

**Supplemental  
correspondence and  
complaints that were  
sent to Washoe County  
Regional Animal  
Services Advisory  
Board**

# **Inventory of supplemental letters sent to Washoe County Regional Animal Services Advisory Board. Letters are listed by page.**

Pages 1-3 From Chelsea Sladek

Pages 4-15 From Jodie Wang

Pages 16-26 From Joel Nelson

Pages 27-29 From Kimberly Wade

Pages 30-32 From Lena Ghiglieri

Pages 33-34 From Patricia Perry

Pages 35-36 From Sally Berger

Pages 37-39 Anonymous Veterinary Professional

Pages 40-41 From Gloria Derby

Pages 42-46 Rita Eissmann NHS Board of Directors

**7/26/2022**

**Reasons to remove Greg Hall as CEO:**

Dear Kris,

I am writing this email to you today with a very heavy heart. Although it has been almost exactly one month since my last day at The Nevada Humane Society, I am still very saddened by the loss I experienced when I left (loss of family and team), but moreover I am extremely troubled knowing that Greg Hall is left to direct and control NHS, seemingly to its ruin.

I am a person who is known for positivity and optimism, and when I came on board I was filled with great expectations for my future and the role I accepted. And I was thrilled to be a part of the NHS "team".

However, fast forward through many unfortunate events (all Greg related), over the course of a year, and I was left with no choice but to resign because my work environment had become too toxic for me, as well as a feeling that my personal and professional integrity were at risk if I stayed.

I am again so very saddened by what happened in my time there because I truly thought I would retire from NHS. And if Greg Hall were not the CEO, I would still be there today, as I believe would many of the people who have left over the last year.

I have listed several reasons I believe Greg should be relieved of his position with as many specific examples as I can provide at this time:

1. Unable to cope with the demands of the position / Ongoing pattern of non-performance:
  - a. Greg is completely paralyzed by the fear of failure or embarrassment to the point of immobility.
    - i. One example would be, whether or not to hire, fire or move a staff member to benefit a department who is struggling (it could take literally months)
    - ii. Another example would be how to handle paid holidays and which ones are important for this organization in order to show inclusivity (this was talked about at a management meeting in 2021 and again in 2022).
    - iii. Changing the floor plan to better suit the needs of the animals for great adoptability and logistics: (a simple – NO COST strategy) switching the small animals and the dog visiting rooms - He could not SEE the possibility for himself and needed to have the assessment tell him this was a good move.
  - b. Constantly seeking approval of his decisions when he finally does make a decision about operations or policy
    - i. If you disagree, you WILL be in conflict with him (Megan B, Brenna R., Rebecca G, Dr. Slatin (all management meeting conversations)
  - c. Pushing off his own work and the COO work onto the Directors/Managers because he is unable to do it himself.

- i. Missing important deadlines that he was specifically reminded of (Grant reports; ask Kristen S., Shelter Count Report (which I found out after the fact had not been done, and I did it on two separate occasions)
    - ii. Passing blame for unfulfilled work responsibilities (Grant reporting, shelter count report, and etc) (who knows what else)
  - d. Performance Review: 90 day and Annual – None of his direct reports received a review
  - e. **Inability to fit into the culture of the organization or lead effectively –**
    - i. Is of the belief that he is not liked org wide, and he is correct. (cat dept, dog dept, clinic, adoptions – This is not a guess, this is confirmed.
    - ii. Failure to make or mend lasting relationships with coalition partners (WCRAS) – 98% of the staff at NHS have a good working relationship with WCRAS, but not GREG. He is the catalyst for why NHS and WCRAS cannot work well together. I made huge inroads with Shyanne, Nancy, Tammy, Robert and many others at WCRAS, only to have him constantly doing damage to the relationship.
- 2. Lack of Integrity and Character
  - a. Talks about entire team behind their backs (these are as close to quotes as I can remember)
    - i. Phil N- lacks focus and cannot be allowed to work in any other part of the building because he may not do his work. He needs to keep him close, so he can keep an eye on him.
    - ii. Brenna- He believes she is under the influence of drugs.
    - iii. Rebecca- She is a pushover and is constantly be worked by her team to get raises and whatever they want, instead of doing her work.
    - iv. Lance- Is too quick to respond, and just doesn't think. Needs a lot of work and growing. She would rather do the work herself than have her team do it.
    - v. Megan B- Let her ego get the better of her with the COO situation, did not like being told "no" about uniforms, in front of the team and really started showing her true colors there in the end, got her ego bruised and that is why she left.
    - vi. Lisa F- was never a good fit from the start and never did any of the stuff she said she was going to do or work on.
    - vii. Clay- J. Very negative. Always complaining about what he needs and what is wrong in Carson. He cant ever seem to mention anything that he has accomplished!
    - viii. Dr. Satin- Has a very poor attitude and it is time for her to leave.
    - ix. DJ Bedahl- Really disappointed in the way she handled herself and cant believe she acted like that, and thinks she needs to understand who I (Greg) am and what my role is!
    - x. Nicole T- Thinks very highly of herself. Has asked for two raises and is mad that she did not get them. Would not be surprised if she leaves!
    - xi. Chelsea-( While I was still there, just after I gave my two weeks' notice he spoke to two other directors and told them) "She quit because she didn't get the COO position"

- b. Moments after talking about someone in my office, he would smile in their face and pretends to be their friend or says the complete opposite of what he had just said to me.
  - i. This is one of the examples that I meant by my integrity was at risk. I knew if I continued to stay, I would either wind up fired (because if you oppose him, you are at risk), or I would wind up a liar.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts. I am hoping and praying for a good outcome for the team I've left behind, who truly deserve better than Greg Hall.

Best Regards,

Chelsea Sladek

All:

This was sent to IRS earlier this afternoon. It will be forwarded to the NV A-G and the NV Secretary of State later today.

Thank you.  
Jodie Wang

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Jodie Wang <[Jodie.Wang@rwc-nv.com](mailto:Jodie.Wang@rwc-nv.com)>

**Date:** May 9, 2023 at 2:05:36 PM PDT

**To:** [eoclass@irs.gov](mailto:eoclass@irs.gov)

**Subject:** Referral to non-profit

Dear Sir/Madam:

Please see attached Form 13909, requesting investigation into non-profit Nevada Humane Society (tax ID 88-0072720).

The details are set out in the second attachment.

Thank you very much for your attention to this.

V/R,  
Jodie Wang

Form **13909**  
(December 2016)

Department of the Treasury - Internal Revenue Service

**Tax-Exempt Organization Complaint (Referral)**

## 1. Name of referred organization

Nevada Humane Society

## Street address

2825 Longley Ln, B

City	State	ZIP code	Date of referral
Reno	NV	89502	5/9/23

## 2. Organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN)

88-0072720

## 3. Nature of violation

- Directors/Officers/Persons are using income/assets for personal gain
- Organization is engaged in commercial, for-profit business activities
- Income/Assets are being used to support illegal or terrorist activities
- Organization is involved in a political campaign
- Organization is engaged in excessive lobbying activities
- Organization refused to disclose or provide a copy of Form 990
- Organization failed to report employment, income or excise tax liability properly
- Organization failed to file required federal tax returns and forms
- Organization engaged in deceptive or improper fundraising practices
- Other (*describe*)

Appointing a Member of the Board who has no relevant experience or professional history of managing animal shelters or running a large non-profit, or even a for-profit business, to CEO position, . Financial opaqueness, possible self-dealing, violations of the non-profit's own bylaws and whistleblower protection policy, refusal to provide public access to bylaws until May 5, 2023.

## 4. Details of violation

## Name(s) of person(s) involved

Gregory J Hall, Kris Wells, Jack Grellman, Janice Watson, Joan Dees, Mendy Elliott, Rachel Ringenback-Watkins, Tierra Bonaldi

## Organizational title(s)

CEO, and members of the Board of Directors

Date(s)	Dollar amount(s) ( <i>if known</i> )
2018-2021	At least \$68000, possibly much more.

## Description of activities

Pls see attached complaint.

## 5. Submitter information

## Name

Jodie Wang

## Occupation or business

Business Owner

## Street address

1355 N McCarran Blvd

City	State	ZIP code	Telephone number
Reno	NV	89512	703-474-7213

I am concerned that I might face retaliation or retribution if my identity is disclosed

**6. Submission and documentation:** The completed form, along with any supporting documentation, may be mailed to IRS EO Classification, Mail Code 4910DAL, 1100 Commerce Street Dallas, TX 75242-1198, faxed to 214-413-5415 or emailed to [eoclass@irs.gov](mailto:eoclass@irs.gov). **Disclaimer Notice:** Your email submission of Form 13909 and attachments are not encrypted for security.

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## Instructions for Form 13909, Tax-Exempt Organization Complaint (Referral)

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### General Information

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The information provided on this form will help the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) determine if there has been a violation of federal tax law. Submission of this form is voluntary.

Upon receipt of this form, the IRS will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of the information you submitted. If at a later date you wish to submit additional information regarding the organization, please attach a copy of the form initially submitted, and send it to the address shown above.

### Specific Instructions

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1. **Organization name and address:** Provide the current name and address of the organization. If the organization has used prior or multiple name(s) or address(es), also provide that information.
2. **Employer identification number:** Provide the organization's EIN.  
The EIN is a nine-digit number, issued by the IRS, that the organization uses for tax purposes (like a Social Security Number (SSN) for an individual). If the EIN is unavailable, include a state nonprofit corporation registration number, if available.
3. **Nature of violation:** Mark the description that describes the organization's alleged violation. More than one line may apply. If none of the descriptions appear to apply, briefly state the issue on the Other line.
4. **Details of the violation:** Provide specific details of the alleged violation including names, actions, places, amounts, dates, and the nature of any evidence or documentation (who, what, where, when, how). Include the names of other organizations, entities or persons that may be involved with the organization, providing EINs or SSNs, if available.
5. **Submitter information:** Provide your name, address, and business or occupation. Include your daytime telephone number, in case we wish to contact you. The acknowledgement letter will be sent to the address you provide.  
  
If you are concerned that you may face retribution if your identity is disclosed, check the box. You may enter "Anonymous" for Submitter's name if you do not want to be identified.
6. **Submission and documentation:** Mail the completed form, including any supporting documentation that you would like for us to review, to the address provided on the form. You may also fax or email the completed form and any supporting documentation to the fax number or email address provided on the form. Include a cover letter describing the documentation or evidence you are providing. If you have already received an acknowledgment letter, include a copy of that letter. If possible, please try to submit all documentation at the same time.  
  
If your referral relates to a church please be aware that Congress has imposed special limitations, found in IRC section 7611, on how and when the IRS may conduct civil tax inquiries and examinations of churches. You can find out more about these special limitations in [Publication 1828](#), *Tax Guide for Churches and Religious Organizations*, in the section on Special Rules Limiting IRS Authority to Audit a Church.
7. **Claim for reward:** To claim a reward for providing this information to the IRS, file [Form 211](#), *Application for Award for Original Information*.
8. **Note:** Federal law prohibits the IRS from providing you with status updates or information about specific actions taken in response to the information you submit.

## COMPLAINT AGAINST THE NEVADA HUMANE SOCIETY

### Introduction

It has recently come to my attention that the Board of Directors and CEO of the Nevada Humane Society (NHS), Reno and Carson City, have been operating in violation of their bylaws and IRS mandates for non-profit organizations. As a concerned citizen, and former journalist, I have assembled the following information that I have uncovered. I request that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) review this information and open an investigation into the NHS Reno and Carson City, to determine the facts associated with the following 5 allegations.

