



Animal Services Advisory Committee AGENDA

**3647 Cornucopia Way
Modesto, CA 95358**

July 02, 2026

6:00 p.m.

Animal Services Advisory Committee Meeting Notice

Thursday July 02, 2026, SASA-3647 Cornucopia Way, Modesto, CA 95358

The Animal Services Advisory Committee (ASAC) welcomes you to its meetings, which are held by announcement, and your interest is encouraged and appreciated.

The agenda is divided into two sections:

CONSENT CALENDAR: These matters include routine financial and administrative actions. All items on the consent calendar will be voted on at the beginning of the meeting under the section titled "Consent Calendar." If you wish to have an item removed from the Consent Calendar, please make your request at the time the Agency Chairperson asks if any member of the public wishes to remove an item from consent.

REGULAR CALENDAR: These items will be individually discussed and include all items not on the consent calendar, all public hearing and correspondence.

ANY MEMBER OF THE AUDIENCE DESIRING TO ADDRESS THE AGENCY ON A MATTER ON THE AGENDA: Please raise your hand or step to the podium at the time the item is announced by the Agency Chairperson. In order that interested parties have an opportunity to speak, any person addressing the Agency will be limited to a maximum of 3 minutes unless the Chairperson of the ASAC grants a longer period of time.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIODS: Matters under the jurisdiction of the ASAC, and not on the posted agenda, may be addressed by the general public at the beginning of the regular agenda and any off-agenda matters before the Agency for consideration. However, California law prohibits the ASAC from taking action on any matter which is not on the posted agenda unless it is determined to be an emergency by the ASAC for Stanislaus Animal Services. Any member of the public wishing to address the Agency during the "Public Comment" period shall be permitted to be heard once for up to 3 minutes.

Materials related to an item on this Agenda submitted to the ASAC after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection in the Clerk's office at 3647 Cornucopia Way, Modesto, CA during normal business hours.

NOTICE REGARDING NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS: ASAC meetings are conducted in English and translation to other languages is not provided. Please make arrangements for an interpreter if necessary.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Executive Director of Animal Services at (209) 342-1740. Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the Agency to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

MATERIALS: Materials related to an item on this Agenda submitted to the ASAC after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection in the Animal Services Office at 3647 Cornucopia Way in Modesto, during normal business hours.



Animal Services Advisory Committee

07/02/26 meeting agenda

1. **Welcome:**
2. **Roll Call (Silent):**
3. **Public Comment Period: (Limit of 3 minutes per person):**
4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting:**
 - A. Approve minutes from previous meeting held on 04/02/26 and 05/07/26.
5. **New Business:**
 - A. Leadership spotlight – Stephanie Loomis, Business Manager
 - B. Programming spotlight
 - i. Cross-training
 - ii. Desk Manuals/Policies Development
 - C. ASAC Purpose & Recruitment
 - D. Town Hall with Best Friends
 - E. Capacity & Return to Home
6. **Adjournment:**

ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC)
Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting

Thursday

April 2, 2026

Members Present:

Cynthia Homen-City of Patterson representative
Melinda Martin-City of Modesto representative
Piper McKnight-Stanislaus County representative
Linda Ford-City of Hughson representative

Staff Present:

Jesus Mendoza, Deputy County Counsel
Lily Yap, Executive Director
Megan Morriss, Confidential Assistant IV

Guests and Dignitaries: None

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Secretary, Megan Morriss.

1. **Welcome:** Megan Morriss, Secretary
2. **Roll Call:** All members present.
3. **Public Comment Period (Limit of 5 minutes per person):** None
4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting:** None
5. **New Business:**
 - A. Meet the Advisory Committee members - (Discussion item)
 - a. Cynthia Homen-representing City of Patterson
 1. Retiree from Stanislaus County. Member of the senior commission. Has a passion for Animals Services. We can do some great things now that we have a quorum.
 - b. Melinda Martin-representing City of Modesto
 1. Has a background in Animal Services in the public and private sector. Worked in a setting of a public shelter partnered with a non-profit for the money gap. The non-profit did spay/neuter for free. She went from cleaning the kennels all the way up to shelter manager.
 - c. Piper McKnight-representing Stanislaus County
 1. Has an interest in the online representation of the Shelter. Has paid attention to the feedback online about the shelter. Animals are near and dear to her heart. Did

many years of fostering and transporting. Has previous Board experience as the chair of a historic commission and experience with the Brown Act.

