

## Meeting Minutes

**Regular Meeting**

**Thursday**

**April 20, 2023**

### **Members Present:**

Scotty Douglas, Alternate for Joe Lopez, City of Modesto-Chair – Present  
Jewel Warr, Alternate for Jody Hayes, Stanislaus County – Present  
Merry Mayhew, City of Hughson – Absent  
Michael Pitcock, City of Waterford – Present  
Ken Irwin, City of Patterson – Absent  
Alex Terrazas, City of Ceres – Present

### **Staff Present:**

Sweena Pannu, Deputy County Counsel  
Vaughn Maurice, Executive Director  
Brian Sterkeson, Business Manager  
Chandra Looney, Operations Supervisor  
Megan Morriss, Confidential Assistant  
Regina Menezes, Manager Consultant  
Jessica Smart, Civilian Manager

### **Guests and Dignitaries: None**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00am by Chair, Scotty Douglas.

1. **Welcome:** Scotty Douglas
2. **Roll Call (Silent):** See above
3. **Presentations:**

#### **A. Rescue Coordinator presentation:**

Self-introduction of SASA Rescue Coordinator, Chandra Looney. She currently communicates with Rescues, non-profits, and Humane Society to save animals at the shelter, primarily dogs. We reach out to rescue partners as far away as Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Connecticut, and Canada. From 1/2023 to 4/15/23 we have worked with 111 partners and have saved 452 dogs and 33 cats. We are always looking for a new partnership. We focus on medical or injured dogs and cats for immediate rescue. We also focus on moms with litters, senior dogs, bite dogs, behavior dogs and longest stay dogs. Most rescues are foster based which means the dogs are in a home. An evaluation of the dog is the first step and usually takes 10-15 minutes. This involves testing how the dog does with other dogs, how they do with dogs from the opposite sex, temperament testing and handling testing. Rescue is always looking to arrange transport of these dogs. For example: we use Best Friends, Pilots and Paws, and private citizens. We recently did a transport to Idaho which was a night drive. We do have some volunteer drivers that have signed up to help in this area. Our Rescue coordinator works alone or independently most of the time. Rescue coordination can be time

consuming but with help from Shelter staff, we get the job done.

No questions were asked by Board members, but City of Waterford extended a thank you for the presentation. The Executive Director of SASA noted that we regularly work with 111 different rescues. City of Modesto commented on the 452 dogs our Rescue program has saved and thanked the Rescue coordinator for such a good program and her passion to this cause.

There was no public comment on this presentation.

**4. Public Comment Period (Limit of 5 minutes per person): None**

**5. Minutes of Previous Meetings:**

- A.** Approved the Agency Board Meeting Minutes from March 16, 2023 (City of Waterford/City of Ceres; 4-0)

**6. Correspondence: None**

**7. New Business: None**

**8. Committee Reports:**

**A. Executive Director report-**

- i. We have been very busy averaging 19 animals per day, 220 adoptions, 165 animals to fosters, 753 volunteer hours, 740 Field service calls and 93 deceased animal pickups. We need people to leash up their animals. Our social media presence is now on the uptick, but we did see a small downtick this quarter. We had a huge post on January 2023 that had 750,000 views-the truck driver companion ad. Social media is still going in a positive direction and our social media coordinator is doing a fantastic job. Reviewed total animal intake chart from 2014 to present...dogs are our main problem. Chart is in the Board packet for Board members to review. Over the last 3 years, 2020-2023, our dog intake of 4000 animals come into the shelter. Beginning in this year we have had 1220 dogs and puppies come in which puts us on track to have 4800 dog intakes this year. A 20% increase on intake. The good news is in the bottom corner of the chart. We have been able to hold our in-house population pretty steady. Took us awhile to find this data but we finally did. Our numbers are way better than the peak of summer last years, we had 350 dogs at our peak intake. Part of that was the Frenchie seizure but Ron Reid, interim director, did a great job moving those dogs out to Rescues.
- ii. Rescue and transports are up 49% and adoptions are up 10%. Rescue coordinator, Chandra Looney, should take another bow as these numbers are great. Even though our intake is up

considerably, our specials and free adoption events have been working. It is nice to have those sponsored by our generous donors as the free adoptions do so well.

