

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

Regular Meeting

Thursday

June 20, 2024

Members Present:

Michael Pitcock, City of Waterford-Chair
Scotty Douglass, Alternate for City of Modesto
Jewel Warr, Alternate for Stanislaus County
Kim Weimer, Alternate for City of Hughson
Mike Willett, Alternate for City of Patterson
Doug Dunford, City of Ceres

Staff Present:

Jesus Mendoza, Deputy County Counsel
Vaughn Maurice, Executive Director
Stephanie Loomis, Business Manager
Megan Morriss, Confidential Assistant IV
Regina Menezes, Manager

Guests and Dignitaries: None

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

1. **Welcome:** Mike Pitcock-Chair.
2. **Roll Call (Silent):** Welcome and introductions
3. **Presentations:** None
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 May 16, 2024 (City of Modesto/St Stanislaus County; 6-0)
6. **Correspondence:** None
7. **New Business:**
 - A. SASA LOVE Clinic 2024-2025 Budget Discussion.

Stephanie Loomis advised that we are proposing a FY 2024-2025 budget for the SASA LOVE Clinic. We created a separate cost center and accounts for the SASA LOVE Clinic from the Operations Budget. This will make it easier to track how it's doing. Partner contributions are being calculated excluding the SASA Love Clinic operational expenses and revenue. Budget is \$519,406 in total. Salary and benefits for the 4 positions that were approved by the 8/23/23 JPA Board meeting in the amount of \$439,186. Supplies are projected at \$80,250. The budget is funded by co-pays for spay and neuters, grants, and fund balance from spay and neuter programs. Revenue projections are as follows:

- i. \$265,746-projected fund balance generated from dog license differential fee, state-imposed fines, and court fines.
- ii. \$113,750 projected revenue for the purpose of spay and neuter programs.
- iii. \$139,910 projected from the utilization of awarded grants (UC Davis Spay and Neuter and PetWise).

No public comment.

(Stanislaus County/City of Hughson; 6-0)

B. Stop-gap budget for the first quarter of FY 2024-2025 main SASA budget.

- i. Ad Hoc Committee member Jewel Warr advised at last board meeting we suggested to separate out the SASA LOVE Clinic funds from the regular operational budget. Subsequently there were changes in understanding on how particular revenue streams were meant to be used. This altered the partner contributions significantly across the board. The Ad Hoc Committee didn't really have time to dig into this significant change to identify the revenue streams and work through the budget to look at the restriction of funds and uses. Discussed as a committee the option to bring forward taking our Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 Budget and extending it into the 1st quarter of the FY 2024-2025 to allow the Ad Hoc Committee time to work through the Budget process. In addition, I think there is another item on the Agenda that will help us with that. With looking into bringing on an outside auditor to look at the FY 2024-2025 budget and the assessments of the revenue. What you are looking at is no change budget to what was presented at last year's budget meeting for FY 2023-2024. This would allow SASA to have spending authority for the 1st quarter and we will not have to have an emergency JPA meeting to approve a thrown together budget. This would give the Ad Hoc Committee

a little more time to thoroughly review the budget. It is recognized that we have had a lot of turnovers in key roles in this agency that has lent itself to inconsistent approaches to budgeting. We want to make sure we fully understand it and that we can support it as a committee and bring it forth for your review and consideration. It's a little different than what we have done in the past, but we will get a set spending authority without any changes to partner contributions from the existing budget. This will allow the team to work through FY 2024-2025 budget.

- ii. Ad Hoc Committee member Scotty Douglass stated that they realize if there are significant changes to the budget that will be felt a little more. Going into this 3-month period we realize that. We recommend to the Board that we get a 3rd party financial auditor to really go through and scrub the budget and make sure everything is as it should be. The other thing is that anything that has spending restrictions is triple checked. What we haven't had time to talk about is significant turnover in the Business Manager position and the lack of continuity in budget preparation due to this. The timing on when we have been able to fill these positions has not been favorable to the budget preparation. Stephanie Loomis did the best she could to get her hands around this budget right when she got hired. I think an outside auditor will be good. I know there are firms out there that do the financial and fiscal audits along with a management efficiency audit. There may be some ways to make it more efficient and enhanced for the future. City of Modesto is supportive of the financial audit and a management efficiency audit.
- iii. Ad Hoc Committee member Kim Weimer stated she agrees with the other members of the Ad Hoc Committee. We need to do a more thorough review of the budget. This is not any disparagement to Stephanie as she is brand new, and the budget is a lot of work. When you are new it takes time to get up to speed. I agree with the committee that we should continue to review the next year's budget.
- iv. Budget Manager Stephanie Loomis presented a PowerPoint on the current status of the FY 2024-2025 Budget and on the extension of the FY 2023-2024 budget extending into the first quarter with no adjustments.

Doug Dunford with City of Ceres asked if what the Ad Hoc Committee is asking for is a 90-day extension? We will need to

go out for an RFP and then get the auditor time to thoroughly audit the budget. That is a tight time frame.

Stephanie responded that the FY 2024-2025 is nearly finished there is just discussion on what would be considered restricted revenue and what should and shouldn't offset partner contributions. The auditor will help bring clarity to the JPA Board. Currently the County uses an outside auditor, but they don't drill down to the level we need. They may not finish in 90 days. An auditor will help with the two years of true up that hasn't been done and make the partners more comfortable with the outcome regarding restricted funds. In all honesty, Stephanie would not be surprised if we get a finding or recommendations from the way I have seen things handled. It won't be a bad thing. It will help us move forward. If we get a finding it will help Vaughn and I make improvements. It is a lot of work but there is a value in getting an outside auditor.