- d. Linda Ford-representing City of Hughson
 - 1. 33+ years working at Animal Services. Stayed seeing things getting better every year. She knows the history of this agency. It's important to remember where the shelter has been and where the shelter is now. Huge reduction in euthanasia numbers over the years. Let's create a more positive online presence.
- e. Lily Yap-Executive Director-SASA
 - 1. Upcoming one year at SASA. She sees 2026 as a year of change. Has 15 years of animal welfare experience. Wants to look at addressing the overpopulation challenges in our jurisdictions. Also, we see that our communities have needs that need to be met.

B. Motion to Elect Piper McKnight as Chair and Linda Ford as Vice-Chair.
(City of Patterson representative/City of Modesto representative; 4-0)

C. Town Hall Recommendations – (Discussion item)

- a. Lily expressed that she wants the Advisory Committee to be about listening. Listening to the community and the shelter needs. Town halls would be more of an open forum; inviting guest speakers, prioritizing hot topics to address concerns and allowing for back-and-forth conversations. Confirmed it is state law that dogs be fixed prior to adoption. We have a Foster to Adopt program that allows dogs to go home and then make an appointment to come back for the spay/neuter. Lily highlighted current partnerships, such as Best Friends, supporting community cat needs.
- b. Linda Ford recommended resuming student education efforts through school visits and assemblies, using a staff-and-volunteer team. She also suggested promoting current SASA programs in these outreach efforts.
- c. Piper McKnight recommended increasing online promotion of shelter events and connecting with neighboring jurisdictions to learn effective practices. She noted the different demands between dog spay/neuter and cat TNR, and supported hosting a town hall meeting.
- d. Cynthia Homen encouraged greater promotion of available services with clear program guidelines. She stressed the importance of spay/neuter in reducing overcrowding and recognized the critical role of rescue partners. She also supported gathering public input through a town hall meeting.
- e. Melinda Martin emphasized the need for transparency in adoption timelines and the impact of prolonged shelter stays on

dogs. She suggested integrating this transparency into the adoption process and expanding education efforts from kindergarten through high school.

Public comment:

Nancy Klein-provided a handout.

- Has worked with the shelter since 2015.
- Stated that town halls, communication, and education are essential.
- Believes the shelter should feel welcoming, like a library.
- Expressed concern that the community may not understand the volume of dogs entering the shelter or the limited time available to find placement for many dogs.
- Questioned why any doors are locked on the shelter floor.
- Emphasized that animals need consistent human interaction.
- Called for data transparency and noted that three years of past shelter data appear to be missing.
- Asked what the shelter is doing to address owner surrenders, describing them as emotional and frustrating for all involved.

Kelly Ceglio-

- Asked the Committee to define its purpose and direction.
- Recommended engaging all customer groups, including rescues, and incorporating them into agendas.
- Highlighted the importance of town hall meetings and listening to community feedback, especially from those experiencing challenges firsthand.

D. Veterinarian Outreach – (Discussion item)

- a. Piper McKnight focused on identifying community pain points, including where residents can access services and whether low-cost options should be recommended. Suggested engaging local veterinarians with community ties who may be willing to partner, including exploring a cost-share model (e.g., shelter covering most of the spay/neuter cost and owners paying a portion). Recommended seeking vets motivated by community service and possibly reinstating voucher programs.
- b. Linda Ford proposed inviting veterinarians to a meeting, potentially aligned with Vet Appreciation Day on 6/18/26, as a “Meet the Director” event.
- c. Cynthia Homen encouraged partnerships with programs such as MJC Vet Tech, UC Davis, and other local schools. Suggested asking veterinarians to donate a day of service and emphasized building long-term relationships.
- d. Melinda Martin recommended partnering with the Animal League and SNIP buses. Noted that some area veterinarians already offer reduced rates to nonprofits and rescues and suggested exploring similar collaborations.

