# **Washoe County Regional Animal Services Advisory Board**

Friday, August 1, 2025, @ 9:00 a.m.
Washoe County Commission Chambers
1001 E. 9th Street, Building A, Reno NV

and available via Zoom and YouTube

**Members Present: Members Present via Zoom:**

Naomi Duerr, Chair Joe Rodriguez

Trudy Brussard, Vice Chair

Clara Andriola

Jill Fisher

Julie McMahon

**Members Absent:**

Diaz Dixon

1. **Call to Order and Determination of Quorum**

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. and a quorum was present.

1. **Salute to the Flag**

Member Andriola led all those convened in the pledge of allegiance.

1. **Instruction for Providing Public Comment via Zoom/Telephone**

Cobi Burnett, Deputy District Attorney, provided instructions for members of the public to join the meeting via Zoom or telephone and provided instructions for how members of the public could provide oral public comment via Zoom or telephone.

1. **Public Comment**

There was no public comment offered at this time.

1. **Approval of May 16, 2025, Meeting Minutes**

Member Andriola moved to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2025, meeting of the Washoe County Regional Animal Services Advisory Board as presented. Vice Chair Brussard seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously by the board with no opposition.

1. **Director’s Report**

Washoe County Regional Animal Services (WCRAS) Director Shyanne Shull, Assistant Director Tammy Wines-Jennings, and Program Coordinator Quinn Sweet presented the Fiscal Year 2024 quarter four report. Director Shull began by advising the board that she had recently attended the April 2025 National Animal Care and Control Association conference as a representative of Northern Nevada, despite Neveda not having its own state association. Topics discussed included how attendees can set the stage as leaders, how to collaborate together and be representatives for animal welfare, current legislation, disaster preparedness, return to home programs, and things that can be done nationally to help support local jurisdictions. One of the largest take-aways came from a presentation by Animal Search and Rescue (ASAR), a group that comes to the aid of animal control organizations to help with field-specific services during disasters by request. WCRAS has entered agreement with them to be able to call upon them when needed.

Chair Duerr inquired about the possibility of utilizing local volunteers. Director Shull shared that the people sent by ASAR would be volunteers that have specific professions. She also shared that WCRAS representatives would be coming before the board in the future to discuss the agency’s own volunteer program which is currently under revamp but will include training volunteers to help during emergencies. Member Andriola shared how important communication infrastructure is during any type of emergency incident and felt that perhaps Animal Services was missing that opportunity. She was excited to hear that disaster preparedness was part of the dialogue within Animal Services and expressed a desire to see automatic alerts through the emergency system that is already in place. Director Shull shared that WCRAS had already planned on presenting an overview of the intensive work that Animal Services has been doing on the back end relating to disaster response at the next board meeting.

Director Shull shared that she also attended the Animal Care Expo put on by Humane World for Animals and is the largest conference in the industry with over 2,500 attendees from across the globe. One of the things learned at this conference were tips and program details about volunteer programs. It was very beneficial to have WCRAS’ outreach staff present to learn and talk to others about what programs have worked for them, software ideas, and other details regarding volunteer programs. Secondarily to that, staff learned about the new neonate kitten and puppy vaccination protocols that were brought back to the shelter for medical staff to integrate and implement.

Moving on to the previous quarter’s statistics, there was a 53% intake increase in the number of small animals including fish, guinea pigs, mice, hamsters, and other pocket pets. WCRAS has seen a greater number of abandonments and evictions where these animals are left behind as well as a high number of these animals left outside of the shelter. On a more positive note, there was an increase in the percentage of impounded cats that were already microchipped which has been an area where staff have been focusing public awareness and education efforts. Director Shull next shared the animal outcomes for all animals that came into WCRAS’ care which included died in care, euthanized, other, reunited, and transferred to one of WCRAS’ rescue partners for a total of 2,505 outcomes. Of the 768 animals that were picked up in the field, 288 were reunited in the field without the need for a stay at the shelter, saving taxpayer dollars, valuable resources and kennel spaces, and getting the animals back home where they belong without the stress of a shelter stay. Of the animals brought in over the counter, 267 of them were reunited with their families. For those not picked up by an owner, Nevada Humane Society took the majority of both cat and dog transfers. 64 dogs were unfortunately euthanized with 43 of them for behavior, 5 for no rescue resources meaning no rescue partners could be identified that had the resources to rehabilitate the dog, 3 animals that were owner requested meaning that we had already picked up an animal that was severely injured or there was a bite animal here on quarantine that the owner didn’t want back and so the owner signed paperwork requesting that we euthanize the animal, and 13 animals that were euthanized for quality of life. 54 cats were unfortunately euthanized and all were for quality of life.

