

Washoe County Regional Animal Services Advisory Board

DRAFT OF MINUTES-VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

Friday, January 26, 2024 @ 9:30 a.m.
WASHOE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX
WASHOE COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
1001 E. 9TH STREET, BUILDING A, RENO, NV
~VIA ZOOM TELECONFERENCE~

MEMBERS

Naomi Duerr (Chair)
Paul Anderson
Julie McMahon
Mariluz Garcia
Trudy Brussard
Diaz Dixon
Jill Fisher

STAFF

Shyanne Schull (Director)
Tammy Jennings (Asst Dir)
Tom Schley (Clerk)
Serena Stockdale (Clerk)

LEGAL COUNSEL

Trenton Ross (DDA)

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1. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM [Non-Action Item]

CHAIR DUERR: Called WCRAS Advisory Board Meeting to order and requested roll call.

PRESENT: Naomi Duerr, Paul Anderson, Mariluz Garcia, Trudy Brussard, Diaz Dixon, Julie McMahon, Jill Fisher, Shyanne Schull, Trenton Ross. Tammy Jennings (absent).

CHAIR DUERR: Asked Trenton Ross to lead salute to the flag.

2. SALUTE TO FLAG [Non-action item]

MR. ROSS: Led the meeting in the pledge.

3. INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROVIDING PUBLIC COMMENT VIA ZOOM TELEPHONE [Non-action item]

MR. ROSS: Provided instructions for members of the public to join the meeting via Zoom and/or telephone. Also provided instructions for public comment.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT [Non-action item]

CHAIR DUERR: Provided instructions as to public comment and asked if there was any public comment. Online speakers were brought into Zoom room.

MS. PERRY: Ardena Perry. Has concerns previously shared. Complimented Shyanne and Jerlene on jobs well done. Discussed the reunification program and feels it has bloomed into a diversionary program. Feels it shifts the burden of stray animals from the shelter to the public. Discussed protocol about finding stray animals with public involvement. Wants to see the codification by insinuation off the county pages.

CHAIR DUERR: Asked clerk or others to make sure timer clock and screens are working appropriately. Introduced herself also. Asked speakers to also introduce themselves.

5. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 21, 2023, MEETING MINUTES [For possible action]

CHAIR DUERR: Asked for changes and/or amendments to Minutes. Asked for motion to approve.

MEMBER GARCIA: Made motion to approve Minutes.

MEMBER FISHER: Seconded the motion.

CHAIR DUERR: Motion passes unanimously.

CHAIR DUERR: Received request that Item 7 be moved in front of Item 6.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Requested to keep the order of #6 Director's Report and proposed moving Item #8 ahead of #7.

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT [Non-action item]

CHAIR DUERR: Agreed to keep in order of the agenda items and introduced Director Schull.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Introduced herself and will be providing updates on Q2 of FY 2024 statistics related to Animal Services.

Opened that there is a decrease in number of animals coming into Animal Services over historical quarters in years past. Seeing 15% decline in cats; 978 last quarter. 1,425 dogs, 1% decline. Other animal category is up by 5%.

Discussed the types of calls. Stray animals impounded was 18% decrease. New category of tracking feral cats not previously done. Started in 12/2022. 132 feral cats for the first year.

Average length of stay for dogs and cats in the shelter. Dogs length of stay has decreased 21.8%, approximately 7.7 days. Cat stays are decreased 19% or 6.5 days. Hopes to see the trend continue to move in that direction.

Length of stay per species. 2023 was highest, longest length of stay per species had in the last few years. 7.7% or 7 days for dogs and 6-1/2 days for cats.

All animal outcomes. Euthanized 95 animals this quarter versus 59 last quarter. Some increases can be attributed to team making decisions for quality of life versus waiting for NHS to make the decisions. Anticipates the number will increase when full-time veterinarian is on board.

Reunited 870 animals. Transferred out just over 1,000. Had 15 animals euthanized through veterinary recommendations.

Animals that went to rescue partners in last quarter. NHS is largest transfer partner. NHS took 885 dogs, cats and small animals into their adoption program. The number of animals transferred to NHS in last quarter don't include 141 animals that are classified by NHS as good Samaritan strays which are typically neonate kittens, kittens under two pounds.

Of 512 cats that NHS transferred, 111 had medical issues. Of 462 dogs, 99 had medical issues. All take resources and time to make them adoptable.

Recently started partnership with Options Veterinary Care to help bridge the gap for feral cats in the community. Options will help spay/neuter, vaccinate, and release feral cats. 64 cats were spayed/neutered, treating minor medical issues, vaccinated and released.