#### 1. Board Self-Dealing by Appointing Unqualified Member to be CEO

In 2018, the Board of Directors for the Nevada Humane Society (NHS) fired its then-CEO Mr. Diaz Dixon, and replaced him with one of the existing Board members, Mr. Gregory J. Hall, who was then VP of the Board. The vast disparity between Mr. Dixon and Mr. Hall's experience was self evident. Prior to leading NHS, Mr. Dixon had spent more than 14 years at a non-profit, named Step 2 Reno, which provides substance abuse treatment programs to women and children. Prior to being appointed to lead NHS, Mr. Hall was a lawyer with no experience in non-profit operations, animal shelters, or personnel management. This change of leadership was even more concerning because the Board appointed Mr. Hall, WITHOUT performing an open search or conducting interviews for more qualified candidates.

Before this event, NHS CEOs had been hired through search and interview processes, and as a result, NHS had been led by a series of capable managers, some of whom were even outstanding. Prior to Mr. Diaz, Mr. Kevin Ryan was the CEO. Mr. Ryan was the former Executive Director for Pet Helpers in Charleston, South Carolina, with extensive experience in animal welfare and non-profit organization leadership. Before Mr. Ryan, Ms. Kiska Icard was CEO. She had previously served as Executive Director of the Sonoma Humane Society. Prior to Ms. Icard, Ms. Bonney Brown served as the Executive Director of NHS for 6.5 years, realizing a no-kill shelter status for NHS by saving 94% of animals in 2010 and 2011. There is one more significant fact: while NHS reported the appointments of previous CEOs, with information on their experience and qualifications, no similar announcement was made with regard to Mr. Hall's appointment.

This could be because Mr. Gregory J. Hall had no experience or training in non-profits, animal shelters, animal welfare, animal training, non-profit fund raising, personnel management, non-profit funds management, business book-keeping, or any of the other major duties or responsibilities of an animal shelter CEO. My thorough search for Mr. Gregory J. Hall in the public domain yielded no glowing testimonies of his work as an attorney; and no history of managing an organization (little less a multi-million-dollar organization). In fact, it is impossible to find a resume or a biographical description of Mr. Hall's professional experience on any public forum, not even the NHS website. He has no LinkedIn account, no mentions in any lawyer review websites, and no public affiliation with animal shelters (other than being a Board member and appointed CEO at NHS). According to multiple reports, Mr. Hall has told individuals that his only prior personnel

management experience was at a bicycle shop with four employees. Other individuals have reported that Mr. Hall's father (and prior employer) told them that he had to fire his son from his (father's) legal practice for being uninsurable (too expensive to insure). While these are second-hand reports, their extreme example of the unfitness of Mr. Hall to be the CEO of NHS is worthy of investigation. If these are true, one has to wonder why the Board would have given Mr. Hall the position of CEO? From an objective perspective, it appears that Mr. Hall's appointment could only be based on the fact that Mr. Hall needed a job, and obtained the position in spite of any consideration of what was best for the animals in the shelter. This would be a classic example of the Board of Directors engaging in self-dealing.

The facts that Mr. Hall did not have qualifications to be CEO of NHS; the Board did not engage in any kind of search for a qualified candidate; and the NHS Board appointed someone from the Board to be CEO, are very concerning. It is not a great leap of faith to believe that the animals in the shelter would have benefited from a more qualified and experienced CEO. This assertion is proven by the large number of complaints received during the entire time that Mr. Hall was running NHS. The complaints detail systemic lack of care for the animals in the shelter, lack of training for shelter employees, chronic mis-diagnosis of "aggressive dogs," dogs being locked in cages receiving only 15 minutes of outdoor time a day, sick dogs suffering for hours before they receive care/euthanasia, no dog enrichment programs, and most concerning, the firing of all managers with animal care qualification (and promotion of kennel cleaners to management positions).<sup>1</sup>

The Board of Directors in 2018 were: Ms. Tierra Bonaldi, President; Mr. Gregory J. Hall, VP (then CEO); Ms. Dawn Ahner, Director (then VP); Ms. Kris Wells, Secretary; Ms. Jan Watson, Treasurer; Mr. Dick Whiston; Mr. Jack Grellman, Esq.; Ms. Joan Dees; Mr. Ken Furlong; Ms. Kristen Saibini; Ms. Mendy Elliot; Mr. Allan Martin; and Ms. Rachel Watkins, CPA. **Four of these 13 directors had served more than 6 years continuously without leaving for at least one year. This is in direct violation of the NHS Bylaws** (See Pt 5. Bylaws state that members have to take a one-year break after 6 years on the Board). The violators included the President, and Treasurer of the Board of Directors. Additionally, another Board member is under suspicion from having taken money from the organization while serving as a Director – see Pt 3). It is also unknown whether Mr. Hall recused himself from the vote on hiring him as CEO. It would be informative to find out what the votes were, to install him as CEO, and whether, without the support of directors who should NOT have been on the board, himself, and a fellow Board member who has taken funds from the NHS, Mr. Hall would have had sufficient votes to become CEO. If the bylaws had been followed and new people had been on the Board who may not have been as agreeable to the idea of putting an unqualified individual, Mr. Hall, into the CEO position without doing the due diligence of a qualified candidate search, Mr. Hall might not be in the position he is in today. The Board is supposed to keep records of these votes. Whether they did, we do not know. But there is a likelihood that given the flouting of their on bylaws by directors of the Board, Mr. Hall may have been installed illegally in his position without the required votes.

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<sup>1</sup> These complaint letters have been sent to the Reno Mayor's office, and Reno & Sparks Animal Welfare Board.

## 2. PATTERN OF DECLINING PERFORMANCE AND RISING COSTS

Since Mr. Hall was installed as CEO of the Nevada Humane Society, the performance of the shelter has declined sharply, while costs have risen equally sharply. Key personnel salaries have vastly outpaced placement of animals, especially between 2019 and 2021. Please see Chart 1. The data is derived from NHS tax returns.

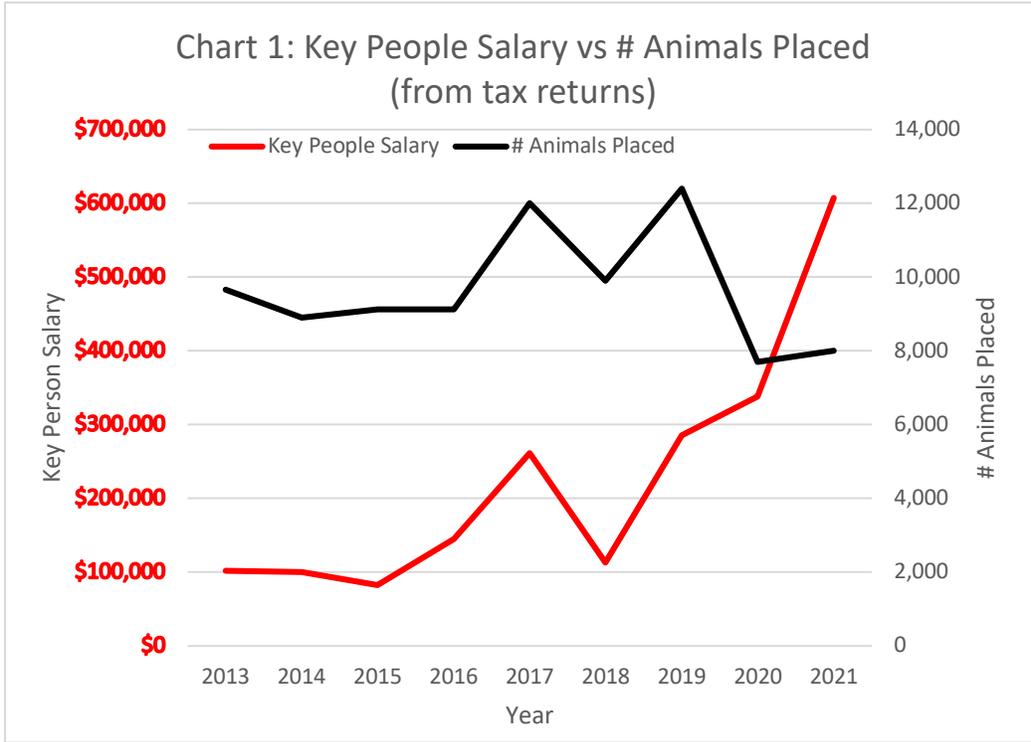


Chart 1

Additionally, the average cost per hour for employees (minus top 6 highly compensated individuals) has risen sharply, see Chart 2.

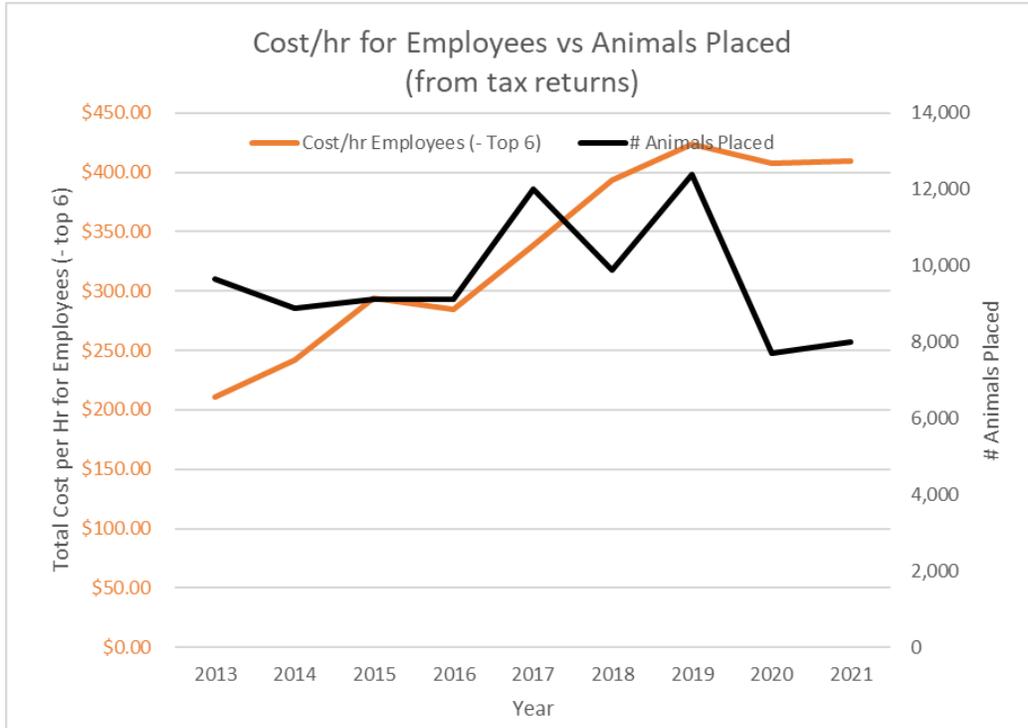


Chart 2

### 3. SELF-DEALING AMONG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

On May 26, 2021, a Reno local news reporter (Mr. Joe Hart) ran a story about NHS, Reno. He had reviewed the Form 990s for NHS and noticed that then Board member (Mr. Gregory J. Hall) was paid \$37,399 in 2017. Another Board member Rachel Ringenback-Watkins was also reported as having received more than \$31,000 in payments between 2017-2019. According to NHS' bylaws, the Board of directors is not supposed to derive financial compensation from the charity.

Prior to running the story, Mr. Hart asked the Board to provide a comment on these payments to Board members (on 29 March 2021). The NHS Board provided no response (not even a no comment). The news report was run on 26 May 2021. Additionally, the NHS Board ignored Mr. Hart's request for a copy of the organization's bylaws. The day after Mr. Hart posed the question to the board, NHS changed the Form 990 on their website to show \$0 payment to Mr. Hall, on 30 March 2021. The IRS received the updated Form 990 on 05 April 2021. Normally, this would not be an issue, as re-filing for a mistake in a tax form is a fairly common occurrence. However, the re-filed tax form stated (in the notes) that Mr. Hall had received "no reportable compensation," yet the total expenditures on the 2017 tax return remained unchanged from the initial filing.