Director Shull shared that the agency had one animal services officer on maternity leave and one officer on light duty for the last few months while also seeing the highest number of field service calls over the past five years. These calls included bite investigations, noise complaints, other, stray animals, unrestrained animals, and animal welfare calls. Chair Duerr asked about what happens with unrestrained calls. Director Shull shared that often when the officers arrive the owner is no longer there, but even when the officer is able to catch up with the person it is very hard to enforce because WCRAS has no arrest authority so the person can simply walk away. Chair Duerr asked if that authority is something that the board should be discussing. Director Shull explained that it would be a much bigger conversation at the legislative level since animal services officers are not peace officers they do not have arrest authority. Chair Duerr asked if other jurisdictions in other states had that authority and Director Shull shared that it depends on the state and the county to grant them that authority. Chair Duerr shared that she thinks it is a conversation worth having and Director Shull agreed that it is a topic that should be put in the parking lot for future discussion. Moving on to a breakdown of the welfare calls, of the 737 calls received, 102 were unfounded, 551 were resolved with non-punitive outcomes, and 84 required a punitive approach. Director Shull pointed out that this was peak season for calls of animals left in hot cars.

Program Coordinator Quinn Sweet shared the efforts of the outreach program over the last quarter. Although there was a decrease in the amount of vaccinations given, she reminded the board that she has only recently returned from maternity leave and is now working on planning more clinics and hopes to have a better update at the next meeting. The outreach team was very busy with eight events in the past quarter including the Mayor’s Dog Bowl event, school presentations, disaster preparedness presentations, and other community events. The team also implemented a number of new initiatives including a free spay/neuter program for individuals staying at CARES campus, Safe Camp, or Our Place in addition to the free vaccinations and microchipping already offered. Other new programs included a lost and found texting program, expansion of public microchip scanning stations, adding free DA2PP and FVRCP vaccinations to the vaccination clinics thanks to a grant from PetCo Love, and partnering with SPCA on a hot car campaign. Member Brussard asked if there was a way to track usage of the microchip scanning stations and was informed that while usage of the stations was not trackable, employees at the stores in which they were found had been asked to share stories when possible.

Assistant Director Wines-Jennings presented the work of the medical program of the last quarter. The medical team performed 170 Trap Neuter Return (TNR) spay/neuter surgeries, 5 Return to Field surgeries, 34 rescue partner surgeries, five CARES program surgeries with 34 CARES program vaccinations, worked on three cruelty cases, and performed one necropsy. Additionally, the agency finally has its own x-ray machine meaning the medical suite is now fully equipped. Since mid-May when the x-ray machine was installed the team has done 17 radiological studies to help the animals at the shelter. The team has also provided 15 other procedures including treating abscesses, wound care, grooming, an amputation, a mastectomy, and an urgent spay to treat a medical emergency.

Director Shull wrapped up the report by sharing that she has asked Rebecca from Humane World for Animals to prepare a brief update on the recent legislative session since they generally take the lead in legislative measures that involve animals.

Circling back to the issue of all the small animals being abandoned at the shelter, Member Fisher commented on the lack of messaging regarding the availability of these animals for adoption through a rescue partner instead of purchasing them from a pet store. Director Shull shared that WCRAS does try and highlight stories of animals and the adoption page for those rescues that they get transferred to. Beyond that, however, it would be incumbent upon the adoption shelters to carve out targeted messaging for those animals as it would not fall under WCRAS’ jurisdiction but agreed that it was a good point and more messaging regarding these animals would be beneficial.

Member McMahon shared that the community has been talking about the microchipping stations in several very robust and active social media pages so while usage may not be able to be tracked, the community is aware and excited about the stations. She also shared that she has noticed that when NHS has received large numbers of the small pocket pets she has seen social media promotions in addition to listings on places like Petfinder to advertise those animals.

