

MINUTES

On June 26th, 2024, the Animal Management & Welfare Advisory Board met at 5:00 p.m. in the City Council meeting room located on the third floor of City Hall at 509 E. 7th Ave to discuss the agenda. Charli Sanchez, Chairman, called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Amarillo Animal Management & Welfare Advisory Board to order at 5:00 P.M.

VOTING MEMBERS	PRESENT	NO. MEETINGS HELD SINCE APPOINTMENT	NO. OF MEETINGS ATTENDED
Charlie Sanchez	yes	16	15
Bethany Schilling	Yes	09	10
Les Simpson	No	02	02
David Martinez	Yes	08	08
Andrea Gulley	yes	01	02
Kerry Dawson	No	02	02

Also, in attendance:

Victoria Medley	Director, AM&W, City of Amarillo
Ty Vernon	Assistant Director, AM&W, City of Amarillo
Brandi Bullock	Assistant Director, AM&W, City of Amarillo
Rozena Helton	Shelter Manager
Dalton George	Field Manager
Kali Dennis	Interim-Rescue Specialist

ITEM 1: Introduction: All board members introduce themselves. It was noted that Margie Gonzalez had transferred to another department within the city, and everyone was in attendance except for Les Simpson and Kerry Dawson. Victoria Medley introduced AMW staff.

ITEM 2: Public Comment: Mary fenmiack, a volunteer trainer gives her respects upon the rescues and animal management and welfare, her concern is the adoption rate of animals and the struggles of downsizing and adopting out all the animals is progressively getting worse. The problem is out of anyone's control due to backyard breeding, irresponsible citizens. She asks about AMW effort to give insight of our problems and needs so that rescues and other shelters can be on the same page. Mrs. Mary wants to clear up the community's dilemma and the only way she can see help is if we start working together, open discussions.

ITEM 3: Minutes. The motion to approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting, on March 6th, 2024, was presented. Approval by 4:0

ITEM 4: AMW Activity Report PowerPoint

- A. **AMW Activity Report-** The first slide shows an overview of the animals that came into the shelter and the outcomes of those animals for the last two months since the last AMW advisory board meeting was on 03/06/24. **Gulley asked** 3 questions, #1 if the surrenders are tracked by the reasons, **Victoria** answered back with managed appointments done by staff that helps AMW understand and closely look at why and how many we get weekly or monthly this has helped from previous public standards of being able to openly drop off animals, no questions asked. With this new system we can deeply investigate efficient ways of keeping the shelter from over populating. Its something that has worked for us but for the public has been difficult, we still help citizens with other options by referring rescues. **#2 Gulley** asked Victoria if she knew the #1 problem behind so many surrenders. **Victoria** answered back with housing issues when citizens move to other places that have different housing requirement and regulations. **#3 Gulley** asked about euthanasia practices and if we still deny owners from going with their animals after requesting euthanasia. **Victoria** answered yes, the practices are still the same by not allowing owners to go back with us due to the liabilities the shelter may face. Due to AMW not having the same insurance private vets have and risk mgt policies, but we still allow owners to hand over sentimental items for their animals. Mr. Sanchez voiced concerns about the huge increase of stray animals between the months of May and April, Victoria replied with the cause of puppy and kitten season.

- B. **Shelter Evaluation:** Animal Shelter Services, LLC conducted a thorough evaluation of AMW on May 10th-13th. Reviewed all aspects including polices and process, the evaluation was covering everything we have done and will continue to do. This company has done reviews with other municipalities with animal shelters and can efficiently recommend strategic solutions to help determine strengths while addressing weaknesses and threats that AMW faces.

- C. **Staff Updates-** AMW has all field position filled and more promotions. Kali Dennis and Andrew Crotser have been eternally promoted. AM Tech interns that have stayed with us after high school have been Jaden Stater, she has been given the position of our Part-time Adoption specialist. Vacant Positions are

outreach manager which is very vital for what AMW has and wants planned, the other positions are Admin Specialist II. These positions are pending and hopefully filled. The other position is CSR intake Specialist, this position is another important and difficult position that has been hard to fill and stay filled due to the overwhelming circumstances of job duties. The city council has been acceptable to raising some of the salaries and has noticed how much this has helped bring in new applicants and longer employment.