If the \$37,399 had not been expended, the total expenses should have been reduced by the same amount on the amended tax return. So, either the original tax filing was wrong, or the amended filing was. It would be fruitful to review this re-filed tax return, as well as the original

return, very closely. Also interesting is the fact that the amended return for 2017, filed in 2021, was done by a completely different CPA (Eide Bailly based out of Minneapolis, MN) vs the original return filed in 2018 (for 2017 – filed by a local Reno CPA), and the new CPA (Eide Bailly) has not filed any other tax returns for the NHS before. It begs the question, how did Eide Bailly manage to refile the 2017 tax returns in one day (from Mar 29 to Mar 30) having no prior involvement in the accounting or tax filing for NHS? It is also worth mentioning that CPA Eide Bailly does not appear to be the CPA for NHS on any tax returns after the re-filing in 2021. Any logical person would have to question, did CPA Eide Bailly actually ensure that Greg Hall did not receive a payment, and was an amended 1099 for Mr. Hall filed? Was a 1099 issued to Mr. Hall in 2018 for the 2017 payment?

It is interesting to note that Board member, Ms. Watkins', payment was not removed from the tax return refiling. To this day, the Board has not provided the public an explanation of why Board member Ms. Watkins was paid, in violation of NHS' own bylaws which state that no funds shall "inure to the benefit, directly or indirectly to Director, Officer or other private person." NHS did not remove her payment from the amended tax return for 2017, and no amendments were made to subsequent tax returns to remove payments made to her in 2018 and 2019. It is said that she provided CPA services, but given the bylaw directive there should have been more transparency as to the rationale for the payment. There should have been bids taken before assigning the (paid) task to a Director. Furthermore, if she was the CPA for NHS, one has to wonder why she did not prepare the organization's tax returns for those or follow-on years. It begs the question, what accounting services did this Board member provide, for which she was paid, at the direction of the Board of Directors?

There is also a rumor that another Member of the Board received a contract to either her company or her business partner's company in an amount greater than \$100k. With all of these occurrences of Board members approving contracts to existing Board members, it would seem reasonable that a thorough review of NHS's W3s and 1099s is warranted. NHS President Kris Wells (who resigned early May 2023, as complaints about NHS were surfacing, after serving for 10 years on the board without a break) provided Mr. Hart a written response to his inquiry about recent issues at NHS, stating that the 2017 payments to Board members "had been investigated and cleared" but would not say who investigated or cleared those payments.

#### 4. FINANCIAL OPAQUENESS, MISUSE OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND FINANCIAL IMPROPRIETY

Upon review of the NHS tax returns, several issues were identified. There is a non-transparent category of non-employee professional services "Fees for services" in the amount of \$243,556<sup>2</sup> (see Attachment: Tax Return Extract) for tax year 2021. This external personnel support category is in addition to Legal/Accounting/Financial Management Fees, which are categorized in separate tax lines. Given these exclusions, one wonders what are these expenses, and WHO got paid from this opaque accounting category? Given the potential for self-dealing within the Board (paying Greg Hall \$37k in 2017, \$31k to Rachel Watkins between 2017 and 2019, plus the

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<sup>2</sup> See Attachment 9 Tax Return Extract

rumored >\$100k to another Board member or an associated party), it is concerning that a large expense is lumped into a nebulous, unspecific, expense category. The lack of transparency into who these funds were paid to is concerning.

Multiple NHS volunteers and ex-staff have reported that CEO Greg Hall has claimed that NHS has no money for enrichment for the dogs (one of the non-profit's fundamental missions is to care for animals), but he is able to find funds for distant travel. Multiple members of the NHS staff spent a week in New Orleans in early April 2023, to attend a conference. Also, Greg Hall has reported that he and a junior female staffer were scheduled to take another trip to the Bay Area in spring 2023. In 2021, NHS spent over \$33,000 on travel.

A former staffer Lisa Feder (COO in 2021) stated that NHS pays about \$20k/year for ShelterLuv, a shelter management software. As COO, she attempted to persuade CEO Greg Hall to switch to PetPoint (\$1.5k/yr) because ShelterLuv was very expensive (>1000% more than PetPoint software), and less capable. PetPoint, in particular, could handle the demands of larger shelters, as well as the ability to ensure seamless data transfer from the county when animals were transferred. Ms. Feder reported that ShelterLuv is so limited that NHS needs two separate accounts for the shelters it runs in Reno and Carson City; and cannot even transfer animals from Carson City to Reno and vice versa, without generating duplicative entries, thus over-reporting on the number of animals in each shelter's care. Lisa stated that Greg is friends with the CEO of ShelterLuv, and told her not to pursue this issue. Mr. Greg Hall is willing to make NHS spend 1,000% more for an inferior product sold by a friend. One wonders if Mr. Greg Hall might have benefited personally via kickbacks or non-monetary benefits from this friend.

In the last month, the NHS has hired attorneys to defend its CEO, Mr. Hall, and Board members from complaints of mismanagement, incompetence and mistreatment of animals. The bylaws provide for officers and directors to be indemnified, but no indemnification should be provided for anyone who has been adjudicated "not to have acted in good faith in the reasonable belief that such action was in the best interests of the corporation." The charges against Mr. Hall include those of misogyny, firing anyone more experienced than he is who disagrees with him, firing whistleblowers (in direct violation of the NHS' whistleblower policy), and providing un-factual accounts to people who complained about senior staff who slandered a local business and its owners. It seems obvious that the charges against Mr. Hall are a direct result of his actions that are NOT in the best interests of the corporation, but in his personal best interests. This being the case, it is an ethics violation, as well as YET another violation of the NHS' bylaws, to use donor funds to defend Mr. Hall and the Board members for their mismanagement and flouting of NHS' own bylaws.

## 5. LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE PUBLIC AND FAILURE TO RELEASE BYLAWS

Requests had been made to the NHS since 2021 by journalists, and recently, even by the City of Reno, to produce their bylaws, and these requests were repeatedly ignored until May 5, 2023.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> As reported by Joe Hart on his Facebook page (in a reply to a comment)

In itself, this is a failure to abide by IRS requirements for a non-profit, which requires NHS to give access to their bylaws to the public.

The bylaws, now finally released, state that directors may serve two 3-year terms but are termed out after that and must leave for at least a year. Then, they may return to the Board after 12 months have passed. However, seven directors served more than six years continuously in violation of the organization's own bylaws. Below are the directors who broke the organization's own bylaws:

Mr. Jack Grellman, 2012-2021, 10 years – was in his 7<sup>th</sup> year when he installed Greg as CEO

Ms. Jan Watson, 2012-2021, 10 years – was in her 7<sup>th</sup> year when she installed Greg as CEO

Ms. Joan Dees, 2014-2021, 8 years

Ms. Kris Wells, 2014-2023, 10 years (recently resigned)

Ms. Mendy Elliott, 2012-2018, 7 years – was in her 7<sup>th</sup> year when she installed Greg as CEO

Ms. Rachel Ringenback-Watkins, 2015-2021, 7 years

Ms. Tierra Bonalda, 2012-2021, 10 years – in her 7<sup>th</sup> year when she installed Greg as CEO. Ms Bonaldi might have served longer than 10 years because historical data on the NHS Board is only available up to 2012 on their website.

The fact that NHS directors either don't know the organization's bylaws or thought it OK to ignore them, is highly disturbing. Is flouting the bylaws an oversight, indicating incompetence, or a deliberate act, indicating malfeasance? The refusal to provide the bylaws for many years might suggest the latter. This conclusion makes one wonder what the Board of Directors stood to gain by staying on the board beyond their allowable terms.

## Conclusion

Based on the above findings, I urge the IRS to:

1. Audit the finances of NHS to determine if the Board of Directors, Mr. Gregory Hall (CEO), or persons/entities associated with these individuals have received payments from NHS, in violation of the NHS bylaws.
2. Investigate the possible self-dealing violation of the NHS bylaws and IRS mandates, from the Board of Directors appointing Mr. Gregory Hall to the CEO position without doing their due diligence to find a qualified person for the position.

NHS, Reno and Carson City is a large animal shelter that has more than \$7,000,000.00/yr in annual donations, and investments of \$14,000,000.00. This amount of public donations requires competent management and oversight to ensure that these public funds are being used in the best interest of the animals that are rendered to the shelter, which is the intention of the donors. The above issues indicate that the current Board of Directors and CEO are either not able to, or are unwilling to, ensure that the NHS is run in accordance with their own bylaws and IRS mandates for non-profit status. The public deserves transparency into the management and finances of NHS. Thus far, public requests for both have been met with refusals and non-

responses from NHS. This leaves the public with no other recourse than to ask the IRS to open an investigation into NHS, on behalf of NHS donors, and all animal lovers of Reno and Carson City.

Attachments: Tax Return Extract

**Part IX Statement of Functional Expenses**

Section 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations must complete all columns. All other organizations must complete column (A).

Check if Schedule O contains a response or note to any line in this Part IX

Do not include amounts reported on lines 6b, 7b, 8b, 9b, and 10b of Part VIII.	(A) Total expenses	(B) Program service expenses	(C) Management and general expenses	(D) Fundraising expenses
1 Grants and other assistance to domestic organizations and domestic governments. See Part IV, line 21				
2 Grants and other assistance to domestic individuals. See Part IV, line 22				
3 Grants and other assistance to foreign organizations, foreign governments, and foreign individuals. See Part IV, lines 15 and 16				
4 Benefits paid to or for members				
5 Compensation of current officers, directors, trustees, and key employees	362,700.	303,914.	49,072.	9,714.
6 Compensation not included above to disqualified persons (as defined under section 4958(f)(1)) and persons described in section 4958(c)(3)(B)				
7 Other salaries and wages	3,244,399.	2,718,954.	435,588.	89,857.
8 Pension plan accruals and contributions (include section 401(k) and 403(b) employer contributions)				
9 Other employee benefits	344,120.	287,111.	57,009.	
10 Payroll taxes	247,257.	205,121.	34,971.	7,165.
11 Fees for services (nonemployees):				
a Management				
b Legal	2,230.		1,775.	455.
c Accounting	22,500.		22,500.	
d Lobbying				
e Professional fundraising services. See Part IV, line 17				
f Investment management fees	96,539.		96,539.	
g Other. (If line 11g amount exceeds 10% of line 25, column (A), amount, list line 11g expenses on Sch O.)	243,566.	186,755.	45,411.	11,400.
12 Advertising and promotion	78,575.		72,279.	6,296.
13 Office expenses	159,912.	96,388.	54,120.	9,404.
14 Information technology	78,627.	21,671.	48,278.	8,678.
15 Royalties				
16 Occupancy	339,491.	317,517.	21,974.	
17 Travel	33,473.	27,764.	4,679.	1,030.
18 Payments of travel or entertainment expenses for any federal, state, or local public officials				
19 Conferences, conventions, and meetings	885.	526.	359.	
20 Interest	5,763.		5,763.	
21 Payments to affiliates				
22 Depreciation, depletion, and amortization	124,402.	111,962.	12,440.	
23 Insurance	57,651.	53,907.	3,744.	
24 Other expenses. Itemize expenses not covered above. (List miscellaneous expenses on line 24e. If line 24e amount exceeds 10% of line 25, column (A), amount, list line 24e expenses on Schedule O.)				
a <b>SUPPLIES</b>	523,012.	502,563.	10,471.	9,978.
b <b>DONATED SUPPLIES &amp; SERV</b>	327,711.	318,015.		9,696.
c <b>POSTAGE &amp; PRINTING</b>	77,026.	172.	73,787.	3,067.
d <b>REPAIRS &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>	53,318.	44,857.	8,461.	
e All other expenses	25,466.	1,144.	9,803.	14,519.
25 <b>Total functional expenses.</b> Add lines 1 through 24e	6,448,623.	5,198,341.	1,069,023.	181,259.
26 <b>Joint costs.</b> Complete this line only if the organization reported in column (B) joint costs from a combined educational campaign and fundraising solicitation. Check here <input type="checkbox"/> if following SOP 98-2 (ASC 958-720)				

Dear relevant parties,

Please find my letter of complaint to be filed for public record regarding NHS Management

Google Drive link here. .PDF attached below.