Chair Duerr asked if WCRAS regularly receives turtles and shared that she had heard that it was illegal to acquire turtles in Nevada. Director Shull clarified that tortoises could be illegal to acquire, but water turtles were not illegal and the shelter does see them come in to the shelter somewhat often.

1. **WCRAS Field Training Officer Program**

Lead Animal Services Officer Clinton Nelms provided an overview of the program for the board. Officer Nelms shared that he has been an animal control officer for 19 years, first in Sacramento for 10 years, and here in Washoe County for the past 9 years. He was California POST certified in 2003, completed the Animal Law Enforcement Academy in 2007, and POST certified in illegal animal fighting in 2009. He is a certified animal cruelty investigator and has been recognized by the California Supreme Court as a dangerous dog expert. Here at WCRAS he serves as the field training coordinator and is a certified instructor in the use of OC (pepper spray), expandable batons, handcuffs and tactical lighting, and the Byrna pepperball launcher, and teaches at the Washoe County Sheriff’s Officer Patrol Academy.

When Lead Officer Nelms accepted the position of Lead Animal Services Officer for WCRAS his stated goals were to not only raise the standard of WCRAS officers but to raise the reputation of the profession as animal services officers and the reputation of WCRAS. The idea was to present a product to the public and to law enforcement partners that was perceived as professional, competent, and effective and for WCRAS to be recognized as the best animal control agency in the region.

Lead Officer Nelms began by working with staff to revamp our hiring announcements and flyers to bring them up to par with nationwide law enforcement agencies. This led to an increase in the number and quality of candidates and eventually to the hiring of four officers with peace officer standards training certificates and two officers who are experts in dog behavior. Lead Officer Nelms rewrote the Code of Appearance and the Use of Force Policy and created SOPs for adding OC, batons, and Byrna pepperball launchers to the standard equipment. He increased the training program from eight weeks to 16 weeks with the goal of better equipping new officers with the skills to succeed and better serve the needs of the community. This included changing the satisfactory requirements for training areas as well as setting up a program to document their progress throughout the training program.

The training program also encompasses training for existing officers and includes OC, baton, and Byrna training, trailer training to ensure all officers are competent and confident in pulling trailers during disaster responses, and training to not only meet the requirements to become a certified euthanasia technician but also to be able to confidently and safely administer euthanasia in a manner as respectful to the animal as possible. In addition, there are bridge training classes that are offered through Washoe County. Currently this includes a vehicle operations course, but Lead Officer Nelms is looking into providing more POST-related training. Although WCRAS Officers are not peace officers it would still benefit them to be educated in regards to constitutional rights and things of that nature. Officers are expected to issue citations and investigate crimes involving animals which includes interviewing subjects, collecting evidence and other activities that would be covered in such training.

Lead Officer Nelms and Field Manager Robert Wooster are both certified instructors in these matters and the benefit to providing these in-house instructors is that WCRAS would no longer be reliant upon outside agencies and their schedules to maintain training for the officers. By moving the training in-house the department will be able to offer training that is specific to the duties of animal control officers and on a schedule that works for the officers. In addition, all officers will be receiving the exact same training instead of receiving slightly different training depending on the agency offering the training.

And finally, to improve the safety of the officers the department has made it mandatory for all officers to carry OC and be trained in its use at a professional level and be certified in the use of Byrna pepperball launchers. These measures not only serve to protect the officers, but also to protect the public when being threatened by animals in the community.

Lead Officer Nelms finished by sharing with the board that current staffing levels have made it difficult to fully research other training opportunities and have kept him extremely busy with the current training. WCRAS had requested an additional Lead Animal Services Officer position but was unable to achieve that at this time. It is the hope of the department that such a position can be created in the future. In the meantime, he shared that the best way the board can support the officers is to lend their voice and influence to help change the laws in NV that may need to be changed to better allow the department to serve the public in the most effective and safe way possible.

