



El Paso Animal Services

MAYOR

Oscar Leaser

Animal Shelter Advisory Committee

Minutes

May 12, 2021

CITY COUNCIL

District 1

Peter Svarzbein

District 2

Alexsandra Annello

District 3

Cassandra Hernandez

District 4

Joe Molinar

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 6:06 PM.

Board Members	Present	Absent
Regina Wagner		X
Celeste Varela	X	
Sandra DiFrancesco		X
Mary Kay Rosenkranz		X
Karen Polanco	X	
Barbara Candelaria	X	
Gina Gagen	X	
Elvira Stephanie Frias	X	
Patricia Y. Riley	X	
Julie Rutledge	X	
Alexandra Annello		X

Animal Services staff present: Ramon Herrera, Maribel Karisch, Michele Anderson, Adan Parra and Esty Molina

CITY MANAGER

Tommy Gonzalez

2. Approval of Minutes

Discussion and action on approval of minutes for April 12, 2021

Karen Polanco motioned to accept the April 12, 2021 minutes; Celeste Varela 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. Chair Report

Julie Rutledge introduced Dr. Patricia Riley, who is one of three Mayorial Appointees and will take the Veterinarian seat. She is a long time El Pasoan who recently retired. Julie also announced her retirement from the Humane Society of El Paso. She is in contact with the Mayor's office on finding a replacement.

Ramon Herrera – Interim Director

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

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



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B. El Paso Animal Services April update and statistics

Ramon read the Animal Services Strategic Goals. The intake for the month of April was 1,238 compared to 2,458 in 2019 and, there were 1,088 outcomes compared to 1,865 in 2019. With over 650 animals currently housed and as more citizens are vaccinated, Animal Services is continuing with walk-up adoptions on Tuesdays-Saturdays from 1:00-4:00 PM. This adoption event consists of showing more of the animal's true personalities instead of just looking at photos. The foster parents have been a huge asset to Animal Services, in spite of the aggressive illness that has afflicted the community's dogs; there are currently 605 animals in foster homes. EPAS staff continues to see symptoms of distemper as the animals are coming off the trucks, which contributed to the increase in euthanasia for the month of April. The LRR was 80.79%, the Fiscal LLR was 88.8% and the Animal Shelter Count LRR for 2021 was 80.79% compared to 65.54% in 2020.

Ramon Herrera presented the PAWCast.

Julie inquired about how aggressiveness and illness are dealt with while the animals are with foster finders. Ramon explained that these animals are immediately picked up at the first signs of aggressiveness and Foster finders are instructed on how to see signs of illness. Dr. Patricia Riley asked how aggressive biters are handled. Ramon explained that these animals are placed in isolation for a period of ten days. These pets are then placed in the euthanasia list while outcome arrangements are determined. EPAS only quarantines non-owned strays. Ramon also mentioned that thanks to grants and an EPVMA donation, pet food distributions at the shelter are continuing on a case-by-case basis. As far as vaccination clinics, Ramon is considering having one sometime in the summer maybe on July 4th. Dr. Gina Gagen suggested presenting a public service announcement regarding 4th of July pet safety. Ramon added that Officers will canvass high intake areas several weeks before to alert owners on pet safety and announcements will be made on the KTSM Mutt Monday's segment as well.

C. El Paso County Animal Welfare Department April update

No Report

D. ASAC Committee Reports

a. By Laws Committee

Celeste Varela had questions regarding how the County could be included in the by-laws. She also went over several recommendations and edits, which she will forward to rest of the ASAC.

b. Strategic Plan Committee

Barbara Candelaria recommended skipping this item on the account of time, and she will follow up with discussion at the next meeting.

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4. Call to the public

None

5. Main Agenda

A. Promote Education and Engagement of Animal Health and Welfare

A1. Presentation on the update of the House and Senate bills in the Texas Legislative.

Gina Gagen gave an update on various House and Senate Bills in relation to Animal Welfare. She explained that HB 1818 has passed and heading to the Senate. There are several bills still at the House such as *The Dangerous Aggressive Dogs* and, *HB 873 Save Outdoor Dog Act* was placed on the State Calendar. House Bill for *Qualified Therapy Dogs in Court* passed, the *Sales Tax Exemption on Adoptions* is in the Finance Committee and the *Housing Authority and Pets* is progressing slowly.

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

B1. Discussion and action on contact and follow-up with TXDOT and EPAS/ESD on scanning dead animals removed from the roads.

Julie Rutledge explained that she obtained some information from TxDOT and Kurt Fenstermacher (ESD). Ramon explained that EPAS and ESD are coordinating to have the logs from the automated system become accessible to EPAS and a second scanner was donated as a backup. Julie suggested having capabilities on the Pet Finder Map on finding perished pets as well. Julie spoke with Jennifer Wright from TxDOT who brought some concerns on the accuracy of information and the removal process. Julie added that Kurt Fenstermacher suggested that the County needs to get on board with dead animal removal as well, and TxDOT concerns can be dealt with. Ramon will provide updates on the progress between ESD and EPAS.

B2. Discussion and action on ordinances related to hitting an animal with a vehicle.

Julie Rutledge will find out who else can attend the meeting since she was unable to get a response from the Cruelty Unit.

C. Engage ASAC members on best practices in Animal Health & Welfare

C1. Discussion and action on revisions of ASAC by laws

The subcommittee will share their recommendations and edits of the By-laws to the ASAC in word document format for discussion at next month's meeting.

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C2. Discussion and action on revisions to ASAC strategic plan

Barbara Candelaria suggested dedicating next month's meeting to the By-laws and the Strategic Plan. The subcommittee will go over recommendations at next month's meeting and are considering adding *Emergency Response with a Disaster Preparedness Plan and Transitioning back to Normal Operations* to the Key Focus Areas of the Strategic Plan.

6. Future Agenda Item

By-laws subcommittee

Strategic Plan subcommittee

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:47 PM

Celeste Varela motioned to adjourn; Stephanie Frias 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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