Public Comment:

Nancy Klein:

- Emphasized to leadership that hiring a second veterinarian is a top priority and recommended inviting local vets to the shelter.
- Stressed that Director-led veterinarian outreach carries the greatest impact.
- Noted that addressing spay/neuter challenges depends on strengthening veterinary capacity; suggested hosting vets at the shelter and providing catered meetings.
- Highlighted the importance of partnerships with SNIP Bus, Animal Protection League, MJC Vet Techs, and volunteers.
- Recommended having MJC Vet Tech students host a vaccine clinic at the shelter.

Kelly Ceglio

- Noted that the ASAC committee has an open veterinarian seat and emphasized the importance of filling it.
- Emphasized that hiring a second veterinarian remains a top priority and suggested each Board member contact their own vets to explore volunteer support.
- Suggested developing a local spay/neuter bus model similar to Stockton's Animal League.
- Highlighted that local vet tech programs may be eager to volunteer.
- Recommended contacting veterinarians to request rescue-rate spay/neuter discounts.

E. Code of Ethics/Rules of Behavior – (Discussion item)

- a. Lily clarified that the Code of Ethics applies to County staff, while the Rules of Behavior apply to the public. She noted the Rules of Behavior have not been updated since 2018 and may need review. She emphasized safety and mutual respect and mentioned exploring a future resource center through Pets for Life programming.
- b. Linda Ford emphasized that all staff should read and understand the Code of Ethics, as they represent the agency and County. She noted that Rules of Behavior guide public conduct and should be printed in a larger format and posted prominently in the lobby. She added that high emotions are common for visitors and that having visible reminders and accessible resources/referrals would be helpful. She suggested asking partners to share these resources as well.
- c. Melinda Martin asked whether adoption packets currently include resources and referrals and suggested adding them if they do not.

- d. Cynthia Homen recommended also listing resources and referrals on the website.

Piper McKnight asked whether SASA has an established brand. The group discussed having a logo and color scheme and the need for consistent branding to increase recognition.

Public Comment:

Nancy Klein:

- Asked whether the Rules of Behavior posted in the lobby are the current version.
- Suggested emphasizing communication in the Rules of Behavior, acknowledging the emotional nature of visits (e.g., surrendering or euthanizing a pet).
- Noted that the shelter environment can feel overwhelming and encouraged designing signage to be more welcoming and visually engaging (e.g., color, paw prints).

6. Adjournment: 7:18 pm

ATTESTED: Megan Morriss, Secretary
of the Animal Services Advisory Committee (ASAC)

ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC)
Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting

Thursday

May 7, 2026

Members Present:

Cynthia Homen-City of Patterson representative
Melinda Martin-City of Modesto representative
Piper McKnight-Stanislaus County representative
Linda Ford-City of Hughson representative

Staff Present:

Lily Yap, Executive Director
Connie Hooker, Operations Manager
Megan Morriss, Confidential Assistant IV

Guests and Dignitaries: None

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by Chair, Piper McKnight.

1. **Welcome:** Chair, Piper McKnight
2. **Roll Call:** All members present.
3. **Public Comment Period (Limit of 5 minutes per person):** None
4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting:** Item pulled from agenda.
5. **New Business:**
 - A. Meeting the Operations Manager-Connie Hooker
 - a. Connie Hooker to continue onboarding and provide ongoing assessments of foster program challenges.
 - b. Staff confirmed SASA policies/procedures remain accessible online; no further action required.
 - c. Staff resolved ITC website error and restored historical shelter statistics; continue monitoring for accuracy.

Public comment:
Nancy Klein-Spoke about her concerns with the missing statistics.
 - B. Director's report-Lily Yap
 - a. Staffing updates:
 1. New second veterinarian to begin late June; staff to ensure onboarding and schedule planning.