Member Rodriguez asked if there was a reason that the officers were not POST certified as acting peace officers and whether there were any barriers to achieving that. He noted that criminal cases currently fall to the different jurisdictions and to city attorneys and detectives who may not have the knowledge that the Animal Services Officers would certainly have. He asked how the different agencies represented on the board could help overcome any barriers and if the department saw the need for the officers to be POST certified. Lead Officer Nelms explained that state law currently does not recognize animal control officers as peace officers and so that training is not required. Instead, Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) categorized animal control officers as specialized law enforcement officers with the ability to issue citations, but not the authority of a full peace officer. Lead Officer Nelms offered that it would definitely be beneficial for animal control officers to be afforded the full authority, and training, of a peace officer as they are doing the job of a law enforcement officer. Currently animal control officers can not enforce felonies so when they are called upon to help with felony cases such as animal abuse, they have to ask for the help of local law enforcement agencies and have no control over the investigation and the outcome.

Member Brussard asked where those types of incidents as well as those in which the public is threatened or endangered are included in the director’s reports. Lead Officer Nelms explained that they can be included in a number of different call types. They can be an unrestrained dog attack, a stray aggressive call, even assisting other agencies. He mentioned a recent incident where there was a vehicle accident, the owner was unconscious in the vehicle, and there was an aggressive dog in the vehicle that was preventing REMSA or the Sheriff’s Office from providing medical aid to the individual. The individual’s medical care was delayed probably 35 minutes because no one on scene was equipped to handle the animal. That is a very common occurrence where an individual needs medical care and there is an animal preventing them from receiving care. In these situations local law enforcement, REMSA, and fire departments must wait for WCRAS to respond and safely remove the animal.

Chair Duerr asked whether officers were always available to respond to these situations. Lead Officer Nelms explained that there is an on-call officer on duty between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 am but that since the department covers a very large area that response can unfortunately be delayed. He shared that recently WCRAS attempted to get a permit from the Nevada State Police that would allow them to provide an emergency response, and therefore reduce that delay, but were denied and told that since their name was not on the list, they would need to change that through the legislature. Lead Officer Nelms pointed out that this is the type of law that he mentioned earlier that the board could lend their voice and influence towards changing. Chair Duerr pointed out that the board does not necessarily need to wait for the law to come up for change but could actively work to sponsor a bill or solicit a legislator to sponsor a bill. She recommended that this be added to a future agenda for discussion.

Chair Duerr also inquired whether there was a lot of interaction between WCRAS and the other agencies such as the NV Department of Wildlife (NDOW) or Fish and Game that work with animals. Lead Officer Nelms explained that WCRAS responds to all domestic animals found in Washoe County, regardless of which agency first encounters the agency. Chair Duerr asked whether there was any cross-training back towards the other agencies. She offered an example from south Reno where there are a number of vehicle accidents involving wild horses. In virtually all of these accidents the horse has either died or has been so severely injured that euthanasia is required. When this happens the Department of Agriculture is called, but it can take them an hour to arrive, and the animal is suffering during that entire time so Chair Duerr had asked if the Reno Police Department officers could get trained in euthanasia since they are already on scene. She now asked if there was the possibility for cross training that we could provide for these types of situations. Lead Officer Nelms shared that as part of elevating the department’s reputation of being leaders in this industry he has been contacted by other agencies in the region and the department has extended training to them in the use of OC and baton. He added that he is familiar with the horses that get hit in south Reno and has had the unfortunate task of dispatching some of them himself. He agreed that a law enforcement officer that is already on scene and has the capability and tools to end that animal’s suffering as soon as possible should be a priority and that he would absolutely provide that training to any agency that contacted him. Member McMahon offered that there are state board regulations stating that euthanasia technicians carrying phenobarbital can only be animal control officers or veterinary professionals. She offered that perhaps trying to build partnerships with Comstock and other veterinary hospitals may be more beneficial than trying to change the legislature. Chair Duerr explained that in these situations they had been using firearms to dispatch the animals and Lead Officer Nelms added that he had also been referring to the use of firearms and his offer was to educate the police officers and how to adequately and humanely dispatch a horse with a firearm.

