

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

Regular Meeting

Thursday

May 16, 2024

Members Present:

Michael Pitcock, City of Waterford-Chair
Scotty Douglass, Alternate for City of Modesto
Jewel Warr, Alternate for Stanislaus County
Dominique Romo, City of Hughson
Fernando Ulloa, City of Patterson
Doug Dunford, City of Ceres

Staff Present:

Jesus Mendoza, Deputy County Counsel
Vaughn Maurice, Executive Director
Stephanie Loomis, Business Manager
Linda Ford, Confidential Assistant IV

Guests and Dignitaries: None

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 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 March 21, 2024
(Stanislaus County/City of Ceres; 6-0)
6. **Correspondence:** None
7. **New Business:**

- A.** Approved Strategic Annual Promotion Schedule for the 2024/2025 Fiscal Year. Vaughn Maurice gave an overview of the month-to-month promotions with emphasis on the newer versions identified in red. July – Freedom Forever, July 4 through 12 Free adoptions. September – Fall in Love, Dogs and Cats will be free from the 15th through the 21st. November – Senior Citizen Dogs will be free. January – Certified Pre-owned Pets, come with four paw drive and 100 purr warranty for cats and 100,000 barks for a dog warranty, January 1, through 7th. February – Bring Home a big Love, dogs will be \$14. April – Volunteer appreciation week, volunteers will pick their favorite dog or cat and that animal will be available for adoption for free. All other promotions remain the same as previous years. In addition, SASA would like to have any animal housed in the shelter, for 30 days or more, to have adoption fees waived. Cost shouldn't affect the budget drastically, but just in case this does have a negative effect, Vaughn included a decrease of \$25,000 in the adoption line on the budget. However, we will be spending less on food and care. Scotty requests data be provided periodically to show if these promotions have a fiscal impact on the budget. Vaughn mentions it does hit our adoption line, but it is difficult to calculate how it effects the other line items. Mike would like to see how many animals are adopted after each promotion and gave positive feedback on the Marketing of these programs. Motion to approve. (City of Modesto/City of Hughson – 6/0)
- B.** Approved accepting a competitive grant from Petco Love in the amount of \$56,215 for SASA's new PetWISE program: This program will provide free dog and cat spay/neuter surgeries, free vaccinations, free microchips, free license and collar, and largely affects our homeless folks and those that cannot afford to reclaim, with license and vaccination fees. Motion to approve: (City of Ceres/Stanislaus County; – 6/0)
- C.** Authorized and Approved the Executive Director to work with the Stanislaus County Tax Collector's Revenue and Recovery Division to Discharge from Accountability the Collection of Accounts Determined to be Uncollectible: Vaughn gave a brief overview of how this works. Annual reports requested but CoVid caused some reporting issues. Revenue and Recovery is now back on track and forwarded this latest report which includes 1370 accounts and \$780,332 in uncollectible funds for varying reasons. Those reasons include accounts going to seniors over 70 and on a fixed income, accounts over 10 years of age, those that have passed, those that filed bankruptcy, those that became

transient or homeless, and accounts with a balance of less than \$25. These funds are not on a receivable so don't affect our budget. Majority of these dollars are coming from Modesto followed by the County. Jewel mentions discharging these accounts will allow Revenue and Recovery to work accounts that are recoverable. Motion to approve (Stanislaus County/City of Modesto – 6/0)

- D.** Adoption of the SASA Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget: Vaughn mentions this is a high-level overview. Two budget categories should be looked at, one being the new public spay/neuter high-volume clinic and the other being the typical SASA shelter/field operations and looking at what the cost is to our JPA partners. We are looking at an increase of \$530,000 which is a significant increase, but the increase is nondiscretionary items that we have no control over. First big one is health insurance, which has gone up \$240,000. Life changes caused some of this influx. The CAP charges increased. The \$132,000 is not the increase from last year to this year but included 2023-2024 increases that were not available at the time of SASA's budget was approved last year. There is 3.5% cost of living increase in salaries this year, union negotiated. Services and Supplies will increase by \$71,000 which is a 4% increase from last year. Stephanie provided a more in-depth overview including percentages of contributions for each partner based on two-year prior intake totals. Stephanie's overview included SASA Operations and the Public Clinic costs. The Public Clinic costs will mostly be covered by the UC Davis grant. However, Jewel says we need to include a services and supplies line item to provide a complete picture. After the expense and revenue summaries were reviewed, partners shared the following: Jewel – I was one of the members on the budget subcommittee with the City of Modesto and the City of Hughson. However, those members that participated for Modesto and Hughson are not present today. It was a very informative session at a high level, we didn't have enough time to dig into some of the items touched on today. I recognized several items at this week's briefing that need additional clarification. One is the Public Clinic which is going to be an entirely different function from normal operations. We need to establish a separate budget unit for the clinic because of the fact it should be a self-sufficient model. In order to clearly see that I recommend an additional budget unit be established. We will have to go through our Auditor/Controller's office and publicly get authorized by the Board. That will allow us to see very clearly the difference between operational and clinic expenses, revenue and differentials. For those reasons, Jewel is not ready to vote on this action today but would recommend we

