

**THE GOVERNING BOARD
OF THE JOINT POWERS AGENCY OF THE
STANISLAUS ANIMAL SERVICES AGENCY (SASA)**
Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting

Thursday

May 18, 2023

Members Present:

Michael Pitcock, City of Waterford-Chair – Present
Allison Van Guild, City of Modesto – Present
Jewel Warr, Alternate for Stanislaus County – Present
Merry Mayhew, City of Hughson – Present
Ken Irwin, City of Patterson – Absent
Doug Dunford, City of Ceres – Absent

Staff Present:

Sweena Pannu, Deputy County Counsel
Vaughn Maurice, Executive Director
Brian Sterkeson, Business Manager
Megan Morriss, Confidential Assistant
Jennifer Smith, Volunteer Supervisor
Regina Menezes, Manager Consultant

Guests and Dignitaries: None

The meeting was called to order at 9:00am by Chair, Mike Pitcock.

1. **Welcome:** Mike Pitcock-Introductions
2. **Roll Call (Silent):** See above
3. **Presentations:**

A. SASA Volunteer program presentation:

Supervisor Jennifer Smith introduced herself to the Board and asked them to prepare for some volunteer program bragging. When Covid hit our volunteer numbers took a hit and we are in the beginning stages of rebuilding our volunteer numbers. What is a volunteer? What do they provide? Volunteers are community members who volunteer their time to help SASA animals. Animal interaction results in healthier moods for the animals, a proven immune boost from volunteer interactions and less tension and results in healthier animals. For FY 22-23 we currently have 89 volunteers compared to 66 the year prior. We are streamlining our volunteer processes to make their time here more efficient. We have

fine tuned jobs they do here to include grooming, animal fosters, and transport of animals to rescues.

Our FETCH program has been restarted with less participants, but we are working on building back this program. We have food pantry volunteers who give out donated animal food out in the community. In the past we have seen some owner surrender animals because they can't afford to feed them. This volunteer program hopes to divert those owner surrender dogs. We also have some student/school volunteers. In the future we hope to have volunteers fixing fences to prevent animals from ending up here. Have our own volunteer diversion program. Woofstock (which was Vaughn's idea) would be a future event we would like to have. Another big future event is the Adopt-a-Palooza which gets us back out in the community.

No public comment on this presentation.

4. Public Comment Period (Limit of 5 minutes per person):

- A. Nancy Klein-Stanislaus County resident. Has spent many hours and years at SASA. She has attended many of the past meetings. Has been a volunteer with City of Los Banos for 1 ½ years. She is a member of the Rescue Support Team which is made up of volunteers of rescue groups. Their job is to evaluate animals and market them to different rescues. They do this with dozens of dogs per month. She likes to stay quietly engaged and to see what's going on at SASA. This agenda piqued her curiosity. She did miss the volunteer presentation. She would like to see this meeting in the evening as people are at work and cannot attend. The pandemic of Covid had a big impact on dogs. We now are seeing Covid returns, financial concerns, spay/neuter concerns. Education in the community is critical. Rescue Coordinator, Chandra Looney is doing a great job.

5. Minutes of Previous Meetings:

- A. Motion to approve the Agency Board Meeting Minutes from April 20, 2023 (County of Stanislaus/City of Hughson; 4-0)
- B. Motion to approve the Agency Special Board Meeting Minutes from April 20, 2023 (County of Stanislaus/City of Hughson; 4-0)

6. Correspondence: None

7. New Business:

- A. Motion to approve item 7A-2023-2024 Fiscal Year Promotions. (City of Hughson/County of Stanislaus; 4-0)