Member Andriola offered her appreciation for the leadership needed to address situations like this and in the exemplary level of trying to do what needs to be done. She noted the overall level of initiation and preparedness as well as capacity needed for this effort and wondered if the program was relatively new. Director Shull explained that the Lead Officer position was created within the last two years. As the position has organically grown with all of the things that have been internalized for continuity, for efficiency, and for cost savings it was realized how overwhelming the amount of work was that Lead Office Nelms has taken on in addition to being a field officer. That has led to the need to develop a secondary position just like his to be able to carry on the training needs as they have organically grown and the request for a second position won’t change as we still need that position. She offered that the training that Lead Officer Nelms has been able to bring on has made it much easier for the rest of the team to remain consistent and professional with that level of training versus sending people across the country to various different law enforcement training which was very disjointed. Having him be able to provide that consistent training internally has been very valuable and so it’s something that the department feels would benefit from a second position to help expand the additional goals and initiatives. Member Andriola added that there was a point to made for leveraging the relationships with Comstock and other agencies that respond to various calls in various ways for various reasons.

Member Rodriguez wanted to circle back to the request for the code three emergency response permit. He noted that WCRAS was heavily involved during evacuations for things like the Davis Creek fire and pointed out that traffic concerns are often associated with those fire responses and wondered when the last time was that the department asked for authorization to use code three response. Lead Officer Nelms explained that it had been very recently as the department recently had a couple of new vehicles built and had looked at obtaining the code three response lights on those vehicles. Chair Duerr wondered if there was an appeal process. Lead Officer Nelms offered that the department had went at it pretty hard and were basically told that they needed to change the state law to simply add WCRAS to the list. Member Rodriguez pointed out that there have been recent retirements and changes in leadership and so that it might be beneficial to revisit the request. Officer Nelms reassured the board that the request would certainly be revisited.

Chair Duerr asked if there was any requirement for law enforcement to receive any animal training. Lead Officer Nelms shared that when he did his POST training in California they were only required to do an hour of animal training. Washoe County Sheriff’s Office brought him out to do a portion of their patrol officer academy several academies ago and WCRAS is in talks with the City of Reno to provide some of the same instruction to their patrol officers.

Chair Duerr also asked about the department’s involvement with wildlife such as bears or other wildlife. Lead Officer Nelms replied that while previously the department had responded to all animals, they recognized that the responsibility for wildlife was with NDOW. WCRAS does still respond to small wildlife and deer if they are injured or deceased on private property, but everything else is under the jurisdiction of NDOW.

1. **Options Veterinary Care Access to Spay/Neuter Services Update**

Options Veterinary Care President Bonney Brown provided an update to the board on the agency’s services. Options Veterinary Care is a Humane Network program that serves as northern Nevada’s only nonprofit affordable high-quality care clinic. Rather than replacing other veterinary clinics they aim to serve the cliental that those clinics are unable to serve due to financial hardship. Options works to keep animals from being surrendered or abandoned by offering veterinary care to owners that would otherwise not be able to keep their animal. Options is able to keep care affordable by using incremental care strategies, working with partner organizations that cover costs for some clients, grant funding, and donations from individuals and local businesses. Last year they were able to provide veterinary care to over 9.800 dogs and cats.

President Brown went on to thank Washoe county for including Options in the public spay/neuter funding from ARPA funds and specifically WCRAS for supporting their spay/neuter efforts. The ARPA funding is being used to provide free TNR surgeries for Washoe County cats, free spay/neuter surgeries for Washoe county rescue groups, and affordable and free spay/neuter surgeries for Washoe County pet owners. Since the funding was awarded on December 10, 2024 through June 30, 2025 a total of 2,182 surgeries have been performed on 561 dogs, 1,620 cats, and 1 rabbit.

Options Veterinary Care works individually with each client to determine the individual financial need and then meet that need. The ARPA funding has allowed them to greatly increase their capacity to meet that need and was able to cover 798 of the 2,182 surgeries performed. In addition to ARPA funding, the SPCA of Northern Nevada Voucher Program covered 151 surgeries, and the remaining 1,233 surgeries were paid for by other programs or the owners themselves. Even when fully funded by the owner, the fees for spay/neuter service is usually far less than a private veterinary practice and so many owners are able to meet that cost.