Pet Network continues to transfer animals to adoption program, primarily cats. Res-Que also takes animals that need specific care through foster care or shy animals. Res-Que has been a partner for a very long time. SPCA has also assisted with both dogs and cats. Have increased number of animals transferred into their care.

Field services. Continued work with capacity issues by reuniting animals in the field, attempting contact with owners via chips or tags on animals. 41% of all animals picked up by field officers were returned in the field and not impounded last quarter. Discussed efforts that the field officers take to reunite the animals with the owners.

Animal reunifications by office team. Once animal has been impounded, attempts to connect with owners are made. 31% (highest quarter) of reunifications from front office team. Opened reunification options for Sundays and holidays so animals can be reunited. Each transaction takes about 20 minutes to get animal back to pet owner.

All field service calls. 5,000 calls for service last quarter with bulk of being lost or stray animals. 1,179 calls under other types of calls. 704 welfare calls. 560 noise complaints. 356 unrestrained dog calls. 313 bite investigations. Trend is slightly down for services.

Animal welfare calls in Q2. 704 welfare calls. 74 were met with citations or notices of civil penalties. 523 had compliance through education, warnings, or other means. Ultimate goal is to educate pet owner and provide tools for them to keep their pet. 107 calls were unfounded.

Outreach services. Continued work on social media improvements and increasing reach to community. Posting a lot more content on the Facebook page. Trying to highlight partnerships and accomplishments to community. Following has increased. 37% increase in new followers and 89% increase in posts. 47% increase in reaching individuals through cross postings. 44% increase in visits to page, 56% increase in reactions.

Outreach activities. CARES program addresses medical care for animals needing assistance. Decrease has been noticed as program has been dialed back a bit.

Senior service center on 9th Street. Noted a 10% decrease of food to seniors. Assisted 217 seniors and 451 animals with free pet food. SPCA assists to sustain the program as they provide the pet food.

Vaccinations have increased. 48% increase of people using affordable vaccine clinics.

Plans for current quarter. Planning three pet food distribution events, three vaccine clinics and one free senior vaccine clinic which hasn't been done since prior to COVID.

Presentation and Director's Report concluded.

CHAIR DUERR: Thanked Director Schull for great presentation.

Asked for further discussion on the significant increase of animals euthanized of 61%. Also asked about outreach program statistics.

Commented on the social media statistics and how incredible it is. Also, asked about the 41% of cat transfers to NHS and 72% other.

MEMBER GARCIA: Also asked about the animal transfer and rescue partners slide of the presentation. Inquired about the "other" category. Thanked all rescue partners, but wanted to know about the "other" category (slide 7).

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented on the "other" category is rescue partners that aren't necessarily a routine transfer partner recipient. Has approximately 35 rescue partners that are reached out to with various animals in care.

MEMBER GARCIA: Also commented about the large scale animal seizure that occurred in Red Rock previously, i.e., horses and dogs. Asked about how that large scale seizure impacted and what partners stepped in to help.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented that Animal Services is responsible for investigate animal cruelty cases, hoarding cases. Capacity is impacted greatly and the built in buffer of open cage space provides the ability to handle multi-animal cases. Not able to speak about Red Rock case as it is still open. Rabbits and livestock cases are difficult as there isn't enough space. Rely in partners to assist with rescue. Able to house livestock and out of Washoe County as a partnership recently created.

MEMBER GARCIA: Thanked her for the clarification.

MEMBER DIXON: Commented on a great job of social media outreach.

Discussed education to the community to help them keep their pets. Wanted to know about community resources and what type are given to community members?

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented that Animal Services is available to help enforce the law, but needs to also help to remedy the situation. CARES program is available to make a referral and then to partner with vet partners for spay/neuter. NHS is also reached out to for assistance. Depends on case-by-case basis. Working on streamlining process.

CHAIR DUERR: Commented that the field services have food on their trucks available to help in a situation. But if it's food for a week, then what happens after that?

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented that programs are geared for temporary assistance, not to sustain. Referrals are then made to other partners that can help longer term.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Inquired about reunification process. Wanted clarification about the 72% of animals being reunified with owners.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Clarified that dog reunification is about 62% currently and cats is about 7% to 10%. Cats don't get reunited as often as dogs do. In 2024, the focus is on how to reach the vulnerable cat population, how to get more cats chipped, how to get more ID tags and collars on cats?