- B. Motion to approve item 7B-Accept \$15,000 grant from the Prevention of Animal Homelessness and Cruelty Voluntary Tax Contribution fund for public spay/neuters. (County of Stanislaus/City of Hughson; 4-0)
- C. Motion to approve item 7C-Accept \$60,000 grant from Petco Love to enhance our transport program capabilities. (County of Stanislaus/City of Hughson; 4-0)
- D. Motion to approve item 7D-Authorize an amendment to the SASA JPA Agreement with respect to the Agency's manner of exercising its powers currently subject to the restrictions applicable to the City of Modesto being replaced by restrictions applicable to the County of Stanislaus. (City of Hughson/County of Stanislaus; 4-0)
- E. Motion to approve item 7E-Accept a grant that creates a joint venture between SASA and Community Animal Medicine Project (CAMP) funded through a grant provided by UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program to provide surgical and clinical techniques in high quality high volume spay/neuter surgery. (City of Hughson/County of Stanislaus; 4-0)
- F. Motion to approve item 7F-Accept a \$40,000 grant for clinic equipment from the California Animal Welfare Funders Collaborative via UC Davis. (County of Stanislaus/City of Modesto; 4-0)
- G. Motion to approve item 7G-Adopt the recommended budget for fiscal year 2023-2024. (County of Stanislaus/City of Waterford; 4-0)

8. Committee Reports:

A. Executive Director report:

- i. Interesting and fun statistics about the shelter. We are receiving 20 animals per day, 7 days per week. Our Field Services has a high call volume at 717 calls. Last year we had 500 calls. Huge difference and the same number of staff responding to the calls.
- ii. Social Media report. We leveled out between March and April but still doing fantastic in reaching people in our community.
- iii. Intake is on a downward trend. Year to date is 2171 animals so far. Dogs in the shelter monthly average is consistent over the last couple of months. We are at a little over 250 dogs. 188 dogs is our max capacity. Puppies have been adding a lot of animals to our numbers. Good news is we are not where we were at this time in summer of 2021. Average length of stay, not a lot of trending to show. The chart shows the last two years, after Covid. Cats and puppies show a downward trend-relatively stable. No trend sticks out for length of stay. If we can get the length of stay down a few days for dogs and 5-6 days for cats, we would be happy with that. Unfortunately, we are a long way from that. We are in crisis mode.
- iv. On dog intakes specifically-dogs are the biggest problem. You can see from April of 2022 to April of 2023, a huge jump from 500 to 700 dogs coming in. Adoptions have been stable. This is

not too bad. Nationwide adoptions are down 7% but we are not experiencing that here. We are maintaining.

- v. Transport and rescue partners have really saved us. 109 animals go out last April and 137 animals went out this April. They really stepped up. Comparing 2022 to 2023, our rescue and transports are up considerably. Adoptions remain stable. We are better than the California average.
- vi. Dog intakes is showing an increase. When we look at the 3-year trend on dog intakes, it's really a bad picture. We are in crisis mode-no exaggeration. On track as of May 1st to have 4785 dogs this year. Last year was only 4000 dogs and the year before that was below 4000 dogs. A lot of animals we are dealing with. We are managing. We have great staff that has done an admiral job with the resources we have.
- vii. Staffing-we are not quite fully staffed anymore which is disappointing. One cool statistic, employee turnover rate was 30% this time last year and this year it is 15%. A 50% reduction in employee turnover. A lot of things contribute to that including the County's bonus and retention program. I'd like to think that our Senior Management team has put a lot of effort into team development, team building and having thoughtful staff meetings. Also, we have sat down with each staff member individually which is a great way to build up staff development. This promotes that each staff member is a valuable team member. We regularly talk with staff members which helps build staff morale.
- viii. Fun shelter promotions-Graphics we did for half off promotion were successful. We also did a fun spring-cleaning event. 100 dog and cat adoptions were gifted to us by Kelcie Costa to make that event possible. We also did an event at the Flea Market on Crowslanding road to reach our Spanish speaking citizens. We are trying to be more diverse. We had a free booth at the flea market on Cinco de Mayo. Lots of citizens came up to our booth with questions. We did outreach and free adoptions.
- ix. Licensing has really picked up. Quite a few more people doing licensing which is good. We are very happy with that.
- x. Question on the price of dog adoptions. Average cost to adopt a dog is \$100 in our service area and \$120 outside our service area.

No public comment on the Executive Director report.

9. Informational: None

10. Member Referrals: None

11. Closed Session: None

12. Adjournment: Adjourned meeting at 10:25am (County of Stanislaus/City of Hughson; 4-0)

Adjourned: 10:25am

ATTESTED: Megan Morriss, Confidential Assistant
of the Governing Board
of the Joint Powers Agency
of the Stanislaus Animal Services Agency
State of California