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bdBG7b8RoeA0GeV3B4vsKC-JMnu7q1aeYtok\\_8HI0Gk/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bdBG7b8RoeA0GeV3B4vsKC-JMnu7q1aeYtok_8HI0Gk/edit?usp=sharing)

Sincerely,  
Joel Nelson

Dear Washoe County Regional Animal Services Advisory Board (WCRAS) and Reno Mayor's Office,

It is with great sadness and frustration that I write to you today. But, I feel a moral obligation to be the voice of the voiceless at NHS. Both animals and some dedicated underpaid staff afraid to speak up.

In this letter I will share my history of reporting concerns and my ultimate suspension as a volunteer by CEO Greg Hall.

I understand this is an extensive letter at some 18+ pages. So, in the interest of respecting your time, please see a summary with suggestions about next steps below:

Suggestions on how NHS needs to restore its trust in our community and our hearts.

(A) - Appoint a proven CEO with actual shelter and animal care experience. Ideally, this is a past CEO of NHS with a proven track record. The appointment of Ms. Bonney Brown, former CEO of NHS, a woman who guided NHS to be recognized as a leading shelter nationally under her care, is a perfect candidate. She is proven, immediately available, inspires trust, and additionally, a woman. Enough with the white men of nepotism and privilege already. All of the above mentioned credentials of Ms. Brown sends a clear and definitive message to our community; NHS is serious about change.

(B) - A complete overhaul of the NHS board is required. There is no one on the NHS BoD with animal care or shelter experience. Period. A total absence of any qualified, relevantly knowledgeable, or track recorded board members, would never be considered, nor tolerated, in any serious organization. Our community demands and deserves more. Additionally concerning, the remaining board members were all present while NHS decayed into a community tragedy. You all either knew about these complaints, in which case you are liars when you say you did not know, and need you to be removed. Or, you did not know about these complaints, in which case you are absentee and incompetent. In either or both cases, the members of the board have lost their trust in this community and need to step down with dignity and humility in face of your public failure. You have failed us. If you truly care for these animals and staff and this community, resign. And let proven competent people guide us out of this dark hour you are complicit in. You would be respected for doing so.

(C) - Order a full forensic financial audit for the period of time that Greg Hall was CEO and Kris Wells President of the Board. New management should do this immediately, if for no other reason than to protect themselves. The Nevada Attorney General and IRS are now involved, and best to be proactive in your cooperation. In the very likely event - according to the financial documents I've been made party to - maleficence has taken place under Greg & Kris's rein, guilty parties need to be tried and convicted to the full extent of the law. Just because Greg & Kris left the building, does not mean the consequences of their actions end. Make an example of guilty parties and send a clear

message to our community this will not be tolerated.

(D) - Raise pay of staff to a living wage. The dedicated staff work selflessly and deserve a living wage. Their pay has not kept pace with inflation and cost of living increases in Washoe County. NHS has a \$14M+ balance sheet. There's enough money. Create financial incentives and paths to increased training and credentials for caring dedicated staff. I.e. offer scholarships for online animal behaviors schools, and upon successful graduation, offer increased pay as a reward. This boost staff morale, gives them a feeling they are appreciated and supported, builds culture, and of course, improves the lives of animals at NHS as a result for more competent care.

(E) - Appoint a credible unbiased 3rd party shelter evaluator to evaluate and monitor the state of NHS, demand standards be returned, monitor progress and application of said standards, and create clear consequences when standards are not maintained. Make all reports to be made public on NHS website.

Thank you advisory board and community for your time and consideration.

### **Introduction**

My name is Joel Nelson. I am a third generation Reno native with a deep family connection to our community. I am not alone in my dire concerns for the safety and welfare of both animals and humans at NHS. These concerns have been expressed repeatedly over months, in voice, official letters, in person meetings with presentations and offered solutions to NHS management. These urgent concerns have gone ignored, and in my opinion, have been actively suppressed by management, specifically CEO Greg Hall.

### **Background**

I have been actively walking dogs at NHS for approximately a year and a half. I began volunteering at NHS shortly after the passing of Mr. Snoops, an 80lb pitbull adopted from NHS 16 years ago. Mr. Snoops and I shared a special 16 years together. I was not ready for the emotional toll of losing another dog, but I wanted to be of service and get "my dog fix" so I thought what better way than to volunteer.

### **1st Day Concerns**

I distinctly remember my first day on NHS premises and first interaction with my volunteer "trainer" Margo Zaugg; I thought, "this simply can't be right". Is this how all shelters are run? There is an undeniable lack of organization, lack of knowledge, lack of training, toxic politics, and even misogyny.

All this leads to dangerous incidents and undue sufferings of animals.

I will itemize my concerns by group below. But in summary, all of the mismanagement noted below leads to the same result; **the animals and some hard working staff are suffering needlessly.**

### **Volunteer Concerns**

While I fully disclose at the beginning of my time volunteering at NHS I had no formal training as a dog trainer or animal behaviorist (I have since begun formal training), I was born and raised around dogs my entire life, and it was clear my volunteer trainer Ms. Margo Zaugg clearly had no qualifications, nor even the most basic knowledge of animal handling or behavior. Her presence often leads otherwise calm dogs to become agitated, hyper aroused and even aggressive.

**There is no initial or ongoing dog handling or enrichment training by any qualified staff for new and current volunteers in my time at NHS. Volunteer "Training" is completely handled by grossly incompetent, untrained and uneducated "self appointed expert volunteers".**

Volunteers "are run" by self appointed volunteer leader Ms. Zaugg, who openly says "she is in charge!" when questioned by concerned volunteers what the NHS chain of command is for volunteers and volunteer concerns. She in fact yelled in my face "I am in charge" when I questioned the official chain of command at NHS. Do I answer to NHS management or Margo?

**Multiple written complaints by multiple volunteers have been written to NHS management about Margo's "bullying", "divisiveness", "toxic volunteer atmosphere", and "her inability to safely walk dogs".**

Also concerning is Margo's "self appointed dog behavior evaluations that staff take as gospel". This is to say, she has no animal behavior training, qualifications or standardized methodology, and she takes it upon herself to evaluate dogs and whether or not other volunteers can "safely" walk dogs. She herself is incapable of safely walking many dogs. Staff, including dog staff managers, David Smith and Amber Grey, who themselves, do not appear to have any formal training take these behavioral recommendations as gospel. Unfortunately, Margo's mere presence adversely affects dog behavior leading to wildly inconsistent and erroneous "diagnosis". This has resulted in a dogs being deemed "dangerous" (dogs other volunteers have no trouble or incidents with) and sadly put in further isolation from human care and without any enrichment or stimulation.

**Example Incident**

Volunteer Ms. Hansen and trained Dog Behaviorist Joshua Green of BarkSide Dog Training began working with dog Punchy. Punchy is harmless, but prone to hyper arousal and height seeking due to a severe lack of enrichment and isolation that is the norm at NHS. Over a series of weeks Volunteer Ms. Hansen made great progress with Punchy using tools and training program prescribed by Joshua.

Margo returns to NHS after a 5 week medical leave, and on day one of her return enters Punchy's kennel and reports he is "dangerous", "he bit me", "he tore my jacket", "he should be a Purple Dot dog (color designation that limits only staff to deal with said dog). Senior dog staff David Smith and Amber Grey again take Margo's expert diagnosis as gospel and make Punchy Purple Dot.

When Volunteer Ms. Hansen came to work with Punchy the next day, and learned that according to Margo this dog Ms. Hansen has been working with for weeks is now deemed "dangerous" and Ms. Hansen is not qualified to walk this dog (because now it has Purple Dot Status) she took the issue to Animal Care Manager Staci Sanchez. Staci, knowing both Ms. Hansen and the patterns surrounding Margo, quickly overrode the erroneous evaluation of Margo, returned Punchy to normal status and Ms. Hansen went on to work with Punchy to great success.

**Yet one of many examples of untrained volunteers making untrained unqualified diagnoses that untrained unqualified staff take as gospel. There is NO Standard Operating Procedure or methodology to consistently behaviorally evaluate dogs at NHS. Untrained staff and volunteers create unnecessary arousal, anxiety and even aggression in the dogs due to no training and incompetence.**

**Management does not respond to complaints about dangerous incidents.**

**Dangerous Volunteer Incidents**

Due to gross incompetence of the majority of NHS volunteers, no training and no management oversight, dangerous incidents have occurred, including bites of staff and volunteers, and unnecessary dog euthanizations.

**Example Dangerous Volunteer Incident**

Volunteer Ms. Cindy is walking down the hall to take dog Punchy for a walk. Volunteer Ms. Karen rushes in front of the both of them and with a high pitch excited voice and waving hands erratically in front of Punchy. Punchy jumps on Ms. Karen. Ms. Karen holds Punchy's front paws and does not release them. Punchy becomes scared - hackles up, front teeth snarled and exposed. All classic body language signs of fear and impending aggression. Ms. Karen puts her face in front of Punchy. Ms. Cindy tells Ms. Karen, "let him go!". Ms. Karen says, "No!". Ms. Cindy, "Karen! Let me go now!" At this point Ms. Cindy is trying to calm Punchy, whose paws are still being held against his will by Ms. Karen. Ms. Karen, "Its ok, I'm a dog trainer". Ms.

Cindy, “Karen! Fucking let him go!”. Ms. Karen releases Punchy.

This incident is an example of another self appointed expert volunteer “dog trainer” Karen. It is a violation of the most remedial animal handling etiquette and practices; e.g. invading a dog walkers personal space without permission, not maintaining a 6’+ bubble around dog and walker, using high pitch excitable voice, rapid body movements, riling a dog up, holding a dogs paws against its will, putting your face in front of a scared aroused dog with exposed teeth, not respecting dog walkers request for space 3x times.

**There is no volunteer training for dog handling. There is not even the most basic SOP’s for safety. There is no volunteer skills review or accountability for dangerous behaviors. Management does not respond to complaints about dangerous incidents and repeat volunteer offenders.**

#### **Example Dangerous Volunteer Incident**

April 10, 2023 Volunteers Joel Nelson and Cindy Hansen and dog staff Mikayla Lopez are in parking lot meeting with a foster dog. Volunteer Leia is walking across parking lot with dog Gretchen. Gretchen is a Blue Dot dog. Leia is NOT an authorized Blue Dot walker and should not be walking Blue Dot dogs. Cindy approaches Leia and politely explains to Leia she can not walk Blue Dot dogs. Leia says, “Ya, I don’t care. I just walk in the kennels and see a dog I like and walk them. It’s ok”.

Next dog staff Mikayla approaches and explains the same. Leia becomes defensive. Mikayla professionally walks with Leia and Gretchen back to NHS building. Leia yells at Mikayla in the public waiting area of NHS. Alyssa Bedgood Volunteer Coordinator is notified of incident.

Alyssa response, “I’ll take care of it, but don’t tell anyone”.

Volunteers Joel and Cindy write a formal incident report as yet another example of a complete lack of oversight of volunteers by management. No training. Another dangerous incident.

Another example of insubordination of volunteers to NHS staff.

Alyssa “taking care of it” was limited to a sentence tagged onto an unrelated email to volunteers, *“just a friendly reminder guys please only walk dogs you are allowed to”*.

**There is no volunteer training for dog handling. There is not even the most basic SOP’s for safety. There is no volunteer skills review or accountability for dangerous behaviors. This took place where members of the public are often with children.**

**Management does not respond to complaints about dangerous incidents. Management is not respected because it is completely absent and anemic.**

**Management does not respond to complaints about dangerous incidents. Management is not respected because it is completely absent and anemic.**

#### **Dangerous Example Incident - Bite**

April 2023 Volunteer Nancy / Staff Alyssa Bedgood/ Dog Capone

I was not present for the following incident, but I am familiar with all parties involved and the repeated scenarios that create such dangerous incidents.