MEMBER ANDERSON: Asked again about reunification when the field officer assists with the reunification versus coming to shelter.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented that both scenarios are tracked. If WCRAS staff touches the animal, it's impounded and entered into the system within 20 minutes. Staff are researching microchips, researching lost reports, researching license number, etc. Team is learning to use TEAMS and message other staff members for reunification processes.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Commented again about a terrific report. Information is terrific.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Asked about intake sources, and disposal. Wanted to know if that means an animal is being disposed of.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented that if the animal has passed away, their animal can be disposed of and/or animals that are deceased that are picked up.

MEMBER FISHER: Asked about the disparity between vet euthanasia and euthanasia. Wanted clarification.

CHAIR DUERR: Asked if there was a slide that provided information.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Animals that are euthanized are euthanized in the shelter by her staff. The vet euthanasia is if an animal is transferred to an emergency vet partner and they recommend euthanasia.

MEMBER FISHER: Wanted a breakdown of the euthanasia's in the shelter.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Confirmed she will break down that information in the next report to see how euthanasia is being tracked.

CHAIR DUERR: Commented on how information is being presented.

MEMBER McMAHON: Asked about the partnership with Options. Noticed on social media they are also assisting with kittens.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Confirmed a number of kittens have been transferred into their program and foster program is being worked on for assistance. Feral cats are mostly focused on.

MEMBER McMAHON: Asked about welfare calls, 74 ended in citation our outcome.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Confirmed that it could be any number of animals related to any of those calls. Those stats are just activities that were created under animal welfare.

MEMBER McMAHON: Clarified that each incident isn't just an individual animal. Each incident is potentially numerous animals at one time. Also asked if vaccine clinics are currently offering microchipping on those days.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Confirmed that microchipping is being offered at all vaccine clinics, but still do it during business hours without an appointment. Encourages community to bring dog or cat and they will be microchipped.

CHAIR DUERR: Following up on microchipping. If animal has been chipped and then adopted, does it get re-registered with new owner?

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Depends on chip company. WCRAS chips are auto registered, as well as local tracking data base.

CHAIR DUERR: Inquired if an animal is chipped and adopted at a community adoption, what does new owner have to do?

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented that the adoption agency should put animal into their name and update microchip information. If an automatic update is not provided from adoption agency, then information is not available in data base. Working with SPCA and NHS for all animals adopted to receive information so records can be updated.

CHAIR DUERR: What if it's a community adoption where there is no agency, i.e., someone looking to rehome their animal.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Clarified that if an individual is rehoming their own pet who is microchipped, it is hugely problematic. Change of ownership form is provided for pets that are rehomed. Really important to have updated information. Discussed there is a home-to-home program for rehoming. SPCA currently hosts that program.

CHAIR DUERR: Asked about slide #13, CARES program, pet food. Wanted to understand about 43% increase.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented that CARES program is designed to be referral based only. Primarily, the referrals come from her staff, but also work with non-profit partners such as Options Vet Care or law enforcement entities. Needs a breakdown in terms of the referral process, but is attributing the decrease to working with Options re: spay/neuter services. It grew too large for her team and had to be dialed back.

CHAIR DUERR: Wanted to know if it was just too popular.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Yes, very popular.

CHAIR DUERR: Commented that it seems like a valuable program. Seems like there is a great demand in the community.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Spay/neuter resources in the community are sorely under served. Need a lot more services. Options and SPCA are struggling to keep up with affordable spay/neuter services provided. Want to help contribute when full-time vet is on board.

CHAIR DUERR: Suggested the spay/neuter conversation to be continued for next Board Meeting on how to support to expand program.

Also commented on the great work on the social media aspect. Asked about animal transfers to rescue partners. Kudos to everyone picking up the slack. More animals than ever to be transferred. Asked about 40% drop which is very significant.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Advised will be discussed more in next agenda item. Commented that 2023 was a rough year for NHS and WCRAS, as well as rescue partners. Animal Services does not have an adoption program so very limited.

CHAIR DUERR: Commented on NHS adoption program and success recently. Has concern about animal outcomes re: euthanasia. Feels like it's a big number. Requested additional comment.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented that a lot of what is done in sheltering is not predictable. Numbers will vary, i.e., quality of life or behavior. Not concerned unless continued increase. Will advise on the next AB meeting as part of Director's Report.

CHAIR DUERR: Thanked Director Schull for great report. Commented jumping out of order on agenda items and now discussing Item #8.

8. INFORMATIONAL UPDATE ON NEVADA HUMANE SOCIETY AND WASHOE COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES' SHARED OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES [Non-action item]

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Introduced herself and Jerleen Bryant, CEO from NHS to discuss work on partnership, metrics and goals, and answer questions.

