

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

**Regular Meeting**

**Thursday**

**March 21, 2024**

**Members Present:**

Michael Pitcock, City of Waterford-Chair  
Lt. Bob Meredith, City of Modesto  
Jewel Warr, Alternate for Stanislaus County  
Kim Weimer, Alternate for City of Hughson  
Ken Irwin, City of Patterson

Doug Dunford, City of Ceres – Absent

**Staff Present:**

Jesus Mendoza, Deputy County Counsel  
Vaughn Maurice, Executive Director  
Stephanie Loomis, Business Manager  
Alondra Peralta, Social Media  
Karla Legorreta, Client Services Supervisor

**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):** See above.
3. **Presentations:**

A. Alondra Peralta (Social Media Coordinator) provided an overview on SASA's Social Media events. There are three main weekly focal points. At Risk Dogs, Volunteer/Recue/Supply pleas and Marketing/Creating Connections. The week starts with At Risk Dogs, dogs that have been at the shelter the longest or dogs with medical needs that may need Rescue intervention. Then throughout the week we showcase more of our longest stay dogs to give them a spotlight, allowing them to stand out a little more, and providing them more attention from the public. We also do video spots of our longest stay dogs. Videos are circling the internet allowing everyone to see SASA dogs in action. These videos are seen

all over the world. We work with and visit Fox 40 News who recently started posting our dogs on their daily weather forecast.

Rescue pleas – This is where we post our animals that are in need of additional medical care. One that I saw all the way through was a Spitz that had been hit by a car and paralyzed. SASA posted a video and received a lot of views. One person in particular said he wanted to meet this dog and see if it was a good fit for him. He arrived the next day and met the dog and the rescue coordinator ultimately took this dog home. This was a successful endeavor. We reach out to rescue for cats and for any animal where we cannot provide the necessary medical care.

Volunteer pleas – Volunteers are essential to our shelter. We need volunteers for many things, like foster homes, when we need more space, or for our youngest puppies and kittens that need 24-hour care. Additionally, we hold many events that could not be run without volunteers. This includes Adoption events, Love Modesto, Woofstock, etc.

Supply pleas – there are times we have special needs and may make a plea for supplies. When we keep it simple, stating this is what we need and why, people are very quick to respond.

Marketing – All these posts are created to get people to visit or become involved. Additionally, we provide public information.

Creating Connections – People enjoy seeing which animals get adopted and where these dogs are a year from now, two years from now, etc. People love to see the updates on our adoptions and what they are up to. People also like to see content created by our volunteers. Doggie day out is a great program where people take photos and videos of how the dog did while in a home environment.

We try to be very broad in what we share on social media because so much good happens here. There is so much going on behind the scenes that people do not get to witness, so if you follow us and see our stories, you will see we try to post all we can so the public feels included, which creates connections.

SASA's Social Media platform is our bridge between the public and our shelter. We try to be consistent and provide quality posts at least three

times per day. Our platforms are growing. In the last 30 days our reach had been 1.3 million; our reach on Instagram is 2.8 million and continues to grow. SASA wants this growth to continue so we have more public support and save more lives. With continued growth on social media more opportunities arise. Our biggest platforms, at present, are Facebook and Instagram, and we recently added Twitter.

**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 February 15, 2024 (Stanislaus County/City of Patterson; 5-0)

**6. Correspondence: None**

**7. New Business:**

- A. Formation of a Budget Subcommittee for the 2024/2025 Fiscal Year Budget: Basically, we need to form an Ad Hoc budget committee of three people. It would include our new Business Manager, Stephanie whom you've all just recently met. We are excited to have her aboard, she's been here almost four weeks now. It takes a little while to get into the swing of things because there is a lot. The budget team will work with Stephanie, and we need three Agency Board members to assist. Hughson, Stanislaus County and Modesto said they are happy to help. Motion to approve. (City of Patterson/Stanislaus County – 5/0)
- B. Proposal for Clinic Remodeling and Budget Adjustments: Our clinic, while it was a nice sized clinic when we first opened, doesn't have the space for the volume of spay/neuter surgeries that need to be done and we only have a couple of options. One will be to increase staffing, which we are desperately trying to do, it's just a challenge to find veterinarians that will come on board. Another way to increase productivity is to have a better design and flow of our patients in our clinic for spay and neuter surgery. This will be a simple project. We will eliminate non-load bearing walls and put-up glass partitions to keep dogs separate from cats. Then our veterinary technicians will be able to assist with surgery prep and keep an eye on the animals in recovery without having to walk all the way around to a different room that is behind closed doors. This