Focusing on the 798 surgeries funded by the ARPA funds, 36% of the dog owners were able to make a financial contribution towards their pet’s care. Of those owners who were able to contribute, 33% of those did so to help cover additional procedures or medications not covered by ARPA funding. Those additional procedures included pyometra surgeries, mass removal, hernia repair, cryptorchid surgery, amputation, and take-home medications. 95% of these surgeries were further subsidized by Options supporters. For cats, 6% of the cat owners/colony caregivers were able to make a financial contribution towards their pet’s care, again with most of the payments helping to cover additional procedures or medications not covered by ARPA funding. Those additional procedures included diagnostic testing, mass removal, hernia repair, cryptorchid surgery, and take-home medications. 40% of these surgeries were further subsidized by Options supporters.

President Brown also shared other options for affordable spay/neuter services including the Nevada Humane Society, SPCA of Northern Nevada, and Pinon Veterinary Hospital. She recognized that Options frequently has a waiting list and offered these other options for those pet-owners who may not be able to wait for an appointment to become available.

Chair Duerr inquired as to how Options decides which animals are covered by ARPA funds and which animals are covered by other sources. President Brown explained that there are trained staff that use a tiered chart when working with each client to determine what level of funding is applied. At the top level are people who can afford to pay the full spay/neuter prices which are still much lower than the areas private clinics. If they cannot pay full price, an induvial discussion is had to determine how much each pet owner can contribute and which funding source would be the best fit.

Chair Duerr also asked if Options was still seeking empty pill bottles as she had been sending people to Options with them. President Brown responded that yes they were still accepting empty pill bottles where they will be sterilized and then used for their clinic.

Member McMahon mentioned that NHS had mentioned that they had to meet the criterion of a certain number of surgeries for the ARPA funding. President Brown stated that their goal was 3,200 in the next 18 months.

1. **Nevada Humane Society Operational Update Report**

CEO Jerleen Bryant provided an update to the board on the Nevada Humane Society (NHS) Reno campus’ second quarter 2025. She started by talking about the Animal Help Desk which is a resource for pet owners in Washoe County and Carson City. In the past quarter the help desk answered 2,375 calls. Of those, 1,895 of them were requests to surrender animals. The help desk works to try and provide counseling or resources for pet owners to help keep the animal at home and only 647 animals ended up being surrendered. Another source of incoming animals is through NHS’ partnership with WCRAS. In the past quarter, NHS was able to transfer 98% of the cats and 88% of the dogs that WCRAS had made available. Year-to-date those numbers were 97% and 89% respectively. A third source of incoming animals are Good Samaritan Surrenders of kittens to young for adoptions and too small for WCRAS. All of these sources totaled 2,662 animals coming into the shelter. Happily, 1,854 animals were adopted out to hopefully forever-homes in the same period.

In May the NHS Community Medical Team was fully staffed and equipped and began providing spay/neuter surgeries for the public. To date they have performed 1,298 total surgeries. The clinic is still working to fill all available appointments as the program is new, and marketing is in full swing to let the public know that these services are now available. Also a recipient of ARPA funding, NHS’ goal is to provide an additional 4,000 surgeries in 2025 and an additional 5,600 surgeries in 2026. Going beyond routine spay/neuter surgeries, she highlighted a recent case where the team was able to provide life-saving pyometra surgery for a beloved family dog whose owners would otherwise not have been able to afford the procedure. In addition to spay/neuter services NHS provides low-cost vaccines and microchips at their weekly clinics. In quarter two they microchipped 1,117 animals and vaccinated 2,886 animals.

NHS relies heavily on their volunteers for activities such as walking dogs, cuddling kittens, supporting events, and more. In the past quarter these volunteers gave 7,102 total hours, the equivalent of 15 full-time staff members. Another resource that NHS relies on is their foster program. Foster families step in when space is tight, or an animal needs more care than can be provided in a shelter environment. 1,049 animals were placed in foster care in the last quarter.

NHS’ Pet Pantry provides free pet food and supplies to those in need. In quarter two they distributed 46,795 pounds of food for 2,059 dogs and 2,760 cats. This is one of the resources that NHS uses to help keep pets at home with their families. In addition to providing food, staff make sure to talk with the owners about what other needs they may have such as spay/neuter surgeries.