Discussed WCRAS and NHS engaging in five work sessions since November of 2023. Goals between the two entities is to have a strong partnership and to benefit community. Commented that it is a very early program to be sharing, but wanted

everyone to be in the loop. Will be sharing information on how goals are being accomplished, which are just preliminary goals set forward with the two entities. Still have a long way to go.

Commented and thanked NHS team, CEO, Jerleen Bryant; Operations Director, Trent Bingham; and Chief of Philanthropy, Melissa Davis; Board Member, Nancy Wenzel. Also thanked her team, Assistant Director, Tammy Jennings; Kennel Supervisor, Art Westbrook; Assistant County Manager, Dave Solero.

They all worked through the issues to move forward together and shared goals to help keep on track. Both entities are a tremendous resource for the community. Addressed presentation to Board Members. Discussed goals to work on, saving lives, fostering, collaboratively moving forward.

Multiple topics were discussed in work sessions. Overview: 1) what are shared goals that relate to partnership? Primary goal is to focus on “we”. 2) worked on shared performance measures. 3) worked through what needs to happen to rebuild trust. 4) how to move forward with more structured plan for management of goals and how to funnel issues within organizations. 5) animal transfers from WCRAS to NHS. 6) shared campus model, relation to PSA and separate funding.

MS. BRYANT: Addressed Board Members and provided presentation for partnership.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented on photographs of puppies on presentation and reminded everyone it is about the animals. Continued comments on partnership and what working sessions have provided. Discussed shared working agreements to develop a standard criteria. Euthanasia protocols will not be melded together. In agreement that they do not euthanize for space.

MS. BRYANT: Continued presentation on quality of care and humane conditions. Also discussed monthly town hall sessions to be hosted. First to begin February 28, which is World Spay Day. Continued discussion on shared goals. Transferred 87% of all live, unclaimed dogs from WCRAS and 84% of all live, unclaimed cats from WCRAS transferred to NHS. Feels good about 2024 and the partnership with WCRAS.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented on cross-communication between the two entities and continued reporting to respective Boards.

CHAIR DUERR: Commented on the positive progress with the two agencies, and committing to a shared behavior criteria. So important to be on the same page.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Feels it is the piece that ties together. Imperative that the evaluations continue so there is a clear understanding of what is transferable and what isn't.

CHAIR DUERR: Inquired into what criteria NHS has as to what animals they are willing to adopt.

MS. BRYANT: Feels that the transfer criteria hasn't changed but a process has been identified that the staff can understand. Many behavior interventions are utilized for animals.

CHAIR DUERR: Wanted to know where the behavioral specialists work at?

MS. BRYANT: Confirmed there is one specialist that assists with policies and procedures. Two specialists are on-site working with the more challenging dogs and assisting staff.

CHAIR DUERR: Inquired about the less adoptable animals affecting adoption statistics.

MS. BRYANT: Commented that NHS is contracted to be the public surrender agency. Animals can't be turned away.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Commented that the previous separation between the two organization was hard. Seeing them come together now is incredible for the community. Also encouraged everyone to take tours of the facility. Discussed his own experience with an adoption and hiring a professional to help with his dog.

MEMBER DIXON: Commented on the importance of the teamwork between the two entities. Feels the biggest challenge is the behavioral specialist. Critical to speak the same language.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Discussed that WCRAS has hired Kelly Bolen as a behavioralist to assist with assessments.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Asked about the town hall meetings.

MS. BRYANT: Indicated the first town hall meeting will be recorded. Zoom availability may be offered later.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Asked about the community cat program.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: The opinions vary about the program. Doesn't have any statistics to offer today, but is a very controversial topic.

CHAIR DUERR: Reminded the cat program can be put on the next meeting as it's own agenda item to discuss further.

MS. BRYANT: Indicated NHS has a community cat program. In 2023, twice the number of working cats were placed into the community than in 2022. They are put with individuals who have barns, breweries, commercial buildings, and they have to agree to provide full care for the cat. Essential to have a robust community cat program.

CHAIR DUERR: Reiterated having the town hall meetings via Zoom.

MEMBER McMAHON: Inquired about capacity for the cats.

MS. BRYANT: Confirms they have not lost capacity for dogs. Cat cages have been portalized which provided more space for cats to be happy. They are working on getting the capacity back up. One room is being updated to allow to move 400 cats through the room, which is a 333% increase. Focusing on capacity and not compromise quality of care.

MEMBER McMAHON: Wanted to know if other resources have been utilized.

MS. BRYANT: Indicated that both entities are integrated into the bigger picture of animal welfare and sheltering. Always looking to learn from colleagues.

