

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

Regular Meeting

Thursday

October 19, 2023

Members Present:

Michael Pitcock, City of Waterford-Chair – Present
Allison Van Guilder, City of Modesto – Present
Jody Hayes, Stanislaus County – Present
Merry Mayhew, City of Hughson – Present
Ken Irwin, City of Patterson – Present
Doug Dunford, City of Ceres – Present

Staff Present:

Jesus Mendoza, Deputy County Counsel
Vaughn Maurice, Executive Director
Megan Morriss, Confidential Assistant
Connie Hooker, Operations Manager
Regina Menezes, Manager

Guests and Dignitaries: None

The meeting was called to order at 9:01am by Chair, Mike Pitcock.

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

- A. Connie Hooker, Operations Manager-Color Code Process. Connie provided an overview of our shelter Color Code process. We have had some misunderstandings with the public about how many days we hold dogs. It has been said in the public that we only give 24 hours' notice. In this overview, you will see that is not the case.

Stray animals with no owner identification are animals that will be placed in the Color Code Process. Animals are coded green for 14 days when they come in. This is for happy dogs who we don't think will have a problem being in the shelter. Next is the color of yellow for 14 days. These dogs may be a little snarky, may be affected by being in the shelter but can still be handled or might have a medical issue. Finally, we have the red dogs for 7 days. In some instances, an animal will be

coded Red from the beginning and given 7 days to exit the shelter. Those can be dogs with behavior issues, dogs not doing well in the shelter, could be a pregnant mom, a dog with a serious injury or a bite dog. We encourage rescues to pull these dogs quickly. These are animals that will not do well in the shelter. You could see an animal coded black for a period. These are owner surrender dogs who we are mandated to hold for a period of time or dogs not safe for the public.

We have included a flow chart in the handouts for better understanding. We are assessing these dogs all throughout the Color Code process. Dogs are reviewed on the 13th day of the 14-day green hold. When they are moved to yellow, they will be assessed again after the 14 days. Our red dogs are our most at-risk dogs. This could be for the length of stay.

The industry recommends a 35-day maximum for length of stay. If an animal comes in at green, they would be in the shelter for 35 days before being put on a euthanasia list. If they come in as yellow, they are here for 21 days. If they come in a red, they have 7 days or a whole week to be adopted or rescued. This gives citizens and rescues ample time for animals to be adopted or rescued. If an animal has a serious medical issue, we do set a very limited time frame for a rescue to get these animals out of the shelter. We have been very successful at having Rescues get these types of dogs out of the shelter quickly.

Cats are different. They don't follow the green, yellow, red color code process. We have a different program for them. The color is orange and that indicates that we are trying to move that cat out quickly.

We also have a black period. These are owner surrenders who are being assessed or a bite dog. We are not allowing the public to see these animals as they are not safe for the public.

The flow chart in your packet goes down and not across. They stay on 14 days of green. On the 13th day the supervisor reviews the behavior and health of the animal. If appropriate they will be moved to yellow which is another 14 days. Assessed again on the 14th day then moved to red. At that point in time, they are definitely at risk because of their length of stay. The industry recommends that 35 days be the maximum a shelter has these animals. They recommend that the animals exit the shelter much sooner than the 35th day.

I provided an example of a dog that came through. In intake her was marked green and staff put some behavior notes in the animal's file. Energetic, easy to process. Marked as yellow on August 11. Then moved to red list for 7 days. This dog was adopted 7 days after his 7-day red list was over. If we have space, we keep the dogs for as long as we can to give them a chance of being adopted or rescued. Unfortunately, today we are at 231 dogs. Our capacity is 188 dogs, so we are way over on space. We are doing adoption specials and pushing rescues and getting transports for dogs. When the public says we are euthanizing animals with no notice, it is not true. We give a 35-day notice or at the very least a 7-day notice. If it is an urgent medical case, we will give a shorter time frame to have the animal out of the shelter. Whatever timeframe the veterinary recommends to us.

Question from County of Stanislaus. This dog was on the euthanasia list on 8/1/23 but then was adopted on 8/8/23. Is that because the shelter felt like it had the capacity? There is a week delay there. Connie advised that dogs get put on the euthanasia list each week are sent on a list out to the Rescue organizations. The red list is a list of dogs that have already satisfied their entire stray time and the Color Code process. We are trying to hold dogs as long as possible for a good outcome. We start the red list with the longest stay dogs. Then the animal has 1 more week to get adopted or rescued. Jody advised-It's built into the Color Code process that we looked at, the last step on the euthanasia approved list is another week of stay with final attempts to adopt or rescue. I can imagine that is when the rescue groups are the most active. Connie advised that it is an interesting phenomenon, we have a 35-day process, but the rescue groups don't get interested in exiting dogs until they are on the euthanasia list. We are doing everything we can to get positive outcomes for these animals. The length of stay can cause really substantial behavior issues especially with the more animals we have.