Early April 2023. Volunteer Nancy is walking dog Capone through the hall in NHS. Nancy and Capone are greeted by Alyssa Bedgood Volunteer Coordinator. Capone “bites” Alyssa.

Capone is put in bite quarantine and euthanized days later.

**I have been told by staff that Alyssa has been bit “3 or 4 times” Two members of senior management CEO Greg Hall and Animal Care Director Staci Sanchez told me they believe “Alyssa is trying to get bit to collect disability”.**

I did see Alyssa’s “bite” on her forearm a week later and it was minimal scratch at best. I had made several written warnings to management about the lack of volunteer training leading to mishandling of dogs and dangerous situations.

I worked with the dog Capone many times. There was nothing wrong with that dog. To get that dog to bite anyone is only possible through gross incompetence of Nancy and Alyssa. They killed that dog as far as I am concerned.

**There is no volunteer training for dog handling. There is not even the most basic SOP’s for safety. There is no volunteer skills review or accountability for dangerous behaviors. This took place where members of the public are often with children.**

**This took place where members of the public are often with children.**

**Management does not respond to complaints about dangerous incidents.**

### **Volunteer Concerns Summary**

**There is a gross and systemic incompetency by NHS volunteers in dog walking skills, animal safety, and the most basic dog behavior and body language observations, due to a complete absence of any training offered or mandated by NHS management.**

**This leads to unnecessary stress on the dogs, an absence of the most minimal enrichment, and tragically, to multiple avoidable bite incidents that have left staff and volunteers injured, dogs locked in kennels for “10 day bite quarantines” and unnecessary euthanizations.**

### **Management ignores complaints**

#### **Staff Concerns**

##### **Senior Dog Staff - David Smith**

David Smith proudly advertises he has a background in “military and police dog training”. I have never seen anything to suggest David has any dog training. He can’t even walk a dog correctly on a leash. It is my opinion, and an opinion shared with me by multiple NHS staff, David's credentials are a gross exaggeration at best, and a total fabrication at worst.

**I encourage the WCRAS to independently verify Mr. Smith’s alleged credentials and what ongoing training and education he possesses.**

I and others have witnessed David use what in my opinion is aversive, fear and pain based behavior modification techniques. Staff reports David will “**violently submit a dog**”. Staff is afraid to report these incidents to management because, “**David is untouchable**”. “**David is protected by Greg**” “**People who report David get fired**”.

I have witnessed an otherwise calm and happy dog react violently at the mere presence of David walking in a room, **which makes me question what dogs experience with David when there are no witnesses.**

Dog training and behavior experts, including Ms. KC Gardner owner and head trainer at ZoomRoom, and Joshua Green owner, trainer, and dog behaviorist of BarkSide Dog Training, also report **David has no knowledge** and is especially deficient in knowledge of appropriate reward based techniques for shelter dogs. In my year and a half volunteering at NHS, I have never seen David provide any enrichment to dogs, nor enrichment training or volunteer guidance. Period. He takes volunteer Ms. Zaugg's unqualified dog behavior evaluations and makes them policy.

#### **Pattern of Management Retaliation**

Staff openly voices frustrations and concerns about David's lack of credentials and deficiencies in basic animal and shelter care knowledge, leadership and work ethic, to myself and other volunteers. But staff “fear retaliation by David and executive management” and “**can’t I lose my job**” and “**anyone who reports problems about David gets fired by Greg**”. There is a narrative expressed by staff that David is “untouchable” and “protected”. I have personal knowledge of David not being held to equivalent standards of conduct other NHS staff are held to, by NHS CEO Greg Hall. There is a double standard Especially with female staff. There is definitely some misogyny here.

#### **David incompetent and unprofessional to adopters**

A concerned adopter told myself and another volunteer that David brought a dog into a greeting room and told the adopter, “this dog is dangerous”, “you don’t want this dog”, “nobody should want this dog”. **And then proceeded to leave the room. (Note, I am told this adopter “Arthur” has also written a formal complaint about David that is on public record with the Advisory Board)** If the dog was dangerous, then why leave an untrained member of the public alone in the meeting room? If the dog is not dangerous, then why say it is?

It is my opinion, David wanted this dog to have a bite incident so he could justify euthanization. This is purely speculative on my part, and admittedly a weighty allegation, but the dog “Punchy” and his evaluation and training had become a bone of contention between David, volunteers,

and management. Put simple and crude, I think David just wanted this dog to go away. Again, a controversial statement, and purely speculative, but an opinion nevertheless shared by myself and others based on a chain of events and context around those events. What is not speculative, is David's decision to leave a "dangerous dog" alone with an untrained member of our community.

### **Senior Dog Staff Manager - Amber Smith**

From my first encounter with Amber I found her cold, negative, uncommunicative, burned out, cynical and frankly disinterested in helping staff, volunteers or dogs. At first I assumed she simply had a "bad day". Later, I assumed she simply didn't like me for some unknown reason. Later still, I was to learn it was not personal; she treats everyone this way.

While admittedly subjective, staff openly speak about Amber's unwillingness to help, negativity, lack of any leadership, and lack of care for dogs in the form of offering even the most basic of enrichment and suggestions by the Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV). Her attitude toward humans and actions (or lack thereof) toward dogs suggests she apparently does not care, or simply refuses out of laziness to take suggestions nor actions to provide the most basic of shelter dog enrichment techniques I have seen deployed to great success at other shelters.

**I have never been greeted in a friendly manner or offered any training or support by Amber Grey or David Smith in my nearly 2 years as an NHS volunteer. I am not alone. Volunteers are treated like a burden and inconvenience by dog staff.**

**Multiple staff members have resigned from NHS expliciting citing Amber Grey as part or the majority of their reason for doing so. These letters of complaints specific to Amber are public and in the possession of WCRAS.**

**Multiple staff members have questioned David Smiths actual credentials and expressed concerns about his treatment of dogs.**

**I encourage the WCRAS to independently verify David and Ambers credentials and what ongoing training and education they possess, as well as reports of animal abuse.**

### **Dangerous Adoption Concerns**

There appears to be no training of staff nor protocols - official or unofficial - followed with regard to appropriate adoption practices. This leads to chronic failed adoptions, disappointed and misled members of the public, dangerous situations for dogs and the public, and tragically unnecessary bite incidents and dog euthanizations.

I have personally witnessed large, young, dogs with untreated behavior issues adopted to inappropriate adopters, including elderly men and women, only to see the dogs returned shortly there after. Sometimes dogs are returned after a tragic incident. In addition, there are dogs with dog reactivity histories and explicit notes in their file stating "single dog home only" or "no small children" being **adopted to homes with multiple dogs and small children with staff knowledge**. Again, sometimes leading to tragic incidents.

**Dogs have been adopted out to obviously homeless people with no means to support those dogs and those same dogs later returned after being picked up by animal control with ribs showing from malnourishment. Witnesses can be provided examples if required.**

### **Overuse of Trazodone and Gabapentin**

NHS has a practice of "doping up dogs" on what I believe to be an excessive amount of prescription drugs Trazodone and Gabapentin. An anti - depressant sedative and painkiller, respectively. It is my opinion David and Amber recommend this because they are lazy and do want to make the most minimal efforts to provide mental and physical enrichment for dogs; this takes time, care, and knowledge after all. David and Amber just want the dogs to sleep in their cages.

The dogs are often in a "zombie state" when they are introduced to potential adopters. This misleads adopters into thinking they are getting a "friendly calm quiet dog". The dogs are adopted out and often sent to their new home with **no prescription refills until very recently**.

There is a pattern of dogs rapidly detoxing over the next 2-3 days in their new home. Reported side effects to rapid Trazodone withdrawals are as follows:

Constipation

Diarrhea

Dry mouth

Headache

When stopped abruptly: agitation, **anxiety**, sleep disturbance

Low blood pressure

### **Manic episodes**

Serotonin syndrome: hallucinations, agitation, delirium, coma, fast heart rate, muscle tremor, dizziness, stomach upset Increased risk of bleeding

Hyponatremia

### **Seizures**

On April 6, 2023 I counted the total number of dogs on site vs the total number of dogs receiving Trazodone and Gabapentin according to their kennel cards. On said Kennel Cards are Pink stickers with a list of medications that dog is on.

**According to my count, nearly 40% of dogs at NHS in custody on this date were being administered Trazodone and Gabapentin.**

I have no formal training nor do I know what is an appropriate or industry accepted standards, but this seems excessively high to me. Shelter experts I have consulted confirmed this is excessive and inappropriate.

\*\*\* Note, I have been told since news of the excessive use of these drugs has been made public, the “pink stickers” on the kennel cards have been removed so as to hide the true number of prescriptions the dogs are on from the public and casual observer.

**I encourage the WCRAS to independently verify the number of dogs on prescription drugs, who approves this, what is industry standard, why adopters are often not sent home with Rx refills to aid the dogs in a slow controlled detox.**

### **Joel Nelson suspended from NHS by CEO Greg Hall**

The following is a chronology of events leading up to CEO Greg Hall suspending me from NHS, including me making multiple formal written reports of concerns about dangerous situations to NHS management while observing the appropriate chain of command. These concerns went unanswered by management, as per usual. When I made these concerns public on a group NHS volunteer email thread, I was suspended from NHS by CEO Greg Hall and accused of “bullying”, “insubordination”, “defamatory statements about NHS”.

### **March 16, 2023**

Myself and other volunteers voiced multiple concerns, in person and in writing, to Ms. Hayley Hayden Volunteer Coordinator about the state of toxicity in the volunteer ranks. Including, but not limited to, Bullying and Insubordination by Margo Zaugg, both violations and grounds for termination accounting to NHS Volunteer Agreement.

Additionally reported to Ms. Hayden, was the lack of volunteer training leading to dangerous incidents and no clear chain of command nor official documentation of where responsibilities lay between staff and volunteers. (e.g. is staff in charge or is Ms. Zaugg as she displays in word and action).

Ms. Hayden said she would “take action”. She of course took no action to address these concerns. A pattern of complete lack of follow through that would remain consistent with Ms. Hayden until her ultimate termination by management April 18, 2023.

Finally, sufficiently concerned that the lack of volunteer and staff training had reached such dangerous and unacceptable levels, myself and fellow volunteer Ms. Cindy Hansen requested a formal meeting with Ms. Staci Sanchez, recently appointed that very week to the role of Animal Care Manager for NHS. Myself, Ms. Hansen and Ms. Sanchez met on March 16, 2023

10:00AM.

Ms. Sanchez, Ms. Hansen and myself enjoyed what I thought was a productive 2 hours meeting whereby I presented a presentation (time stamped and dated and available for **WCRAS review**) of concerns and offered solutions to our urgent concerns. Staci was more than amenable and in fact passionately shared and affirmed our written concerns. *“Things have to change”*, she said and we all agreed. She agreed with many of our complaints, especially about specific volunteers Margo and Karen, and were deemed *“zero tolerance”* incidents and *“they have to go”* by Ms. Sanchez. Ms. Sanchez said action would be taken immediately. We were instructed by Ms. Sanchez to take our presentation and documents of incidents to Ms. Hayden Volunteer Coordinator, and Staci *“would back Hayley up, because Margo pushes her around”*.

### **March 21, 2023**

Ms. Hayden Volunteer Coordinator, Ms. Hansen Volunteer, and myself met in Ms. Hayden’s office to discuss concerns about the state of NHS volunteers and safety and welfare of the dogs as a result. Amongst topics covered were a series of recent dangerous incidents involving volunteer mishandling of dogs; in one case leading to a bite of NHS staff and subsequent euthanization of dog “Capone”.