MEMBER McMAHON: Wanted to know what the goals were for the behavioral specialists and how will they work together?

MS. BRYANT: Discussed they are separate organizations with separate missions. They are partnered together and collaborate together. Euthanasia criteria is separate. Important to have shared understanding.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Didn't want to project in an arena they haven't performed in historically re: behavior. Anxious to see how it works out.

MEMBER GARCIA: Commented on the PSA and the behavior information. Feels that the 2015 document can be ambiguous. Further discussed euthanasia and is hopeful to add a section about the behavior criteria.

CHAIR DUERR: Appreciated all information. Great job done.

7. **INFORMATIONAL UPDATE ON NEVADA HUMANE SOCIETY'S ("NHS") 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW** [Non-action item]

CHAIR DUERR: Commented that NHS is on a calendar year. WCRAS is on a fiscal year.

MS. BRYANT: Introduced Trent Bingham, Director of Operations, who will speak. NHS mission is care for pets, find them homes and save lives. Continued discussion in presentation and statistics for NHS in 2023. Advised that NHS has a pet pantry program. Last year, 60,000 pounds of food was distributed.

Continued presentation about involvement of NHS in the community and services provided. Many procedural changes were made to the betterment of the community. Created pathway planning for every animal in their care.

Discussed resources of an animal help desk that can point people to vital resources to keep pets or alternative approaches to rehoming. Can also provide appointments for the individual to bring in the pet. NHS has removed surrender fees for community residents.

MR. BINGHAM: Introduced himself. Discussed that NHS dog intakes have increased every year since 2020. Owner surrenders increased. Discussed the numerous changes to better assist the community and all requirements to be met. In 2023, owner surrenders increased 75% for dogs and 38% for cats.

Good Samaritans. NHS partners with Washoe County to take animals directly into their care. They have a neonatal foster program to support them.

Since 2014, NHS has transferred nearly 20,000 dogs from WCRAS. On average, 92% of live, unclaimed dogs were transferred and 97.2% of live, unclaimed cats. 2023 transfers were still above previous year numbers. Discussed further statistics for adoption.

Further discussed length of stay for the animals. 72% of dogs had outcomes within 14 days. Length of stay for cats varies, especially if they arrive as very new kittens. Saw an increase in the 31-60 day criteria.

MS. BRYANT: Discussed 2024 goals and initiatives. Community cats. Public spay/neuter. Expanding foster department. Establishing behavior department. Addressing feral cat program.

CHAIR DUERR: Thanked them both for a great presentation. Opened up to Board for questions or comments.

MEMBER McMAHON: Discussed the recent contract with Hills for internal feeding and the concern of what is happening with the community food.

MS. BRYANT: Advised that NHS operated on a basis of donated food. Wasn't always the healthiest thing for the animals. Hills Science Diet has a great shelter program which allows the purchase of food at a fraction of a cost which allowed the donated food to be provided to the community.

MEMBER McMAHON: Asked about the long waits for animal surrenders.

MS. BRYANT: Originally the wait time to surrender was several weeks. Now the wait times are just a matter of days.

MEMBER McMAHON: Asked if increased surrenders directly translate to decreased transfers?

MS. BRYANT: Agreed, yes.

MR. BINGHAM: There are 142 dog kennels. Operate best at 80% or below on capacity, 114 kennels. It is a balancing game.

MEMBER DIXON: Congratulated on the Hills program. Wanted to know if it was being shared with WCRAS.

MS. BRYANT: If there is a surplus and a need, NHS would be happy to share. It ebbs and flows.

CHAIR DUERR: Acknowledged the letters from the community. Asked about staff turnover.

MS. BRYANT: Doesn't think it is accurate. Had some staff turnover. Management also made a decision to separate employment with some of the staff.

CHAIR DUERR: Asked about the adoption fees portion to reflect what kind of animal it is.

MS. BRYANT: Wondered if the comment was referring to the starred dog adoption fees. Demand is greater for a popular breed so the adoption fee will be higher as it helps other animals. It helps pay it forward.

CHAIR DUERR: Wanted to know if genetic testing is done.

MS. BRYANT: They will perform genetic testing if it is a highly desirable animal.

CHAIR DUERR: Discussed the prior program with the Carson City Correctional Center. Asked if it's possible to bring it back.

MS. BRYANT: Confirmed that the program is not running, but is very open to exploring the program moving forward.

CHAIR DUERR: Wanted to know the plan for trap, neuter, release program.

MS. BRYANT: Expanding. Need additional staffing and more volunteer support. Also need to be able to address the spay/neuter needs of the animals.

