

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

Regular Meeting

Thursday

August 20, 2026

Members Present:

Jewel Warr, Alternate for Stanislaus County-Chair
Scotty Douglass, Alternate for City of Modesto-Vice-Chair
Mike Willett, Alternate for City of Patterson
Steve Williams, City of Ceres
Dominique Romo, City of Hughson
Mike Pitcock, City of Waterford

Staff Present:

Jesus Mendoza, Deputy County Counsel
Megan Morriss, Confidential Assistant IV
Stephanie Loomis, Business Manager

Guests and Dignitaries: None

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am by Chair, Jewel Warr.

1. **Welcome:** Jewel Warr-Chair
2. **Roll Call:** Silent. All members present.
3. **Presentations:** None
4. **Public Comment Period (Limit of 3 minutes per person):**
 - Kathy Hall-Boyer-Fostered 100+ dogs; asked for more community spay/neuter; concerned about high numbers of unwanted animals.
 - Christina Wilson- Requested affordable spay/neuter and low-cost vet care; concerned about euthanasia list creation; suggested looking to Manteca/Lathrop for community spay/neuter models.
 - Ron-Spoke about prior shelter inspections; referenced Hayden's Act and CA Penal Code 599(d); cited Merced County's inmate-care and creative adoption events.
 - Tina von Stade-Asked for TNR resources; noted community trappers driving to Fresno; requested TNR and fostering workshops, more adoption events, and more cat-focused social media presence.
 - Samantha Lopez-Requested halt to current euthanasia practices; urged review of RED list process; noted dogs appearing on lists within days; advocated for low-cost spay/neuter and hiring a contract vet.

- Cynthia Homen-Requested review of RED list process; emphasized the importance of rescue volunteer support; stated animals need more time to find homes.
- Nancy Klein- Highlighted community contributions; stated strategic plan issues remain unresolved; urged implementation of spay/neuter expansion and overcrowding solutions; asked to place the 90-day plan on September agenda.
- Claudia Henley-Shared photos of two dogs scheduled for euthanasia; asked for extensions when kennels are available; noted last week's list had 32 dogs and 30 were placed; urged giving the two dogs a chance.
- Kelly Ceglio- Raised concerns about RED list practices, unused kennels, poor rescue communication, inconsistent procedures, transparency issues; stated accountability is lacking; cited an example of Louie being listed before his hold ended; criticized public comment reduction from 5 to 3 minutes.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

- Motion to approve 7/29/26, 7/30/26 and 8/10/26 minutes. (City of Waterford/City of Modesto; 6-0)
- Motion to approve 7/16/26 minutes with correction. (City of Modesto/City of Hughson; 6-0)

Public comment: None

6. Correspondence: Written public comments were distributed to each Board member. Written public comments are part of the official record and are available for inspection/can be requested.

7. New Business:

- A. Motion to approve the Chair and Vice Chair to work with Stanislaus County Chief Executive Officer-Human Relations Division, Employer of Record, in managing the recruitment to fill the vacant Stanislaus Animal Services Agency Executive Director position. (City of Waterford/City of Modesto; 6-0)

Public comment:

- Tina von Stade-requested an open recruitment and a stronger process informed by past recruitment challenges, with qualifications tailored to SASA's specific needs.
- Kelly Ceglio-emphasized the need for rescue experience, revenue-generation skills, strong oversight, and vision.
- Nancy Klein-called for a strengthened recruitment process focused on prevention, capacity management, community engagement, collaboration, leadership and accountability.
- Unknown speaker-recommended greater focus on performance improvement, data tracking, customer service, transparency, and clear guiding principles.

Board comments-

- City of Modesto thanked the public for their comments and Craig Gundlach for accepting the Interim Director position, noting his previous success in building community relationships. The Board acknowledged lessons learned from the past and expressed a commitment to moving forward positively, with a focus on process improvements, efficiency, administrative experience and strong community relationships for the permanent director.
- Stanislaus County advised that they have learned from past recruitments. Advised that Stanislaus County and City of Modesto have served on the prior two recruitments and have been with the agency for many highs/lows.

8. Informational reports:

- A. Announcement of SASA Interim Executive Director in accordance with Government Code Section 54953(c)(3).
- B. Introduction of Craig Gundlach, Interim Executive Director.
 - Thanked the Board for the opportunity to step into this role again.
 - Unique, multitasking and multifaceted position here at SASA.
 - Intention is to mentor leaders, care for the staff, foster positive relationships with the community and do right for the animals.
 - Leadership team at SASA has been pushing forward in the absence of a director. We owe them a huge thank you for that. Thank you to Stephanie, Connie and Megan for continuing to lead through this transition.
 - Work has continued on many of the items the public brought up today. Including the RED list, spay/neuter, foster program, medical services and capacity.
 - Thank you to the volunteers, rescue and networkers. Hundreds of animals leave the shelter each year because of them. They have given SASA a piece of their lives to save animals.
 - Monthly statistics sheet has been revised for this month going forward.

Board comments:

- City of Waterford thanked Craig Gundlach for stepping into this role. We appreciate your relationship with the rescue volunteers. Advised we need to get a handle on the RED list.

Public comment:

- Cynthia Homen-wants to see SASA rebuild the relationship with the rescues. A lot of work is needed to rebuild those relationships. Some rescues won't even work with SASA anymore.
- Tina von Stade-on the monthly statistics sheet, 59 cats were euthanized in July. That is way too many. Will be

doing a public records request to get the details on the 59 cats' euthanasia. Do we need to strengthen our cat foster program to bring that number down?

- Kelly Ceglie-thank you to Craig for the openness and caring expressed in his director's report out. Please include the experts in the rescue volunteer world too. Their experience shouldn't be discounted.
- Nancy Klein-thank you to Craig. Statistics-addendum to report regarding euthanasia decisions was started when Lily was here. One month was published but the numbers did not match and then they went away. Data is everything. It drives decision making. Would like that to come back.

Board comments:

- City of Patterson advised that August is his last meeting. Another representative, Johanna Ferreira, will be joining the Board for City of Patterson going forward. Thanked the Board for all their help. Thanks, the rescue volunteers for all that they do to assist SASA.

9. Adjournment: 10:03am

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