Doug Dunford with City of Ceres stated that it may be more prudent to ask for a 6-month time frame.

Jewel Warr from the Ad Hoc Committee advised that the committee has established a twice a month meeting to work on budget and budget related issues. We will report back monthly in the SASA JPA meetings to let the Board know how it's going and what progress is being made.

Scotty Douglass from the Ad Hoc Committee advised that we very well could bring back a budget in less than 3 months. But it will take 3 months to get the auditor in place.

Stephanie Loomis advised that it won't be an RFP-Request for Proposal, it will be an RFQ-Request for Qualifications. Stephanie is familiar with doing RFQ's with her prior employment at First Five. The auditor's office gave First Five 4 names of auditors they would recommend when First Five did audits. Stephanie has those names.

Scotty Douglass Ad Hoc Committee member advised that if the Board adopts this budget extension in 3 months, we may be doing some budget adjustments coming up to mid-year. Let this be the year that we get everything rearranged to the way it needs to be rearranged. It will bring a high level of confidence to the JPA Board and to Stephanie and Vaughn.

Mike Pitcock-Chair of JPA Board asked if usually when you adopt a budget there is capital. Does extending the budget change that? Vaughn Maurice-Executive Director advised it is not a problem.

Mike Willett-Alternate for City of Patterson asked historically does the partner percentage change each year? Vaughn advised that yes it does. Mike Pitcock advised it's usually a few percentage points at most. It's not a big jump. Jewel Warr advised it is calculated by two years arrears intake numbers. The variance is hard to gauge.

No public comment

(County of Stanislaus/City of Patterson;6-0)

C. Engaging an outside auditor.

- i. Mike Pitcock advised we have already talked extensively about hiring the auditor. He asked if anyone had any further questions about hiring the auditor? No questions were asked.

No Public Comment.

Amended motion-To engage an outside auditor for a financial and management efficiency audit.

(City of Modesto/City of Ceres;6-0)

D. Best Friends \$23,000 grant for program development assistance.

- i. Vaughn Maurice, Executive Director, advised that what we did was send Best Friends our statistical reporting and then Best Friends came back with 3 areas they would fund for our shelter:
 1. \$15,000 for kitten supply kits.
 2. 20 dog training scholarships for citizens that adopt out our longer stay dogs.
 3. Playing for Life training sessions for staff members.
\$5,000 to send a couple of people to this training.

No public comment.

(City of Ceres/Stanislaus County;6-0)

E. Election of new Chair/Vice-chair for 2024-2025.

- i. Jewel advised that usually the vice-chair automatically takes over for Chair the following year. This would make Jewel the nomination for Chair.

(City of Modesto/City of Ceres;6-0)

- ii. Mike Pitcock nominated Scotty Douglass to be Vice-chair.

No public comment.

(City of Waterford/County of Stanislaus;6-0)

8. Committee Reports:

Executive Director's report-

- i. SASA Love Clinic is being totally remodeled right now. Any Board members who would like to see the progress can stay after the meeting for a tour. There will be a ribbon cutting with the big scissors and media coverage.
- ii. Our friends at Fox 40 have been doing a lot of stories on our shelter. Vaughn goes up once a month to appear on live TV with an animal from our shelter. They have also added in a morning segment that our Social Media Coordinator does with Fox 40. In addition, the weather person who does the morning weather now features a picture of one of our available dogs.
- iii. Our organization chart-most positions are filled. SASA Love clinic is fully staffed. We welcomed Dr. Erin Zimowske-Alvarez to our team in mid-June. A very important piece for our clinic. We continue to struggle to get Registered Vet Tech's and to retain staff in our lower positions. We have a little bit of turnover in our lower positions.
- iv. Our statistics for May-typically we have been seeing around 500 intake animals per month until May. We saw an increase of animal intakes of about 770. Primarily this was due to kitten season. 243 kittens came in May. 255 went to Foster. 700 calls for Field Service. 103 deceased animal pickup-95% hit by cars. Big problem in our community. Dogs, cats, bunny rabbits are what we see on deceased animal pick-ups. These are pick ups for SASA only. City of Modesto has their own deceased animal

pick up with their Animal Control officers. The deceased pick up's do not go in the jurisdiction numbers or calculations for budgets. We use live animal intake to determine calculations for budgets for the jurisdiction. Total animals in for May was 3326. We will reach 8000 animals by the end of the year if we keep at our current pace. We are not alone in this uptick. All shelters are experiencing this trend. YTD adoptions are up 13%. Rescue is up 21%. State of California is down overall for Rescue, so we are very happy with our trend in this area. Kudos to our Rescue supervisor Chandra Looney. Intakes are up 18%. Adoptions were down which is unusual.

- v. Lots of promotions took place in May. 31 animals were adopted thru Kick off to Summer campaign at the end of May which is donor funded. 35 animals adopted during National Pet week which is a JPA approved special. 28 animals adopted during California adopt a pet week that the ASPCA supported. June events will include 2 for 1 cats/kittens and \$6.19 adoptions in honor of Juneteenth. We have 2 events coming up this Saturday. Adopt a Palooza at Modesto Toyota and California Landscape Supply combined with the \$6.19 adoption special.

9. Informational: None

10. Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn:

(City of Ceres/Stanislaus County; 6-0)

Adjourned: 9:41 am

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