Question from Stanislaus County about our broad level statistics. We track broad level stats, but do we track how many euthanasia we do on animals who are otherwise adoptable? Connie advised we absolutely can. Have we tracked it recently? I would have to look at our numbers. In the two months, we euthanized 4 dogs who could have been adoptable.

Question from Stanislaus County on how many years Connie has worked for Stanislaus Animal Services Agency? Connie advised 18

years she has worked here. Stanislaus County advised he has toured this facility many years ago and he remembers us euthanizing 4 dogs per day at that time. Connie advised that is correct. County of Stanislaus said the shelter has come a long way from those time frames and numbers. Connie advised we as a shelter are really pushing for positive outcomes for these dogs. The hard part is we have no space.

City of Waterford commented that it is great news that so few animals are getting euthanized and thanked Connie for the presentation.

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

5. Minutes of Previous Meetings:

- A. Motion to approve the Agency Board Meeting Minutes from August 17, 2023 (City of Hughson/City of Patterson; 6-0)

6. Correspondence: None

7. New Business:

- A. Motion to approve December 1, 2023, through November 31, 2026, DocuPet contract. (Stanislaus County/City of Modesto; 6-0)
- B. Motion to approve a budget adjustment for the Petco Love Foundation grant for a transport/adoption trailer purchase of \$60,000. (City of Ceres/City of Patterson; 6-0)
- C. Motion to approve a budget adjustment for the UC Davis grant regarding the funding of CAMP high volume spay/neuter training center in the amount of \$683,000. (City of Patterson/Stanislaus County; 6-0)
- D. Motion to accept the Audited Financial statements and Governance Communication for Stanislaus Animal Services Agency provided by Clifton Larson Allen LLP Firm for Fiscal Year 2021-2022. (City of Hughson/City of Patterson; 6-0)

8. Committee Reports:

- A. Executive Director report:
Our new organization chart is in your handouts. You will see that our Business Manager position has been filled by Sara Miller who starts November 20, 2023. She comes from Merced County DA's office and has Accounting and Human Resources experience. Seems like a good

fit for us. We are very excited to have her join our team. We have 2 full time vacancies. One RVT and one Animal Care Specialist. We also have 3 part time extra help vacancies. One in canvassing and two in Animal Care Specialists.

Statistics for September, we are still bringing in about 20 animals per day. We wish that was spread out more evenly, but it never is. Some days we get 5 in and some days we get 45 per day. 700 calls for Field Service for September. The saddest statistic of all is the number of dead animal pickups was at 100.

One statistic we are really happy about is our UC Davis spay/neuter grant is at the 6-month reporting point. We did a 6-month report to them. We completed over 900 spay/neuters for the community. The average cost was \$64 per surgery using contract vets and contract vet assistants. We are getting a lot of bang for our buck. We have used \$60,000 of the grant so far. We have quite a bit left to spend. The only thing holding us back is finding the availability of contract vets and space. The more contract vets we can get, the more surgeries we can do for the community as space allows. If Dr. Cadwell is doing shelter animals, then we don't have the space to do contract vets. We have to do them on different time frames.

Intake from September 2022 to September 2023 is sharply up 20%. Adoptions are up 24% and our rescues/transfers are up 20% which is good news. With the new transport trailer we have, those numbers could get even higher. Our length of stay is stable. Our live release rate will be provided at every meeting from now on. 94% of dogs were released alive. 78% of cats were released alive. We are better than the state average and our neighboring counties. These numbers are supported by our donors and the free adoptions and adoption specials they allow us to do. Dog and puppy intakes has jumped considerably from 2021 to 2022. This chart shows we jumped from 4000 to 4500 in 2021 to 2022. Our average length of stay has not changed a whole lot. My favorite chart is the live release rate. Of course, we have the sick animals with an owner euthanasia request, and we do quite a bit of those. We also have animals that have been hit by cars that we have to euthanize because it's humane. We also had the 4 animals that did have to be put down. We are at 94% of our dogs walk out the door as do 78% of cats. In California the state average is 87% of dogs and 56% of cats have a live release rate. In our neighboring counties, San Joaquin we are doing significantly better. We are doing a little bit better than Stockton.

Our Halloween special is \$31 for dogs and \$13 for cats. We have Woofstock coming up on 10/29/23 which is a Sunday. We will have vendors, activities, trunk or treat, music and food vendors. Can bring your own dog. Our wonderful donor, Kelcie Costa, donated \$10,000 so

we can have free adoptions on 10/29/23. She is also letting us do some paid advertising to draw a bigger crowd. It is a free event, no ticket sales. We advertised on the billboard provided by the County. Trunk or Treat still has spaces open if you would like to sign up.

City of Waterford asked if we could notify the public that adoptions are free? Vaughn advised yes; all partners can do that.

No public comment.

B. Business Manager update: None

9. Informational: None

10. Member Referrals: None

11. Closed Session: None

12. Adjournment: Adjourned meeting at 9:41am. (City of Hughson/City of Patterson; 6-0)

Adjourned: 9:41am

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