CHAIR DUERR: Commented she visited the facility. Asked about the inside and outside visitation and how to handle that.

MS. BRYANT: It is deliberate to do it that way to maintain a lower stress environment to move away from the public if the animal needs to.

CHAIR DUERR: Discussed public viewing.

MS. BRYANT: Discussed numerous barriers to adoption process that were happening when she came on board. Increases in adoptions have occurred.

CHAIR DUERR: Wanted to know if all areas were open.

MS. BRYANT: Confirmed there are four adoption areas for dogs.

CHAIR DUERR: Inquired about the euthanasia space that was created.

MS. BRYANT: Felt there needed to be a dedicated space for euthanasia for both the animal and the owner.

CHAIR DUERR: Wanted to know if the community could be involved.

MS. BRYANT: They have an owner request euthanasia program. It is for those individuals who have an animal at end of life medically and it's a quality of care situation, or it's a very unsafe dog. Very minimal cost.

MEMBER DIXON: Advised that the prison programs also take cats.

CHAIR DUERR: Feels that maybe a cat adoption program at the prison would be a great idea. Also asked if Ms. Bryant would be coming back to further meetings.

9. WASHOE COUNTY REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES FEE STUDY AND PROPOSED FEE CHANGES [For possible action]

CHAIR DUERR: Introduced Tammy Jennings.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: Provided information on recently performed fee study. Fees haven't been revised since the consolidation with NHS. A fee study was done by MGT Consulting.

In April of 2023, goals were defined. MGT researched five different jurisdictions in comparison. All departments were looked into. Extensive meetings were conducted to analyze the recommendations.

User fee costs. \$2.4 million are related to user fee services.

Current revenue. Fee related revenue is just over \$1 million dollars at a 42% cost recovery level.

Current subsidy. Current fee revenues recover 42% of full costs and 58% to be funded by other sources.

Recommended recovery. Adoption of recommended fees would increase cost recovery to \$2.2 million and would be an overall cost recovery level of about 89%.

Increased revenue if proposed fees were adopted. 111% increase in amounts currently collected.

With recommendations, an increase is being recommended to 23 of current fees, 16 new fees. Recommending removal of 8 fees. Five fees would not change. Provided current and new fees suggested to Board Members.

CHAIR DUERR: Discussed her recommendation of charging more of altered and unaltered would assist spay/neuter program.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Confirmed senior dog or senior citizen.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: Senior citizen. Proposing the license fee for senior citizen to license the pet stay at \$8.

CHAIR DUERR: Wanted to know what age is considered senior citizen?

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: Age 60. Proposing that fee stays the same. Currently charges \$5 for replacement tag. Keep it at that. The late fee can stay the same. Licensing fees are significantly lower than other jurisdictions.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Confirmed a lot of jurisdiction don't offer three year licenses. WCRAS does not offer either.

CHAIR DUERR: Suggested N/A may be more appropriate than "no fee."

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: Variance permit fee is \$50 to own more than five dogs.

CHAIR DUERR: Confirmed it was just changed from three to five dogs. New changes would be to add a sixth dog. Inquired about cat limits.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: Limit on cats is seven. Variance permit fees should be \$843 when taking into account all the work put into it. Proposing \$400 for variance permit fee.

Dangerous dogs. Current fee is \$50 to register dangerous dog.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Every year, dangerous dog permit has to be renewed. Officer has to inspect. Much more involved than just a license.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: New suggestion is \$500 to register dangerous dog.

Exotic animal permit, commercial animal welfare permit, breeder's permit, there are no fees. New suggestion is \$100 for commercial animal welfare permit, \$250 for exotic animal, \$400 for breeder's permit.

Currently, there is a variance permit renewal fee and dangerous dog renewal fee. Proposing just one annual fee every year of the same price.

Impound fees. Currently it is \$34 for first impound, \$50 for second impound, \$100 for third impound. Costs for WCRAS are \$100. New suggestion is to keep the third impound fee of \$100, and raise first impound to \$60, second impound to \$75. Increase for cat impound and livestock impound.

CHAIR DUERR: Has questions about new suggested fees to ask later.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: Not going over every single fee. Livestock hauling fees are a tremendous strain on staff, but costs are large. Also, asking for exotic animal boarding fee. Also requesting pass through costs, i.e., specialized food and/or equipment, that would get passed through to the owner when animal is picked up.

CHAIR DUERR: Raised question on quarantine fee. Wanted to know if it was per day?

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: Home quarantine fee is the fee for staff to go to the residence of the animal, place it in quarantine, and then come back after quarantine period to release animal from quarantine, which is 10 days. Same would apply if the animal comes into the shelter as opposed to pick up.

