report on Vaccination Clinics

No Discussion

Motion: No action taken

8. Discussion and action on abandonment of animals.

Barbara Candelaria expressed concern over the abandonment of animals. She explained that several rental property managers are looking for answers on how to handle the cases of abandonment on military properties. Dr. Freund advised to either call the police or City Attorney and file a report. Kurt Fenstermacher added that any city cases will be handled by Municipal court and the military will take care of all Fort Bliss cases.

Motion: No action taken

9. Discussion and action on animal welfare to be included in public health education

Barbara Candelaria proposed to have ASAC place more of the animal welfare emphasis in the Public Health component since the state of Texas already requires that grades kindergarten through 12th take health and P.E. as part of their curriculum. She advised that the animal welfare emphasis can be placed on the curriculum by going to Region 19 or to School Districts and making a recommendation. Dr. Freund advised Barbara Candelaria to read Humane Society of America Education to help her figure out what will work and what won't on recommendations to the State.

Motion: No action taken

10. **Discussion on Animal Statistics**

Dr. Freund asked if there were any questions and comments. There were no questions nor comments.

Motion: No action taken

11. **Call to public**

- a. Member of the public inquired about the volunteer program background checks. She was concerned because she has been waiting since February to have her background check done. She wants information on how to move forward with the process. Kurt added that it is more difficult to clear a volunteer that it is a city employee.
- b. Member of the public commented about the time spent on the agenda items and on a public report. Kurt advised that Animal Services is meeting the requirements on reporting to City Council.

Motion: No action taken

12. Motion to adjourn meeting at 8:36 P. M. by Robert Melson and seconded by Marcia Margherio.

Prepared by: Maribel Karisch

Approved A.S.A.C. Chairman



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Melson', is written over a horizontal line.