- iii. Social Media has been doing a great job for us especially with licensing. We had 6 different media platforms we used to get the licensing message out to the public. 7 TV stations including Univision/Telemundo. Shared this with the communication manager, Sonia, for Stanislaus County. We have been trying to push the carrot instead of the stick. Asking people to license their animals and having a free code to get a designer tag has helped.
- iv. Lots of promotions since last meeting. \$7.77 for Saint Patrick's Day was a hit and our April Fool's Day special of buy a license, get a free dog went well too.
- v. Very excited we are bringing back our shot clinics starting on May 13<sup>th</sup>. Now that we have a full time Vet who has been able to coordinate some Saturday Vet's we will be able to start having our shot clinics monthly we hope. A lot of demand out there. We advertised only on Facebook and Instagram, and we have already filled up 148 appointments in just a few days. We will be sold out by the end of the day.
- vi. Late Friday, we received notice that we got awarded a \$15,000 grant the Director applied for last August to support more spay and neuters in the community. We also got awarded another grant of \$60,000 for a new transport vehicle that was approved from Petco Love. We will be accepting these grants at the next meetings. The great benefit of having a new transport van is it will have built in kennels. No more using plastic crates and bungee cords in our current transport vehicle. Will have a nice cooling/heating system to keep the temperature consistent for the animals.

No questions from the public. City of Modesto thanked Vaughn for the thorough report and asked if next time we could get a report/chart on the longest stay dogs.

## **B. Business Manager report:**

### **i. Presentation on Fiscal 23/24 draft budget.**

- Jewel Warr advised that the budget subcommittee has met twice, and it has been very helpful. Brian is learning as he goes and has been very patient with all of the budget questions. The subcommittee really appreciates that. The subcommittee looked at the intake numbers and costs per partner. Oracle cloud and changes in the accounts have made things difficult. We hope to meet one more time prior to final budget.
- Scotty Douglas advised that the budget subcommittee meetings have been very helpful. He is looking forward to the final budget being brought to the Board for approval.

He feels that next year the process will be much smoother.

- Brian Sterkeson advised he is very appreciative of the budget subcommittee and thanked them for being able to tap into their resources. He advised he has a short presentation on the draft budget as it stands right now. This year's intake numbers are based on FY 21/22 information which is the peach column on the PowerPoint. There is also a column for prior year comparisons of operating costs. Each partner pays a portion of the operating costs. There were not many changes in this year's operating costs. Brian went over each partner's percentage. City of Modesto's percentages are different due to them having their own Animal Control Officers which changes their calculations. Total net contribution by the partners is \$4,864,304. The next chart is a comparison to past years. FY 21/22 and FY 22/23 were relatively flat because of the Covid impacts. We increased roughly \$500,000 from FY 21/22 to FY 22/23. We are projecting a \$400,000 increase (estimated) to FY 23/24. As both City of Modesto and Stanislaus County mentioned, this year's budget is a foundational year for the Business Manager as he is new to SASA's budget process. There have been many changes with how we are reporting funds. Reconciliation needs to be looked at as past practices on this were problematic. Stanislaus County code states very specifically about fees as it pertains to licensing differentials (increase in fees for dogs that are unaltered). In the County code it states that these fees are to be used to support a voucher spay/neuter program. The Food and Agriculture code states fees for impounding animals that are unaltered are also to be used for a spay/neuter program and education. The reason for these charts is because at the end of the fiscal year, SASA will need to organize these fees in the budget a little bit differently than years past. One thing that is proposed is a fund/balance type of accounting. This would be for fees that are for legislatively restricted purposes. We need to separate these funds out and hold them in a fund that would transfer from year to year. We will track these, so they are going to specific funds. Over multiple years this would be a benefit to the partners as these fees would pay for the spay/neuter programs. Again, this is a foundational year for the budget. It will support our mission a little bit better by supporting spay/neuter programs and community education by these designated funds. Concluded presentation and opened it up for questions.
- City of Waterford had a question on identified revenue restricted funds. Has the estimated revenue projection been modified to account for that for each agency? Will