will really increase efficiency while promoting more surgery for our veterinarians. We tried to solicit three bids which was challenging because it is a very small project. After many months of looking, we found a contractor who gave us a bid based on prevailing wage and met the county requirements in terms of insurance. His bid was \$51,187. We would like to move \$52,000 from our donations (which were raised for this remodel) and move those funds to be utilized for the remodel project. For clarification – Valley Pet will move out of the clinic they utilize at the end of May. Our staff will move over there allowing work to begin on our clinic, once work is complete, Valley Pet can go back, and we proceed with opening our Spay/Neuter Public Clinic. The work should take about two weeks, so to be safe, we estimate three weeks. Motion to approve: (City of Patterson/Stanslaus County; – 5/0)

## **8. Committee Reports:**

- A. Executive Director report: Vaughn advised our numbers really spiked in February and continue to do so in March. Officially our average went up for intake from 20 a day to 22 a day in February, or approximately 60 more dogs entering the shelter in February. In addition, field service calls jumped up to 741, usually we are around 600 calls. These extra calls cause an extra burden to shelter staff as officers cannot assist in the shelter while doing their primary job of responding to field service calls and aiding the public. In addition, we recently dealt with three massive hoarding cases. March 8<sup>th</sup> SASA rescued 15 dogs living in a car and truck, this party was trying to breed to sell. Monday, we rescued 38 chihuahuas from inside a house. Fortunately, the owner surrendered the chihuahuas to SASA which meant we could put them up for adoption immediately. SASA was housing 327 animals after the chihuahua confiscation. Our full number is 187. Tuesday of this week we responded to a house in Ceres where the oxygen level was at 16% SASA rescued 86 dogs, 81 initially, then there were more found under the floorboards. Many had to be shaved, they had issues with their eyes, and the smell was horrendous. You could smell this from the street. Education for the public is to call as soon as they know there is a problem. These dogs were also surrendered, which allowed rescue to take these dogs after four days for healthy dogs and immediately for those with medical needs. Modesto asked how they can help if they know they will be rescuing hoarder dogs. Vaughn suggested forewarning helps, and trying not to take animals that don't have to be taken, if an owner has had a dog for five years, a few more days won't hurt.

So year to date we are already at 1309 dogs into the shelter, which means we are on track to see 6100 dogs this year. Intake is up 43% year over year. Adoptions are still up 28% which is really good. Our

rescues and transfers show a big decrease, which is due to many of the receiving shelters being full. We have a unique transfer going out at the end of this month, 20 dogs are going to Wisconsin.

A reminder regarding our Animal Advisory Committee, we still need committee members from Ceres, Waterford, and Patterson. There is a veterinary opening, which is optional. I would like to utilize these members as a formation board of directors for a 501C3, which will aid in all sorts of fun things with fund raising. There are a lot of grants out there that would be perfect for SASA, but we need a 501C3.

SASA brought in \$200,000 for our HEART Program (Helping Each Animal Retain Tranquility) which provides free licensing, microchips, a pet collar, and a rabies vaccine. Our first test for this program is going to be in Modesto at Orville Wright Elementary School on April 20<sup>th</sup> from 8a.m. until 12 noon, and we'll see how many free licenses we give out. The idea is the more animals we have licensed, the more they can be returned. Thus, reducing intake and housing of animals at SASA. We will hit each of the JPA areas via rotation, we will make it fair to every Agency partner. Orville Wright is in the Airport area where a lot of strays are picked up. Another fun promotion coming up is our Willy Wonka themed Golden Ticket. We had a lot of fun with it, SASA had a cute video with a youngster, and he was so excited about getting his golden ticket and then he looks up at his mom and says, "What does this mean?". It was very cute. Staff has discretion to hand out Golden Tickets which are funded with donations.

Questions: Did SASA get a full-time veterinarian for spay and neuter? Vaughn said we are very close, possibly. There is a PetCo veterinarian that will be coming up and doing some shifts with us to see if she likes it. If she likes it, we will be in great shape, if not we are adding contract veterinarians. Either way we will be able to open our public clinic, one way or the other.

**9. Informational:** None

**10. Adjournment:** Motion to Adjourn:(City of Patterson/Stanislaus County; 5-0)

**Adjourned:** 9:38 am

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