



Department of Animal Services

MAYOR
Dee Margo

Animal Shelter Advisory Committee
Minutes
December 9, 2020

CITY COUNCIL

District 1
Peter Svarzbein

District 2
Alexsandra Anello

District 3
Cassandra Hernandez

District 4
Dr. Sam Morgan

District 5
Isabel Salcido

District 6
Claudia L. Rodriguez

District 7
Henry Rivera

District 8
Cissy Lizarraga

1. Call to Order- Establish Quorum

A meeting of the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee was held virtually by Chair Julie Rutledge at 6.05 PM.

Board Members	Present	Absent
Regina Wagner		X
Celeste Varela	X	
Sandra DiFrancesco	X	
Mary Kay Rosenkranz	X	
Vacant		
Barbara Candelaria	X	
Gina Gagen	X	
Elvira Stephanie Frias	X	
Vacant		
Julie Rutledge	X	
Alexandra Anello	X	

Animal Services staff present: Paula Powell, Maribel Karisch, Misty Monteros Michele Anderson, Ramon Herrera, and Adan Parra

CITY MANAGER
Tommy Gonzalez

2. Approval of Minutes

Discussion and action on approval of minutes for October 14, 2020 and November 19, 2020.

Alexandra Anello motioned to accept the October 14, 2020 minutes; Mary Kay Rosenkranz seconded; all members voted in favor, and motion passed unanimously.

Sandra DiFrancesco motioned to accept the November 19, 2020 minutes; Mary Kay Rosenkranz seconded; all members voted in favor, and motion passed unanimously.

3. Reports-Support the City of El Paso's Initiative to Reach and Sustain a 90% or Greater Live-Release Rate by 2020

A. Department of Animal Services November update and statistics

Paula Powell – Director

Department of Animal Services | 5001 Fred Wilson | El Paso, TX 79906

O: (915) 212-7297 | Email: EPAS@elpasotexas.gov



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Animal Services continues to follow the six strategic goals to measure their progress. The intake for November was 551, a dramatic decrease that was the result of the community's participation and the temporary suspension of the TNR program. Surgeries started back up and there are two major TNR programs in December including the daily community cat program. In addition, more TNR programs are scheduled for every week in January. The outcome was 655 for November with a decrease in adoptions due to most adoptions were done via curbside or virtually. There were 122 animals returned to owners compared to 383 in 2019. In November, 113 animals were transferred, nine died compared to 80 in 2019, four were owner surrendered and the shelter euthanized 83 animals. Currently, there are 576 fosters out which is over 50% of the shelter population that are in foster care. The euthanasia history consisted of 29 trauma, 20 behavioral, 22 non-infectious, 12 infectious and four owner requested. There was a drastic decrease in infectious euthanasia. The died history included one foster-infection, two foster failure- to-thrive, one shelter trauma, two shelter non-infectious and three shelter failure-to-thrive. The LRR was 82.08% which was below last year which consequently was the result of reduced intake. Paula explained that November was a successful month for euthanasia, because every animal was humanely euthanized that needed to be euthanized. The Calendar year LRR is 85.49% and the fiscal year LRR is at 87.64% with possible improvements in January and February. Paula Powell presented the PAW CAST.

Barbara Calendaria mentioned that Costco has the big bags of Purina One for those wanting to donate to Animal Services.

Paula explained the the community cats are in the statistics under the stray at large and are counted in the spay/neuter return outcome. She also added that the goal is to get the LRR and the community lifesaving rate above 90%. On the next City Council meeting, Animal Services will ask for more funding for medical supplies in the efforts to save more animals. Animal Services will also apply for grants so more animals can receive additional medical care.

B. El Paso County Animal Welfare Department November update

Lauralei Combs congratulated Paula Powell for all the work she has done at Animal Services. She explained that since October they have spayed and neutered 110 owned pets in which 53 were females and 112 distemper/parvo vaccinations were given. Animal Welfare Officers are offering vaccinations and microchips out in the field as well. The El Paso County Animal Welfare Department continues to support Animal Services and in October their intake was 100 animals compared to 261 in 2019, a decrease of more than half the intake from the previous year. The intake decrease is credited to Officers returning animals to owners, reaching out to rescue groups and engaging

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with the community. Ms. Combs also explained that she is looking towards next year to go before the court to propose for more staffing which includes a veterinarian. She is also developing a campaign on animal abandonment.

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4. Call to the public

None

5. Main Agenda

A. Promote Education and Engagement of Animal Health and Welfare

A1. Discussion on the awareness of fraudulent go-fund-me accounts used for veterinary services by fosters.

Barbara Candelaria mentioned that the presenter for this agenda item was unavailable. She explained that when fraudulent go-fund-me accounts are created, they affect all rescue groups. People are posting these type of accounts on Facebook and other media outlets. She explained that when rescue groups offer information of the whereabouts of the animal in question and who's the attending veterinarian, it creates trust within the community when donating. Rescue groups can also ask for other donations such as food and blankets, if donors feel uncomfortable about giving money. Barbara added that these fraudulent accounts are hurting the rescue groups that really need the funds to help animals and when they are fundraising. She suggested that rescue groups keep their websites updated and show the animals' veterinarian expenses, the animals' progress and foster home information. Julie Rutledge asked how ASAC could assist in spreading awareness. Barbara explained that she could make flyers with questions to ask before donating. The item will be placed on the agenda next month.

B. Research and Advise on Effective Ordinances and Policies to Improve Overall, Health, Welfare and Safety for Animals

B1. Discussion and action on community involvement and responsibilities related to stray animals and means of getting them back to their owners.

Julie Rutledge explained that this item was placed to support community involvement. The community has been stepping up to help each other reunite pets with their families whether it's by the Next Door app, Facebook or other media outlets. Paula added that the Community and Pet Support Program (CAPS) is using more innovative tools such as the award winning Pet Finder Map to help pets get back home and also developed better procedures to prevent animals from entering the shelter. Animal Services also provided the community that tested positive for covid-19 with a two-week supply of pet food through grant funds. The vaccination clinics will start up soon with safety protocols for staff. Paula also mentioned that staff

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is getting better at their jobs and making improvements along the way and there are so many good stories out there of neighbors helping neighbors reunite pets with their owners that prevented pets from entering the shelter. Paula added that Animal Services will continue to make improvements for next month and the rest of 2021.

Celeste Varela inquired whether county Fire Stations have scanners. Lauralei Combs explained that they have just partnered with Horizon City and have supplied staff with scanners and training.

B2. Discussion and action on content recommendations for ASAC annual report to the Mayor and City Council.

Julie Rutledge explained that the ASAC is required to prepare an Annual Report with information per Chapter 8.23 of the Health and Safety Code that will be presented to Mayor and City Council as part of their statutory duties. The report shall also include recommendations made from the previous year per the non-statutory duties. The deadline for recommendations is December 31, 2020. The report will be delivered to Mayor and City Council in March. Paula submitted the Animal Services performance report for reference. Barbara Candelaria suggested to include the virtual adoptions and the pet pantry. Julie suggested adding how the County has supported Animal Services in their no-kill efforts. Recommendation can be emailed to Julie or Maribel.

6. Future Agenda Item

- Discussion and action on community involvement and responsibilities related to stray animals and means of getting them back to their owners.
- ASAC Annual Report
- Fraudulent go-fund-me accounts

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:45PM

Alexandra Anello motioned to adjourn; Celeste Varela seconded; all members voted in favor, none opposed, and motion passed unanimously.

Prepared by: Maribel Karisch

Approved by A.S.A.C. Chairman

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