Hayley said herself, *“I am a pushover”* regarding her unwillingness or incapacity to rein in volunteers behaviors and that *“Margo gave me a dressing down in my office because I did not consult with her first about promoting Joel to become a “blue dot walker”* (approval to walk more behaviorally challenged dogs).

I expressed my frustration again at having (a) - no clear understanding who is in charge, Margo or Staff? and (b) - Bullying and Insubordination directed not only at other volunteers but also staff by Ms. Zaugg. Both violations of the Volunteer Agreement and listed as “termination offenses” Ms. Hayden assured myself and Ms. Hansen that staff, and indeed she herself Ms. Hayden, was in fact *“in charge of volunteers”*, had *“power to make changes”*, and *“would immediately”*.

Ms. Hayden even said she would *“request Staci and Nikki”*, Head of Animal care and Management Consultant hired by NHS respectively, to *“be in the room”* when she met with Ms. Zaugg so she wouldn’t *“get run over by Margo”*. **Here the volunteer coordinator is afraid of a volunteer and needs a team to address said volunteer.**

**I sent the minutes of our meeting with Hayley to her via email to make sure there is no confusion on what was said or agreed in that meeting.**

Nothing changed. Business as usual at NHS.

### **April 3, 2023**

I send a follow up email asking Hayley what progress she’s made regarding our agreed upon action plan. She had done nothing.

### **April 5, 2023**

I email Hayley expressing my frustration at her growing pattern of inaction and cite the minutes from our meeting(s). I explain her pattern of making promises and not keeping them, inaction and pattern of passing her job responsibilities up the chain of command is no longer acceptable to me. I inform her I will no longer waste time bringing complaints to her, and instead, I will forward my concerns to CEO Greg Hall and NHS Board of Directors.

Haley responds in an email, *“given the nature of this email, I am forwarding it to HR and Senior Management”*. Hayley’s response to my complaints of her not following through, keeping promises, and passing her job responsibilities to management, was in fact, to do all of the above.

### **April 15, 2023**

I send email to volunteers expressing my concerns and frustrations. I say we need to demand more of each other and management. I cite dangerous practices that are leading to bites and volunteer injuries.

### **April 15, 2023**

Greg sends email to all volunteers the same day. Says my email and complaints are *“baseless”*

*and totally inappropriate*". Calls them "defamatory", "bullying", "insubordination" Orders all volunteers to not speak of this incident again or risk immediate termination. Email below.

Hi Joel,

I have been forwarded your e-mail message to staff and volunteers earlier today.

This e-mail is grossly inappropriate and violates numerous terms and conditions of the Volunteer Policy and Waiver, attached here.

The specific violations are covered in the following sections:

Professional Behavior, Supervision, Confidentiality, and Volunteer Standards of Conduct. The specific actions under the Volunteer Standards of Conduct include Insubordination, Bullying of any kind, Inappropriate communication or public outbursts, and Not following policies or processes.

As such, you are temporarily suspended pending our meeting on Monday at 2:00 p.m. You are not authorized to have further interactions with staff and volunteers other than me until that time.

If you have any questions or concerns, please direct them to me.

Thank you in advance and I am looking forward to our meeting on Monday.

Regards,

CEO Greg Hall

### **April 17, 2023**

I meet Greg and Staci Sanchez in Gregs office. He is 17 mins late for meeting. He had every intention to fire me immediately, until I shared with him over 30 pages of email correspondence between myself, Hayley Hayden Volunteer Coordinator and Staci Sanchez Animal Care director.

I share my presentation, previously shared with Ms. Sanchez, with concerns and potential solutions to the dangerous situations that were becoming common with NHS dogs, staff and volunteers. Greg took 3 pages of single spaced notes. I gave him a copy of my presentation. It is my distinct impression he had never seen these complaints and is completely in the dark about what happens daily at NHS. He tells me, "*he needs to reflect on all this and will let me know by April 19 at the latest if I am permanently terminated as a volunteer*". In typical lack of Greg follow through, I never hear from Greg again.

### **April 18, 2023**

The day after my meeting with Greg, Hayley Hayden Volunteer Coordinator "resigns" abruptly with no explanation. I hear from fellow volunteers that Greg told them, "*Hayley resigned because Joel Nelson threatened her life and she doesn't feel safe here anymore*". This is of course **Slanderous and had this been true I would have been arrested immediately**. This yet another classic example of Greg pitting people against each other and creating lies, as is so often reported in the complaint letters to this Advisory Board.

### **April 19, 2023**

Two days after my meeting with Greg, Greg issues a "new mandatory volunteer waiver" with specific language that addresses new safe dog handling standards. This new waiver must be signed or volunteers are not allowed to walk dogs. This new waiver is **pre-dated to April 1, 2023**. There is no line for volunteers to date their signature. Why? If my concerns were so "baseless and defamatory" according to Greg, why make them "mandatory policy and must be signed if you wish to volunteer". Further, I believe this waiver was pre-dated to make it appear that action had been taken far earlier than it had in reality. This one of Greg's panicked preparations for the April 21, 2023 advisory board meeting in which Greg was going to be forced to address these concerns and others. Of course, as we know now, Greg failed to show up for this meeting.

### **April 20, 2023**

NHS announce Joshua Green of BarkSide Dog Training has been contracted to train volunteers in safe dog handling. This is a direct recommendation in my presentation that had gone ignored by Staci Sanchez and Hayley Hayden. Again, if my concerns were "baseless and defamatory" why **enact another specific recommendation I've made**? Again, I believe this to be a last minute pathetic effort to make Greg look like he was taking action ahead of the April 21, 2023 Advisory Board meeting he failed to attend.

### **April 21, 2023**

Greg does away with volunteers walking Blue Dot Dogs (dogs with behavior issues requiring

more knowledgeable volunteers to walk them safely). Kris Wells, then NHS board president says in a prior unrelated letter *“they [dog staff] are so very short staffed and barely have time to clean kennels”*. So, if staff barely has time to clean kennels, how are they now able to clean kennels AND walk and enrich dozens of Blue Dot dogs on site? The answer is, of course this is impossible and staff now report these dogs are NOT being walked and now **spending “days alone in their kennels” without human interaction.**

Next, management initiates a program that *“while not mandatory, is highly recommended to all volunteers”* whereby Joshue Green will train volunteers in correct dog handling, enrichment, and dog body language behaviors. This, again, is a direct recommendation from my presentation ignored for months by management. Why now? Because Greg was panicked and media attention was on him. Unfortunately, many volunteers still think they “know best” and ignore Joshua’s help and recommendations.

### **Summary and Recommendations to WCRAS Advisory Board**

At the time of this writing Greg Hall, Kris Wells and two additional board members have resigned. The public is now fully aware of the dysfunction at NHS and subsequent animal and human suffering. Raymond Gonzalez is President of the Board and Rita Eissman Vice President.

This is not enough. The community demands and deserves more.

Suggestions on how NHS needs to restore its trust in our community and our hearts.

(F) - Appoint a proven CEO with actual shelter and animal care experience. Ideally, this is a past CEO of NHS with a proven track record. The appointment of Ms. Bonney Brown, former CEO of NHS, a woman who guided NHS to be recognized as a leading shelter nationally under her care, is a perfect candidate. She is proven, immediately available, inspires trust, and additionally, a woman. Enough with the white men of nepotism and privilege already. All of the above mentioned credentials of Ms. Brown sends a clear and definitive message to our community; NHS is serious about change.

(G) - A complete overhaul of the NHS board is required. There is no one on the NHS BoD with animal care or shelter experience. Period. A total absence of any qualified, relevantly knowledgeable, or track recorded board members, would never be considered, nor tolerated, in any serious organization. Our community demands and deserves more. Additionally concerning, the remaining board members were all present while NHS decayed into a community tragedy. You all either knew about these complaints, in which case you are liars when you say you did not know, and need you to be removed. Or, you did not know about these complaints, in which case you are absentee and incompetent. In either or both cases, the members of the board have lost their trust in this community and need to step down with dignity and humility in face of your public failure. You have failed us. If you truly care for these animals and staff and this community, resign. And let proven competent people guide us out of this dark hour you are complicit in. You would be respected for doing so.

(H) - Order a full forensic financial audit for the period of time that Greg Hall was CEO and Kris Wells President of the Board. New management should do this immediately, if for no other reason than to protect themselves. The Nevada Attorney General and IRS are now involved, and best to be proactive in your cooperation. In the very likely event - according to the financial documents I’ve been made party to - maleficence has taken place under Greg & Kris’s rein, guilty parties need to be tried and convicted to the full extent of the law. Just because Greg & Kris left the building, does not mean the consequences of their actions end. Make an example of guilty parties and send a clear message to our community this will not be tolerated.

(I) - Raise pay of staff to a living wage. The dedicated staff work selflessly and deserve a living wage. Their pay has not kept pace with inflation and cost of living increases in Washoe County. NHS has a \$14M+ balance sheet. There’s enough money. Create

financial incentives and paths to increased training and credentials for caring dedicated staff. I.e. offer scholarships for online animal behaviors schools, and upon successful graduation, offer increased pay as a reward. This boost staff morale, gives them a feeling they are appreciated and supported, builds culture, and of course, improves the lives of animals at NHS as a result for more competent care.

(J) - Appoint a credible unbiased 3rd party shelter evaluator to evaluate and monitor the state of NHS, demand standards be returned, monitor progress and application of said standards, and create clear consequences when standards are not maintained. Make all reports to be made public on NHS website.

Thank you advisory board and community for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Joel Nelson

Dear Animal Advisory Board,

Please see my attached letter regarding the statements against Nevada Humane Society (NHS) and CEO Greg Hall. I have been involved with the organization for over 12 years and NHS holds a special place in my heart. I write this letter in the hope that sharing my experiences and what I have seen will have an impact on creating change and setting NHS up for success once again with NEW leadership. The animals and the true good people who stand up for them only deserve the best—and I will help in any way that I can. Thank you in advance for your care, concern, and time.

**Kimberly Wade**

904-294-1914

**Consultant**

[kwade@humanenetwork.org](mailto:kwade@humanenetwork.org)

**Humane Network** ([web](#) and [Facebook](#))

May 10, 2023

Dear Animal Advisory Board,

I began at Nevada Humane Society (NHS) under Bonney Brown, as a volunteer and foster in 2007. I became an employee in early 2010. I worked with an incredible team over the years with a common goal to put animals first and collaborate with other organizations to continually save every life we could and make a positive community impact. I was also an adopter, foster, donor and I cultivated many relationships that played a key role in the success of NHS.

In 2017, after a CEO was let go, myself, along with Arthur Westbrook, took over as interim Co-CEO's, appointed by then Board President Tierra Bonaldi and Vice President Greg Hall.

In 2018, I resigned for a role where I could help even more animals through Humane Network and Maddie's Pet Project in Nevada—but continued as a contract employee for over six months. In late 2018, Greg, who was currently Board president, was moved into the role of CEO.

I remained a volunteer from the time of my resignation through 2019.

Initially, Greg "felt" to be a good fit, supporting the mission and team. That quickly deteriorated. I witnessed (and several staff and volunteers shared complaints with me) several changes:

- Shelter care declined. Kennels were consistently dirty, our longstanding "10 Minute Poop and Scoop" rule disappeared, and a smell permeated the building that was not there prior to his lead.
- Animal care declined. Cats were being placed back into colony rooms too soon after anesthesia during spay/neuter surgeries and were declining overnight, or worse. Neither dogs nor cats had enrichment. They sat in kennels, feigning sleep, or hiding, and deteriorating mentally, which we know affects their physical health. Dog walks were limited, and dogs were left unattended for long periods of time in play yards. Kittens were consistently sick with runny noses, weepy eyes, and other cold symptoms. The care of office cats deteriorated—diets changed, litter boxes weren't cleaned, enrichment

went away—and they began exhibiting physical and emotional stress symptoms: unkempt coats, constant respiratory infections, fear, and anxiety. Previously, staff offices were used for cats who needed extra medical attention, special diets, behavioral modification, or were just harder to adopt and needed one-on-one time with humans.