Boarding fees. Currently is \$9 for dog and \$4 for cat. Suggested increase is \$14 for dog and \$8 for cat.

Safe hold. Only want to charge a boarding fee for a safe hold animal.

Microchips. Free to Washoe County residents. Charge non-Washoe County residents.

Field service fee. Currently none. If a deceased animal is picked up, suggesting to charge appropriate fees.

CHAIR DUERR: Asked about when a deceased animal is picked up and a microchip is found, is the owner then charged?

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: No. Charges would apply if the owner requested transportation.

Vaccination fees. Currently charging \$10 and \$20 for Bordatella shot and \$10 dewormer fee. Costs for vaccines have increased, but suggestions are to keep them as low as possible.

Currently don't have a fee for necropsy. Suggesting fees associated with same.

Complex veterinary exam is a cruelty related exam. Suggested fees associated with same.

Routine exam for animal brought in. Suggesting to be able to charge for vet and staff time in examining the animal.

CHAIR DUERR: Commented her support of increasing the fees since it has been almost 20 years since they have been increased. Feels the 89% cost recovery is a little steep.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: If the goal is to keep the animals in the homes and not in shelters. But if an individual doesn't have money and the new costs are too expensive for the owner, it could become a disincentive for the owner.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: Commented that the fee study still needs to be presented to BOCC. Would like to propose the potential to waive fees based off of Director's discretion in certain circumstances. It would be a case-by-case basis. Also would like to offer free licensing with adoption.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Feels it all needs to be spelled out for owners.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Commented that inflation and rising costs have made fees more important to be looked at. Asked how many variance permits are in Washoe County?

DIRECTOR SCHULL: When code amendment was updated, it was 125 permits. When it was increased the number of dogs from 3 to 5, there are about 30 variance permits.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: Exotic animal permits, there are two.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Commented that WCRAS gets the amount of money to be sustainable. Raised concerns about covering costs. Really likes the idea of a fee waiver program for those that need it.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: Commented that incentives like “free licensing weekend” for example, would be a great idea. Due to capacity issues, they want to provide incentives for people to get their animals sooner than later.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Communication is key. Encourages to use every platform to help with the message to the community so nobody freaks out about the rising costs.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: Agreed. The next step is to present to the BOCC. A full implementation plan and time line will be presented. A public education campaign will also be planned.

MEMBER McMAHON: Asked about impound fees. Does that include impound plus boarding on a 5-day hold.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: Confirmed.

MEMBER McMAHON: Commented on the variance permit fee, the dangerous dog fee. Feels that the high increase may result in increased numbers of euthanasia of those dangerous dogs. Also inquired about increased fees for variance holders, and is it only for new variances or renewals?

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JENNINGS: Need to research further.

MEMBER McMAHON: Feels that the livestock hauling fee is justifiable. It’s not just staff resources and time, but also the knowledge and experience in handling the livestock.

CHAIR DUERR: Feels that the dangerous dog increases could be more of a stepped implementation. If an owner is hit with a \$500 fine, what decision will they ultimately make? Asked for public comment.

MS. DOBBS: Jill Dobbs, Executive Director of SPCA. Voiced her overwhelming support as it is long overdue. Appropriate funding is needed.

MS. PERRY: Commented on presentation. Feels that comparing WCRAS to other markets is like comparing apples and oranges. Commented on the PSA and contracts between the County and NHS. Isn't hearing anything about the interlocal which is the County's contract with the City.

CHAIR DUERR: Directed Ms. Perry on comments re: fee proposal, instead of public comment.

MS. PERRY: In agreement with the fee increase, however, felt that if the fees are too high, people will leave the animals.

CHAIR DUERR: Asked for discussion leading up to potential motion.

MEMBER McMAHON: Offered a motion for approval with the potential to consider some issues of tiering overall increases over a period of time instead of one solid change.

CHAIR DUERR: Confirmed transition into higher fees. Also clarified variance process or some incentive of waiving fees.

MEMBER McMAHON: Agreed it is an important factor to have the right intent for the owner's pet.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Seconded motion.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Asked if WCRAS can make modifications and adjustments and then come back to Board.

CHAIR DUERR: Asked Director Schull if it will be brought back at April 2024 meeting for final recommendations to the BOCC.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented that they are hopeful to get this through this budget session so it would not be enough time to bring it back to the Board.

CHAIR DUERR: Confirmed that final budgets are not adopted until May. If it was brought back in April, it would still be enough time to modify the proposal.