reconvene the budget subcommittee to see how we can separate and get the authority to establish a separate budget unit. Mike agrees, we need two separate budgets, and it should include services and supplies, which is absorbed in the SASA budget at present. Scotty agrees. First year, needs a foundational beginning and be treated almost like its own business. Is it successful or not? There may be times we need to supplement, just like other entities where we need authority to do that. Separate budgets will allow us to see here is where we are, now it is self-sufficient, now it is paying back the fund. Let's bring the budget subcommittee back and revisit this in June. Motion: Postpone considering the budget until the June meeting and in the meantime reconvene the budget subcommittee to review and work with the County Auditor Controller to establish a separate budget for the clinic so we can then identify those two separate budgets for the purpose of evaluating and considering approval in June. I want to make sure we have the authority to do what we need to do. (Stanislaus County/Modesto 6-0)

8. Committee Reports:

- A.** Executive Director report: Vaughn provided information from March and April since we did not have a meeting in April. He reminds all Board members there were three back-to-back hoarding cases SASA handled in March which really drove up our intake numbers. In March alone animal intake reached 774 animals, which works out to 25 animals per day, seven days a week. April took us back to 619 animals which is about 21 animals per day, a little higher than our usual average of 19 per day, but closer. Adoptions were lower in March with 245 animals adopted vs. April, where we sent many more animals to new homes, with a total of 284 adopted. March rescues were high at 271 We appreciate Rescue stepping up when we had such a need, thanks in part to a ton of media coverage. The media market wasn't just local, we were in the San Francisco media market with ABC and NBC doing stories on these hoarding cases, which really helped. Calls for service, our Animal Service Officers remain busy with 755 calls in March and 743 in April. A typical month is approximately 750 calls, with deceased animals being 107 in March and 133 in April. Already this year we have a total animal intake of 2580. If you look back two years, we were at 5645 for the entire year. Last year we had 4775 dogs come in, this year we are on pace to reach 5360. 2023-2024 year to date comparisons: Intake is up 22%, our staff are doing 22% more work with the same number of people on board. Our adoptions are up 23% and our rescues and transfers are up 22%

Updated Organizational Chart: The exciting piece is the SASA Love Clinic. Love is for our public clinic, and we have a new veterinarian. Dr.

Erin will be going to high volume spay/neuter training at Camp LA, with grant funding, so she will be going free of charge for a week. At the end of June, we can start up with a Registered Vet Tech who is getting some training on this side and will move over to the clinic upon opening. We are in the process of interviewing additional Animal Care Specialists. We will utilize established Animal Care Specialists to go over to the Clinic and newer Animal Care Specialists will be placed into the shelter. Business next door closed a week and a half ago, but they have 2 ½ weeks to move, giving us plenty of time to move in and start operations in late June.

Last week's Promotion was half off adoptions which was very successful.

We held our first HEART event, (Helping Each Animal Retain Tranquility) 66 dogs were aided at Orville Wright Elementary school, in an economically disadvantaged area, where 97% of the families that send children to that school are social economically disadvantaged. So, these are people that probably never would have licensed their dog or get a rabies vaccine or get a collar. Not that they don't want to, but there are other priorities like food, rent, etc. As long as we have a minimum of 50 dogs per program visit, our cost recovery is about \$16 per dog, the grant is written to give us \$32 per dog so, we are actually making a profit of \$16 per dog by helping out indigent folks. Next HEART event is coming up June 8th in Waterford and on June 29th we will be in Grayson. For those that come through that don't have their dog spayed/or neutered they are given a 90-day temporary license and they are told they have 90 days to get their dog altered. Our public clinic is \$200 paid for either by license differential or the UC Davis grant with a co-pay of \$50. \$50 can be a lot of money for some so, if they come in and say they attended one of our community events they will have been told that we have money through our PetWise program to cover the co-pay. Some people will be able to benefit from all three of our programs, HEART, PetWise, and the UC Davis grant, to take care of their dogs.

9. Informational: None

10. Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn:(City of Modesto/City of Hughson; 6-0)

Adjourned: 9:55 am

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