this result in higher participation costs for the partner agencies? Brian advised that the estimated operational costs may trend down. Hard to calculate that right now. That fund balance may be building up which would help the partners operational costs. City of Waterford advised that he wants to make sure that when the partners go back to their agencies with budget numbers that this revenue projection is included in that amount. Brian advised that for this Fiscal Year we used the same methodology that have been used. It is in the JPA agreement that these fees and fines be used in a specific way. Brian used historical trends to get to the numbers displayed on the charts. The chart is an estimate. We will still have a reconciliation process towards the end of the year. One note, Brian expected our fees/licensing to increase due to the canvassing team. That is not something he could calculate. City of Waterford advised that they had canvassing prior and did not see a significant increase in their revenue fees/licensing.

- City of Ceres asked if we have real numbers to plug into our budget yet? Do we know off hand what the increase is going to be for Ceres. Brian will get Ceres that trend line. The chart provided gives you some idea on the Operational costs.
- City of Waterford advised some partners are still paying off this building. Brian needs to make sure that is still being accounted for. Debt service costs will be more straightforward for Brian. Brian advised some invoices were sent out that weren't accurate, and he still has some work to do in that area to reconcile. Brian advised that the City of Hughson will be paying off their debt this year for the building.
- City of Ceres advised he is going through the budget process currently and will be sitting down with his finance team and Counsel in the next few weeks and he will need something to plug into the budget.
- City of Modesto suggested Brian should meet with each partner for a budget briefing. Send something out to the partners ahead of time and then you can meet on it.
- Brian advised he will get the building costs and Operational costs out to the partners next week and can schedule a time to meet if needed.
- City of Ceres advised he sat down with his team yesterday for budget discussions. They also have a new budget process. Is the realm over \$200,000 from the previous year for City of Ceres? Brian advised they could meet/talk offline, and City of Ceres agreed.

- City of Modesto advised that the Budget Subcommittee meeting that they sharpened their pencils and gave Brian things that needed to be accounted. Recount for intake numbers was an area they addressed as animal fosters were being counted in animal intake numbers incorrectly. The numbers Brian presented today, have those numbers corrected.
- County of Stanislaus advised that the Budget Subcommittee also had the canvassing vehicles costs looked at. Brian advised that the canvassing vehicle costs are not included in today's numbers as Vaughn is seeking some additional grants to offset those costs.
- City of Modesto advised it is critical that we get the budget numbers as it is significantly later than when we usually get the numbers. The partners look forward to getting more information from Brian.

**9. Informational:**

- A. City of Waterford advised the partners to be careful today as it is April 20, 2023
- B. City of Modesto advised he has accepted a job in Cottonwood, Arizona and this will be his last meeting with the SASA JPA Board. Last day with the City of Modesto is May 4, 2023. Welcome to Jessica Smart from Modesto Police Department and Allison Van Guilder from City of Modesto as alternates for City of Modesto. He advised he will miss the SASA Board as he learned a lot from being a partner representative.
- C. Jessica Smart introduced herself as a lifelong Modestan. Been with the City of Modesto for 17 ½ years and is currently with the Modesto Police Department as a civilian Manager. She has worked in various departments within the City of Modesto. She does have budget experience from working on the police department budget. She is looking forward to this role.
- D. The partners thanked City of Modesto for all of his work over the years on the JPA Board and wished him well in his future position in Cottonwood, Arizona.

**10. Member Referrals:** None

**11. Closed Session:** None

**12. Adjournment:** Adjourned meeting at 9:41am (City of Waterford/City of Ceres, 4-0)

ATTESTED: Megan Morriss, Clerk of  
the Governing Board

of the Joint Powers Agency  
of the Stanislaus Animal Services Agency  
State of California