- Customer service disappeared. As a volunteer, we were no longer kindly welcomed—we were a bother. I volunteered with a longstanding photographer, and we went from being able to handle the animals on our own and having access to anything we needed, to not, and being told our help wasn't needed. Front desk staff no longer greeted people entering the building. Wait times for help doubled.
- Overall communication became delayed and nearly ceased. I have numerous emails between local media, volunteers, and donors (individuals and small businesses alike) that show my continual push to get Greg to respond to inquiries, contracts, payment and more. Getting him to follow through on a project, reach out to a donor, or business partner was impossible.
- Mismanagement and lack of leadership increased some of which specifically related to my contract role.
  - I was treated disrespectfully, talked down to, made to feel incompetent and invalidated continually by a specific upper management staff member. I voiced those concerns and my discomfort in being around said person, yet he continually allowed the behavior to continue.
  - I was working with and providing training for a new manager. That manager shared with me that they were unable to do their job due to Greg's micromanagement and lack of follow through. They did not feel empowered to do the role they were hired to do and struggled to hit deadlines because of his lack of communication. They ended up resigning.
  - Several managers who saw the decline in animal and shelter care tried to right the wrongs and "get things back to where they were." They shared with me many times that they were continually challenged and shut down by Greg. They expressed their despair and frustration in seeing the decline of the animals and the shelter but were unable to do anything about it. They ended up resigning.

Near the end of 2019, I made a tough decision to walk away. My contract time had long ceased. The complaints from staff, volunteers, adopters, and donors were mounting. People were comfortable talking to me because of my history with NHS, but I was no longer able to do anything about it. I felt discouraged by continuing to volunteer, no matter how much I wanted to help the animals. I reached out specifically to speak with Greg and several managers to see how I could help but was told by a trusted internal source that "Kimberly Wade is no longer welcome in the building and her help is not wanted."

That was the end of my duration with NHS in any capacity. I have not been back in the building since, but I do continue to hear of the challenges as more people voice their concerns. I am writing this letter in the hope that sharing my experiences and what I have seen will have an impact on creating change and setting NHS up for success once again with NEW leadership. It breaks my heart but the animals and the good people who stand up for them only deserve the best—and I will help in any way that I can.

Sincerely,

*Kimberly S. Wade*

Kimberly S. Wade

**Humane Network**

[kwade@humanenetwork.org](mailto:kwade@humanenetwork.org)

I am so disheartened to write this letter however, I feel a deep concern for the good name of Nevada Humane Society.

I have been a donor, volunteer, foster parent and have worked for Nevada Humane Society for 14 years. In that time I have seen many changes in management, policy and even CEOs. All points of contact with fellow employees and management at NHS have been professional and cordial and I have maintained a friendly relationship with all management. I have worked closely with all prior management teams, the board of directors and many employees. My creative designs and ideas have been used for multiple fundraisers, and I have been beyond proud to work for NHS.

Until the recent, unceremonious firing of the Marketing Director, Nicole Theodoulou, approximately 4 months ago, I was able to freely communicate with management, collaborate, and receive my payment in a timely fashion. Trent Bingham, the Development Manager, took over Marketing upon Nicole's departure. I received two emails from Trent regarding my invoice, and my attempt to assist with a fundraiser. After that, I was ignored completely by Trent and his team. I received no payment for several months and no further direction on work needed.

After waiting, I reached out to Greg Hall to inform him of his team's lack of response and my need for payment. I never received a response from Greg. I then reached out to the CFO, Phil Neff, and cc'd Mr. Bingham, to let Mr. Neff know that I was waiting for payment after several months. I have since, received payment.

The next day, I found an email stating that my account had been removed from marketing sources by NHS. I can only see this as a form of retaliation.

I have still not received any contact from Mr. Hall or Mr. Bingham. My standing with NHS is completely unknown.

I have seen many, many invaluable managers and donors be treated with complacency and a complete lack of courtesy and respect, either directly by Mr. Hall or by his team. And in my case, by Mr. Bingham.

Mr. Hall and Mr. Bingham's approaches of neglecting issues within and then ignoring or retaliating against whistleblowers, staff, and public alike cannot be sustainable.

Treatment of donors is well known, especially in a city like Reno, the biggest little city, where everyone knows everyone.

I only wish for the very best at Nevada Humane Society, whether I am able to assist or not. But I

do know, that while Mr. Hall and Mr. Bingham are present, they will be losing valuable resources. Thank you for your time.

Lena Ghiglieri  
775-741-3035

*"You can't use up creativity, the more you use, the more you have" - Maya Angelou*

To whom it may concern,

Attached is a brief statement of my tenure at NHS under the recently resigned CEO, Greg Hall. The organization had been suffering since before I left in 2019.

Neglectful practices, bullying and leadership that didn't know what it was doing was the main reasons I resigned.

I hope everyone involved in this will be held accountable.

Thank you for looking into these issues.

Patricia Perry

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter because Nevada Humane Society is a very special organization to me. This animal loving community is one of the most generous I have ever been involved with. I no longer live in the area, but have been following the issues for the past 2 years. I wanted to give a brief statement of my previous tenure as the Cat Care Manager and the issues I had with the leadership at that time.

I started my career in animal welfare at NHS back in 2010. I worked there for 3 years in the cat dept and then cat medical leader. I moved on to other organizations across the country to become more knowledgeable in all aspects of animal welfare. I received a certificate in animal shelter management through University of Pacific in 2016. I attended many continuing education seminars and conferences over the years to keep up on the ever changing guidelines to quality care for animals in a shelter environment. I was a shelter manager at a shelter in South Carolina for 2 years. Although I worked with all animals, I have always been drawn to working with the cats. In November 2017, I applied for the Cat Care Manager position at NHS and was offered the position. It was a great opportunity at this time as Maddie's Pet Project was going to be kicking off a campaign to help save Nevada's Pets. Nevada Humane Society was a leader in the animal welfare field with innovative solutions to saving animals. We would be working closely with the campaign because we had the space and the resources to help other shelters across the state. We saved so many animals that would otherwise not have had a positive outcome.

When I started in January 2018, there were serious issues with the medical care of a large group of cats (200) that were not being housed in the best way and were being medically neglected due to a skin fungus they all had. I received pushback from the medical director when we were trying to come up with a plan to resolve this issue. We did finally come together to get all the cats cleared within about 6 weeks. Unfortunately, my assertiveness to ensure the best care for all the cats did not bode well with the clinic/vet staff. Everyday moving forward was a battle with them. When Greg Hall became CEO, we brought these concerns to him so many times and things never changed. He had multiple people with years of experience and knowledge to share at his disposal, but didn't take advantage of that. He proceeded to push those people out of the organization. There was never any accountability when it came to animals suffering, not getting the medical treatment they deserved or ultimately losing their lives.

I could not continue this course watching animals suffer and die due to neglectful practices. I left NHS in October 2019.

It's very unfortunate that it has taken so long to investigate the operations and leadership at the organization. It is obvious by the recent resignations that things were/are broken. I am hopeful

this is the beginning of much needed improvements and accountability to the public, staff and most importantly the animals in their care.

The board of directors needs an overhaul, as they seem to have been ignoring concerns about Greg Hall for some reason. They also need to ensure a nationwide search for an experienced and innovative leader for Nevada Humane Society.

To all concerned about the state of affairs at NHS,  
 There are two areas I am most familiar. There are many more reasons Greg is not the right person for CEO of NHS but most are not known to me first hand. One of those most disturbing is that he is unable to keep knowledgeable, forward-thinking individuals in key staff positions.

### Volunteering

I have been a volunteer in animal care and rehoming animals in Washoe County for more than 30 years. I have a very deep understanding of what is involved and how to create a viable volunteer program. That is why I am extremely concerned about how volunteers are recruited and treated when they commit their service time at NHS.

1. After orientation you are on your own. You might hook up with a volunteer dog walker to be mentored if that is your interest, otherwise it's a mystery as to what you are there for.
2. No volunteer training or supervision.
3. They overstaff volunteers for special events or staff takes over leaving you with nothing to do after spending time and expense to show up.
4. They hold volunteer appreciation events. You are told how valuable you are but then you are treated like "a necessary evil."
5. Most volunteers never show up for a second time. No one questions why that is.
6. Staff shows no respect for the incredible value volunteers bring to the organization.

I feel a progressive volunteer program, which I have seen in action, could supplement and reduce staffing by as much as 30%.

I no longer volunteer at the shelter. I allowed my frustrations to show to Greg so he decided it was time for me to go.

### Dog adoptions. Why are they down?

1. It is often said that "my dog chose me" when I visited the shelter. Not going to happen at NHS. The public cannot see the general population. You can only see 2 which are predetermined from pictures.
2. It often takes a very long time to get waited on because each potential adopter must be screened for the 2 dogs they wish to visit with. I've heard people say they will never go back to NHS because of this.
3. If you don't think the 2 dogs you have visited with are the right choices you are turned away rather than given alternatives.
4. What on earth is "Nap Time." People are turned away should they show up between 2 and 3 each day. It must be time for the staff to take naps! The dogs are napping all day since they don't see or get any mental stimulation from the public.
5. We are told limited staff makes it hard to show dogs to potential adopters. How about recruiting volunteers? Volunteers can do adoptions offsite. Why not at the shelter?
6. Meet and greet dog visits are rarely supervised, creating some dangerous situations.

Thanks for taking the time to investigate the many concerns of our community.

Sally Berger

I am writing this email because of recent news features I saw discussing concerns about Nevada Humane Society.

I work at a local veterinary clinic and believe it is important to give a voice to those pets in our lives who are not able to speak up for themselves. Because I want to protect my clinic and my position in the clinic I would like to remain anonymous. I can tell you that I work closely with clients and their pets in a clinic setting and have many years of experience working with people and their animals in this type of setting. The timing of 2 clients coming into our clinic on the heels of seeing several news stories made the situations I want to share with you even more impactful. I trust that the info I provide about the pets and owners identified in this email will be handled delicately and respectfully as they have already gone through so much hardship and heartache.

Last week we saw a sweet 8 year old, neutered male Pitbull named Hank. Hank's owner Christine adopted him from Nevada Humane Society a week earlier. She lives alone now and wanted a companion to keep her company. She said in the shelter Hank was breathing hard and labored but no one there was concerned and she attributed it to him being older. She said when she got him home he began coughing when he would get excited and he wasn't eating much. She attributed this to him being in a new home but wanted to get him checked out by her own vet. When Hank came in for his exam he was a sweet and happy dog but was having difficulty breathing. We took radiographs of his lungs and although we normally do a 3 view series there was no need in this case. Hank had so many large lesions in his lungs that the cause was very obvious to all our staff.

Below is a portion of his physical exam with abnormalities highlighted:

**Eyes:** **Eyelid mass OS superior lid touching cornea and black dermal mass** OD superior medial canthi and lower right eyelid

**Ears:** No exudate observed, no redness present externally

**Oral Cavity:** Teeth are free from excessive tartar, no gingivitis present but gingival hyperplasia present diffusely

**Dental Grade** I

**FAS** 0 /5

**Nasal Cavity:** No obvious abnormalities observed

**Cardiovascular:** **Abnormal: tachycardia**, no murmur auscultated

**Respiratory:** **Abnormal: increased inspiratory effort with increased lung sounds**

**Abdomen** Abdomen palpates normally; no pain, tenderness or masses on palpation

**Rectal:** Did not perform rectal exam

**Musculoskeletal:** Normal ambulation

and from Treatment Plan:

Diagnostics Performed:

**3 view chest rads: stopped after one view due to diffuse metastatic pulmonary lesions**  
**Senior Screen - cancelled due to metastatic dz**

Treatments Performed: None

Medications Prescribed: prednisone and cerenia palliation

**Prognosis: 5**

1. Good – Favorable outcome is expected and / or maybe easily managed
2. Fair – Favorable outcome possible and / or manageable
3. Guarded – Possible outcome is unknown
4. Poor – Non-favorable outcome is expected
5. **Grave – Death is imminent**

**Hank had Metastatic Pulmonary lesions - lung metastasis** is a cancerous growth in the **lung** that got its start from cancer cells originating somewhere else in the body.