Member Andriola asked for clarification on delivery of food through the Pet Pantry and whether they go out into the community. CEO Bryant explained that community members would come into the shelter and check in with the client services to receive food. Currently the Pet Pantry is available seven days a week but that process will be shifting slightly in October. Member Andriola followed up by pointing out places like Cares Campus and Our Place where residents would have barriers to transportation and asked if there were plans in place to address that, specifically with spay/neuter services. CEO Bryant explained that they do have a mobile spay/neuter vehicle and eventually it will be going out into more underresourced and underserved areas. They have already been identifying areas such as those mentioned by Member Andriola for when they are able to start going out into the community. Member Andriola lastly inquired whether NHS tracked the outcomes of animals that were transferred from WCRAS specifically. CEO Bryant explained that they do have the capacity to track it but have never focused on that particular metric.

Member McMahon asked how successful NHS had been in shortening the wait times for animal surrender appointments since long wait times for appointments has led to owner abandonment issues in the past. CEO Bryant explained that the wait time fluctuates depending on the time of year but they are very sensitive to the problem. Currently NHS receives 1,000 phone calls per day and while not all of them are for the help desk, the majority of them are and so depending on staffing levels there could be a delay in the ability to connect with the pet owner. However, oftentimes NHS is waiting on information from the pet owner themselves before being able to schedule an appointment. She added that while the median timeframe might be 10 days, they do have emergency slots available every day. Another consideration she pointed out is capacity as NHS has to balance their kennel space between owner surrenders and transfers from WCRAS. Member McMahon recognized that there has been a remarkable improvement in the number of transfers from WCRAS. Lastly Member McMahon asked whether kittens that were transferred from WCRAS are included in their Good Samaritan Surrender numbers. CEO Bryant explained that those kittens are not included in those numbers and are instead included in the transfer numbers. Member McMahon finished by thanking the NHS foster team for being so supportive for the kitten foster families.

Chair Duerr mentioned that she understood that there was a new transfer agreement that had been settled or assigned and asked for clarification. CEO Bryant explained that there is a transfer agreement with WCRAS in its final stages. Prior to 2023 there wasn’t a transfer agreement, only the PSA which is the overarching agreement. Since then, CEO Bryan and Director Shull have been working on a transfer agreement which is more of a robust SOP whereas the PSA is an overarching agreement between the two agencies. Director Shull added that she also understood that the transfer agreement was in the final stages and not yet complete. Chair Duerr expressed that she had thought that the new transfer agreement would be on the agenda for this meeting and asked that it be placed on the next meetings agenda as a topic for discussion. CEO Bryant clarified that there has already been a transfer agreement in place that the two agencies have been operating under and this new agreement was more of an update to the existing agreement but that she would be happy to talk about the update at the next meeting.

1. **Washoe County Regional Animal Services Advisory Board Member and/or Staff Announcements, Requests for Information, and Selection of Topics for Future Agendas [Non-Action Item]**

Chairperson Naomi Duerr proffered the following for future agenda items:

1. Discuss ways in which the board could promote legislation to strengthen WCRAS’s enforcement abilities and reaction capabilities including whether a requirement for animal control officers to be certified as peace officers could be implemented at a local or regional level.
2. A status update on the transfer agreement between WCRAS and NHS.
3. WCRAS’s efforts to offer animal handling training to local law enforcement.
4. The role of WCRAS in collaborating with other agencies to provide euthanasia training.

Member Julie McMahon proffered the following for future agenda items:

1. An update on the shared dog behavior policy including behavioral assessments and training staff.

Director Shyanne Shull shared the following items that her team has been working on bringing before the board at future meetings:

1. An update on the agency’s disaster preparedness program including protocols and SOPs, and external agreements with outside organizations.
2. A legislative update from this past session with an overview of what passed, what did not, and any impacts to the department operationally.

Member Andriola mentioned that she had recently done a ride along with local law enforcement and was present at an incident where some dogs had been left behind. It was clear to her that there was a direct and seamless protocol for when that happens and the response from the animal services officer was prompt. She noted that the cooperation, compassion, and care from both sides was commendable, and she wanted to recognize that.

1. **Public Comment [Non-Action Item]**

There was no public comment offered at this time.

1. **Adjournment [Non-Action Item]**

Chair Duerr declared the Animal Services Advisory Board meeting of August 1, 2025, adjourned at 11:43 a.m.