MEMBER GARCIA: Is supportive of the approval of the fees. It is long overdue. Supportive of the idea of creating a financial assistance program at discretion of Director. Unclear about part of the motion relating to the tier system. Her inclination is

to propose the motion without the tier suggestion.

MEMBER McMAHON: Felt that the enormous increases, i.e., variance fee permits and dangerous dogs, could potentially affect the outcome of the animal.

MEMBER GARCIA: Suggested another area of discretion to Director. Proposes a motion to adopt the fee schedule as presented with direction to staff to create a financial assistance pathway program at the discretion of Director. Also, to implement on an as-needed basis, a tier system for those specific fees that had an increase of greater than 50%.

CHAIR DUERR: Supports that motion as well. In addition to the finance waiver, also wants an incentive waiver. For example, to pick up your animal within 24-hours, impound fee won't apply.

MR. ROSS: Suggested to clarify the motion as much as possible.

CHAIR DUERR: Asked Member McMahon if she accepts amendments to motion and clarified that rather than adopting a tier system, to adopt recommended fee schedule, any fee increasing greater than 50% would include a step wise implementation.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Asked about the 50% cap because it would include most of the fee increases.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented on the fee increases that are more than 100% increases. Add "greater than 100%".

CHAIR DUERR: Adopt the fee schedule. Any fees that are proposed more than 100% increase, staff would propose an implementation schedule to get to ultimate fee. When presented to BOCC, they would include a proposal for financial waiver and include a proposal for incentive to pick up animal sooner.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Confirmed they have a lot of ideas for waivers. Want to be able to waive license fees for adoptions. Fee forgiveness program for first time impounds. Also, have a lot of administrative things that come up that the need to be able to have the discretion to waive fees.

CHAIR DUERR: Confirmed it is not the intent of the Board to take away their discretion. Also add to motion to continue to have the Director to have discretion in implementing the fee system.

MEMBER McMAHON: Agreed not to inhibit them in any way.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Agrees it needs to be clearly outlined in the resolution what fees are allowed to be waived.

CHAIR DUERR: Suggested it be brought back to next meeting on which fees could be waived that doesn't affect the budget and the fee adoption schedule.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Wasn't prepared to discuss with the Board what authorities they have to waive what fees.

CHAIR DUERR: If it's being brought to BOCC, it should be brought to Advisory Board in April.

Trying motion again to adopt the fee schedule and any fee that has over 100% increase to be considered for a stepped implementation schedule that the staff would come up with; that there would be a financial waiver program; and to bring back to the Advisory Board the category of fees they would like to have the authority to waive at the April meeting.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Agreed.

CHAIR DUERR: Asked Member Motion if he agreed to amended motion.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Confirmed and amended his second to the motion accordingly.

CHAIR DUERR: Motion passes unanimously.

10. ESTABLISH ASAB MEETING DATES FOR 2024 [For possible action]

CHAIR DUERR: Asked about establishing ASAB dates for 2024.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Discussed previous dates discussed for Advisory Board meetings. Friday, April 26th at 9:30 am; Friday, July 26th at 9:30 am; October 18th at 9:30 am.

CHAIR DUERR: Confirmed schedule works for her. However, feels that maybe 2-1/2 hours may not be long enough. Should they start at 9:00 am?

MEMBER DIXON: Agrees with 9:00 am.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Agrees with 9:00 am.

CHAIR DUERR: Confirmed that 9:00 am works for all. Asked for a motion to adopt dates for meetings. Also asked for public comment. Seeing none, asked for motion.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Motion to approve all mentioned dates and to start at 9:00 am.

MEMBER FISHER: Seconded motion.

CHAIR DUERR: Motion carries unanimously.

11. WASHOE COUNTY REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS AND/OR STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS, REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION AND SELECTION OF TOPICS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS [Non-action item]

CHAIR DUERR: Suggested update on trap, neuter, release program. Suggested next January to have a strategic planning budget workshop. Interested in increasing staffing and shelter capacity. Suggested proposals in April to be brought to the Board.

MEMBER McMAHON: How will that affect the real estate they currently have and how will it be utilized?

CHAIR DUERR: Suggested the prison program and a joint update. Changes in new agreement, implementation of vet, behavioralist, program changes. Wants to know how increased communications are working. Asking for report/update on changes.

12. PUBLIC COMMENT [Non-Action Item]

CHAIR DUERR: Asked for final public comment.

MS. PERRY: Discussed the interlocal and changes suggested.

13. ADJOURNMENT [Non-Action Item]

CHAIR DUERR: Declared meeting adjourned.