There was nothing else medically to be done for Hank because the cancer in his lungs was so far advanced, His owner was devastated as she already bonded with this sweet dog only to be told one week post adoptions that her dog was dying from very advanced cancer. Our Vet prescribed medication to help make him comfortable (relieve his pain and entice him to eat) so Christine could take Hank home for the weekend and spoil him before returning to euthanize him on the following Monday. Hank's breathing issues did not just develop in the week that Christine had the dog in her care and she said she noticed it at time of adoptions but no one there was concerned.

This poor dog was suffering with breathing issues for some time and likely not eating much prior to adoption as well. Not only do I find it concerning that it was not diagnosed at the shelter but worry if she had not adopted this dog that he could have potentially still gone untreated and unnoticed and died a painful death.

The other instance that recently came to my attention was a cat Named Loki; a 8 year old, black and white, neutered male cat. Loki's owner Nick brought him in to be seen by our vet and told us that he adopted a bonded pair of cats (Loki and Thanos) at Nevada Humane Society a few months ago. He told me that when he adopted the pair that Loki was wearing a plastic cone around his neck but Thanos was not. He said that although they were closely bonded and together in the shelter NHS told him Loki had fleas and Thanos did not and that was why Loki had a cone one. (Of note fleas are very easily spread to other animals in close proximity) He said they gave him no medical history, no medications to take home and no mention of treatment at the shelter, let alone no instructions on when the cone could come off. When he inquired about medications they told him he was not on any medications. Nick brought Loki to see us because post adoption he continued to scratch himself aggressively to the point of causing open wounds on his neck and ears despite no evidence of fleas on either cat. After testing it was determined that Loki had serious food allergies and needs to be on a hydrolyzed diet to prevent further injuries and placed on medication to relieve his painful itching so wounds could heal and to help alleviate his pain. Once again it seems like

this animal was suffering in the shelter and the solution was to put a cone on the cat instead of trying to figure out what was really going on health wise. The prescription diet can be quite costly and this owner adopted the cat without any forewarning of the potential additional costs of repeated veterinary visits for allergy treatment and prescription food.

I work at one clinic and these two cases presented themselves with in the last few weeks, I recall other stories from other clients about their adopted pets for Nevada Humane Society needing additional medical care post adoptions but did not give it much thought until the recent news about Nevada Humane Society. It makes me wonder how many other animals are being brought to other clinic with similar untreated/unidentified health issues and potentially being adopted by clients who are not prepared for sick animals or the costs associated with medical care but don't find out until they are already bonded with their new pet.

Sincerely,  
A concerned veterinary professional and animal lover

Hi Naomi --

I was very glad to hear that Greg Hall resigned as CEO of NHS, however I am very concerned about the NHS Board of Directors after reading the statement they put out to the NHS staff. The following are all things mentioned in their statement:

An interim CEO or COO was not mentioned and I am very concerned that leadership will NOT be given to either David or Amber who were mentioned in various complaints as having issues with compassion towards the animals, such as drugging the dogs to keep them mellow, not providing any enrichment activities, leaving them in their kennels for all of each 24 hour day except for 1 hour of time outside their kennel, inappropriate euthanasia of dogs they did not "like" and who knows what else non welfare behavior was committed.

Supposedly, the board conducted an INTERNAL inquiry to determine the facilities processes and determined that all processes were conducted in accordance to National Humane Society standards. To my knowledge there is not a National Humane Society. There is a Humane Society of the United States which is not, I believe, the same thing. And who exactly conducted the INTERNAL inquiry?

Also, according to the tax returns filed and available on Charity Navigator, the number of animals which found homes (a lifesaving rate) has dropped over the past few years and I would guess that the lifesaving rate is no longer 95% I think I should alert Charity Navigator to that discrepancy.

A third party investigation has been scheduled for May 22 to determine if NHS operates within full compliance of ANIMAL HUSBANDRY (breeding) ethics and standards. Again, no mention of which third party will be doing the investigation and their qualifications. And NHS supposedly does spay/neuter not breeding. Does the board even know what they are talking about?

On May 9, 2023 the board voted to initiate an investigation with a third party expert to evaluate management processes within the organization so they may identify operational breakdowns and improve processes. Again, no mention who the third party is and their qualifications.

The board is searching for a third party method for fielding anonymous reports should any staff member or volunteer have concerns about ethics or compliances within NHS. In the past board members were given reports about these concerns and did NOTHING about them.

The board also approved a bylaw committee that will review the existing bylaws to determine if updates should be made. Any bylaw updates need to be made available to the public so there is transparency about the processes at the facility and the board.

The statement goes on to say that concerns need to be made directly to the board in lieu of NHS leadership. This has happened in the past, and to reiterate, NOTHING was done.

As a final comment, in one letter, the writer told about a cat that died overnight in its cage because it could not get out of the vomit and diarrhea built up in its cage and the clinic staff did not euthanize the poor animal as they were supposed to because they "wanted to go home for the night". That is a horrible end of life situation for ANY animal and breaks my heart that a kitty had to suffer like that.

It is mentioned on the NHS website that spay/neuter services are not currently offered at the clinic. That is only one violation of the agreement between NHS and WCRAS. How many more are there?

The current board has members who were on the board during the time of Greg Hall's tenure and did nothing to stop his practice of running the facility into the ground. Why should we expect better now?

The whole situation is a disaster and I believe the animals are suffering because of it. Any changes you can make for the better would be greatly appreciated.

Gloria Derby

**From:** NHS Board <[nevadahumanesocietyboard@gmail.com](mailto:nevadahumanesocietyboard@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 10, 2023 2:50 PM  
**To:** [nhswhistleblowersgroup@proton.me](mailto:nhswhistleblowersgroup@proton.me)  
**Cc:** [schieveh@reno.gov](mailto:schieveh@reno.gov); Animal - Advisory Board <[AdvisoryBoard@washoecounty.gov](mailto:AdvisoryBoard@washoecounty.gov)>  
**Subject:** Response to concerned citizens from Nevada Humane Society 5-10-23

**[NOTICE: This message originated outside of Washoe County -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]**

Hello concerned individuals,

In the interest of efficiency and expediency I have attempted to aggregate your questions into one response. I hope to impress upon you that I wish to communicate but must do so in a manner that is legally appropriate. You are correct in that the operations at NHS are the responsibility of the board. We are taking every single allegation and claim seriously at this time.

To this end, please know that as of yesterday afternoon, May 9, 2023, the Nevada Humane Society board officially accepted the resignation of CEO Greg Hall, effective immediately. Further, the board approved the search for a third-party service to help NHS anonymously field staff and volunteer concerns regarding ethics and compliance. Once installed, these reports will be brought to the board's attention at the subsequent board meeting to be addressed. Lastly, an external audit of animal welfare is scheduled to take place at Nevada Humane Society on May 22.

I have provided answers to your questions to the extent I am able to, but hope you will stay close to the Nevada Humane Society as the board continues investigations as we plan to keep our stakeholders updated. We will be speaking with Joe Hart at KRN Channel 4 regarding these matters tomorrow morning.

**Regarding your email: ATTENTION RITA - NHS Bylaws Violations**

Our current bylaws stipulate that a board member must drop from the board after serving six years for at least a period of one year. To ensure the organization retained board members with historical understanding as new board members joined, the board elected to split the existing board into multiple classes to term out in a staggered fashion. Had they imposed the six year term in 2015 on all

board members, it would have created a gap in information for the newest 2021 class.

I can assure you: the NHS board takes the organization's bylaws seriously. All bylaw decisions are approved by the board at large after a bylaw committee proposes changes.

**Regarding Jack Grellman, 2012 - 2021:** Because the term limit began in 2015, he served six years before reaching the conclusion of his six year term and was termed out in 2021.

**Regarding Jan Watson, 2012 - 2021:** Because the term limit began in 2015, she served six years before reaching the conclusion of her six year term and was termed out in 2021.

**Regarding Joan Dees, 2014-2021:** Because the term limit began in 2015, she served six years before reaching the conclusion of her six year term and was termed out in 2021.

**Regarding Kris Wells, 2014 - 2023:** Kris Wells was in a board group that was staggered, meaning her six years did not conclude in 2021. We are seeking board minutes that describe the stagger.

**Regarding Mandy Elliot, 2014 - 2018:** Because the term limit began in 2015, she served six years before reaching the conclusion of her six year term and was termed out in 2021.

**Regarding Rachel Ringenback-Watkins, 2015 - 2021:** Because the term limit began in 2015, she served six years before reaching the conclusion of her six year term and was termed out in 2021.

**Regarding Tierra Bonaldi, 2012 - 2021:** Because the term limit began in 2015, she served six years before reaching the conclusion of her six year term and was termed out in 2021.

As to payments made to former board members, according to the 2015 Nevada Humane Society bylaws, the board may distribute funds with those they have entered into contractual relationships or elect to make lawful payments **in furtherance of the purposes of the organization** (Article II, Section 3). The board is actively reviewing the minutes from the last several years to ascertain what circumstances may have surrounded those payments. Regardless, **last night the board approved and comprised an ad-hoc bylaw review committee that will re-review the existing bylaws**, identifying whether there are insufficiencies and determining whether updates could be made that will strengthen the nonprofit's governing body.

#### **Regarding your email: ATTENTION RITA - NHS Legal Team Compensation Details**

Nevada Humane Society has retained law firm Fennemore Craig P.C. to provide legal counsel and support to the organization during this time. Michelin Nadeau Fairbank is the attorney working with NHS. Neither Ms. Fairbank nor her firm are retained to provide legal services to any individual or employee of NHS.

The legal team is in place for the sole purposes of understanding contract and employee law so that Nevada Humane Society board members may make decisions for the future of the organization within proper legal parameters. It is the unanimous opinion of the board that this expenditure, and others we may approve, is critical as we seek to ensure forward steps safeguard the future of the organization and, again, no one person.

It would be unethical for this organization to make decisions that inadvertently open the Nevada Humane Society to future liabilities, so we must endeavor to make every forward step compliant and within the best interest of our staff, volunteers and the animals within our care.

#### **Regarding your email: NHS Executives Salary up 540% while staff suffers**

Pursuant to NHS policies, employment information pertaining to current and former employees is confidential and I'm unable to discuss this information. That said, last night the board approved a comprehensive review of board compensation.

The board has also approved the following activities:

- A third-party investigation into management practices at Nevada Humane Society to understand what breakdowns might exist and how to correct them.
- A bylaw review committee to evaluate the current bylaws for potential improvements.
- A search to identify a third-party service to enable staff and volunteers to make anonymous reports regarding ethics or compliance concerns directly to the board, to be reviewed at the board meeting directly following the reports.

Another change you should be apprised of:

As of WEDNESDAY, May 9, 2023, the board installed the following executive officers:

Ray Gonzalez, President

Stephen Festa, Treasurer

Secretary, Nancy Wenzel, Esq.

Rita Eissmann will revert to her original post as Vice President.

The board has approved a communication to be publicly posted today on the NHS website as we seek to be exceedingly transparent.

Concerned friend, it is beyond clear you care about the outcomes of the Nevada Humane Society; both its staff and the animals entrusted to our collective care. I thank you for that.

I assure you, as a board, we are taking all allegations with the appropriate level of gravity and care to ensure next steps protect the future of the organization and its ability to positively impact animal welfare in Northern Nevada - no one person.

We endeavor to be an organization you will be proud of.

Rita Eissmann

NHS Board of Directors