2. Animal Care Specialist vacancy fully filled. No action needed.
- b. Quarterly statistics reviewed:
 1. Continue tracking and reporting adoption conversion rates and intake/euthanasia trends. Noted decrease in euthanasia rates.
 2. Ensure annual statistical archives remain posted and updated.
- c. Kennel Access Procedures
 1. Staff to maintain current protocols for locked kennels (Isolation, rescue holds, maternity, etc.)
- d. Upcoming Programs and Events:
 1. Town Hall with Best Friends: Staff to finalize mid-June date and logistics.
 2. Volunteer Program: UNC Charlotte assessment to proceed; Linda Ford acknowledged for contributions.
 3. LEMO turf installation to be coordinated with attention to heat and drainage requirements.

Public comment:

Nancy Klein- Concerns voiced about vet schedule, weekend availability, spay/neuter access, vaccine clinics, and owner-surrender euthanasia.

Unknown citizen-Questions about Best Friends partnership.

Staff response: Yes, we have an ongoing agreement with Best Friends. The turf will be animal rated. Will have drainage and sprinkler system to wet the yards and cool them off. Also has shade structures. Turf can be sprayed with Rescue.

C. Veterinarian Outreach-Piper McKnight

- a. Piper McKnight to distribute surveys on 6/18/26 during Vet Appreciation Day regarding:
 1. willingness to support local spay/neuter
 2. offering discounted services
 3. distributing SASA information
- b. Staff to add survey questions on rabies certificate reporting, potential dog license amnesty, and Docupet registration research.
- c. Committee requests Shelter to explore enforcement strategies for backyard breeder litter permits.
- d. Possible special meeting to approve outreach materials.

Public Comment:

Unknown citizen- Challenges of addressing backyard breeders.

Nancy Klein-Read an online code about vets needing to provide rabies certificates to the shelter or public health. HSC 121690. Request for special meeting once outreach survey is ready.

Staff response: Also include in the survey to see if vets would be willing to provide SASA with the rabies information so then we could contact about a license. Also suggested to have a dog license amnesty period. Docupet registration is also something the shelter is looking into. The committee would like the Shelter to pursue the backyard breeders for litter permits.

D. Programming spotlight-

- a. TNR/SNR Program
 1. 18 cat appointments weekly plus 15 on Wednesdays
 2. Officers release cats back to originating neighborhoods
- b. Barn Cat Program
 1. Uses Airtable; 15 placements so far
 2. Trap rentals available
 3. Emphasis on need for ongoing cat spay/neuter

Public comment:

Nancy Klein-Public concerns about friendly TNR cats not being adoptable. Suggestion to change website label from “rescue” to “TNR/SNR” for transparency.

Staff response: Yes, we rent out traps. Very affordable to purchase also. Cats are allowed to roam freely. Feral cats are wildlife. We need to continue our spay/neuter programs for cats.

E. Compassion Caravan-Melinda Martin

- a. Lily Yap & Melinda Martin to continue coordinating site visits with shelters/rescues statewide.
- b. Focus on small dogs/puppies; maintain PPE/parvo-minimizing protocols.
- c. Staff to assess program frequency and address public concerns regarding kennel access and RED list volume.

Staff response: Lily and Melinda are transporting dogs/puppies to shelters and rescues across California to get our foot in the door with no commitment. It's not just about adoption but creating a path and new

relationships with these shelters/rescues. Primarily focused on small dogs and puppies. Shelter/rescues can customize their needs. We are using PPE, puppy corrals, and minimizing the risk for Parvo for the puppies.

Public comment:

Nancy Klein-raised concerns about the frequency of the Compassion Caravan and the growing number of dogs placed on the R.E.D. list. She also emphasized that locked kennel doors and the lack of small dogs or puppies may push the public toward backyard breeders.

Board comment:

- City of Patterson representative, Cynthia Homen, requested the advisory committee be presented with an organizational chart.

6. Adjournment: 8:04 pm

ATTESTED: Megan Morriss, Secretary
of the Animal Services Advisory Committee (ASAC)