- D. Field Stats-** 3,488 calls that we have responded to, Dalton George has categorized the type of calls we receive from bite and animal v. animal. **Sanchez** asked if the dead animal call is being taken care of and both sources reliable to getting these animals off the streets. **Victoria** replied yes, these are from AECC and front desk calls. The visual statistics show our highest call rate and what differs from them and our higher priorities. Our AECC polices mirror our actual APD protocols and setup.
- E. Field Services-** All officers must be certified by the state of Texas, within the first year of employment. Four AMW officer trainees attended the classes and passed the ACO basic certification test and can be in a unit by themselves. This can help more coverage in the field and the number of calls we can complete. Our field services have been working with community projects as like **T-anchor homeless project** to capture loose dogs on the campsites and or provide homeless citizens with leashes. Dog attacks on the camp site and the city's impact with this dilemma has been due to impounding two very aggressive dogs. **Gulley** asked if we vaccinate the homeless dogs. **Victoria** replied with no, we do not vaccinate because we do not have a onsite vet to help. AMW has gone back to neighborhood patrols due to our full staff, which has helped schools with children who walk home before and after school. **Gulley** asked if we work with private schools and daycares because there is an issue there as well. **Victoria** said we do not but will put this on our list as patrols. Animal traps, we will provide to private properties if there is a threat to public safety, these traps are approved by a supervisor for, high risk rabies, bite animals and aggressive animals. After a filled form this mean citizens will obey our ordinances sec.8-287 setting traps. Return to owner campaign for the month of June to increase the number of RTO in the field, this goal is to prevent the number of animals impounded at AMW and educate the importance of responsible pet ownership. Bissel donated 500 microchips for this campaign, the microchips are inserted by the field at zero cost to the owner, AMW will register the microchips for the owner. As of June 24th- 53 animals have been RTO and microchipped in the field alone.

Technology updates: Les Simpson has asked for technology to replicate APD protocols. Since them AMW was included in the budget and has received the body cameras. July 4th AMW officers will be equipped and fully trained. **Mr. Sanchez** asked if the supervisors are testing them out before the field officers are out on the field with the body cameras. **Victoria** reassured that is correct, after Sanchez asked if the vehicles are equipped with cameras, answer No. Facility security has been updated due to discussion from upper management, the security has been updated for both counter and field intake rooms which footage can be held up to 90 days. **Gulley** asked if there is a camera in the euthanasia room answer No. **Victoria** explained, that there are litigations when cameras are put in and it would be considered open records. She also stated it's not that we are doing anything wrong, there are concerns of being inhumane. **Gulley** respectfully disagrees that due to the city's past records she recommends there be camera in the EU room.

- F. **Municipal Court/ AMW Dockets:** Les Simpson wanted updated information on how our accountability process works for the public and the municipalities. Our new animal docket is scheduled on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Assistant city attorney, prosecutor and filed supervisors are there to cite with the written citations which helps with what each case will be stated for and a visual representation. Each citation is considered a case, the court will give AMW two docket sessions. **May 11th:** 11 defendants that were scheduled for a total of 48 cases; 3 appeared at docket for 8 cases; 2 appeared prior to docket for 6 cases- 6 failed to appear for 34 cases. 1 defendant plead guilty/ no contest on 3 cases- 4 defendants plead not guilty and requested a trial. **June 12th:** 22 defendants were scheduled for 71 cases, 6 appeared at docket for 20 cases- 5 appeared prior to docket for 6 cases- 11 failed to appear for 45 cases. 3 defendants plead guilty/ no contest on 6 cases- 3 defendants plead not guilty and requested a trial. **Gulley** asked if citizens see the same judge for each of their cases and **Victoria** replied with no because the courts have a full-time judge (Hamilton) and a few part time judges, it's just dependent on who they assign for each docket.
- G. **Positive Outcomes Departmental Update:** Rescues and adoption teams. 70 barn cats were employed in the last three months, 502 animals found a new home. 211 animals transferred to rescues from AMW, **all rescues and shelter nationwide are over capacity so that number is great and, microchips have been a huge factor in getting these animals moved out- Victoria medley.** 302 animals were returned to owner (RTO).
- H. **Rescue Team-** Victoria stated that AMW rescues team has been doing an amazing job. AMW has been working with OKHS'S – Oklahoma City humane society adoption center. Our Vet clinic and adoptions helped 15 adult cats and 2 kittens ready for the trip while the doctors helped prep and meet all of Oklahoma's vetting requirements. The trip took 11 hours total.
- I. **Community Outreach Update-** local news outlet have been a huge source to get our name and events out there. Our weekly media spot is KAMR CHANNEL 4, ALPHA MEDIA RADIO, ABC CHANNEL 7 and, COA FACEBOOK-PET OF THE WEEK. **Sanchez** asked if we reached out to a Spanish media spot. **Victoria-**we are seeking Telemundo which is an available media source. The most recent event was SPCA's muttfest took place on May 19th we were able to microchip 86 animals that were donated by Bissell foundation. **Spring empowerment zone pop-up vaccine/ microchips.** Products were donated by the Bissell foundation, 4 pop-up clinics **Himes/Wardford center** March 9th: 39 microchips-43 DHPP/rabies; **San Jacinto-** April 6th: 62 microchips-58DHPP/ rabies; **Eastridge park** May 11th: 36 microchips-43DHPP,42 rabies. **El Alamo Park** May 4th: 56 microchips/ vaccinated. **Barrio Clean-up** April 27th: 13 microchipped. In total were able to give out 206 microchips, 200 DHPP Vaccines and, 199 rabies vaccines. We have been reaching out to lower income areas, which has showed positive impacts on responsible ownership. Lower numbers of attendance to events were due to factors of weather and timing. Upcoming events, high noon on the square, Starlight theater, June-jazz, patriotic pet parade, community vaccine clinic and, Clear the shelter Campaign. We have applied for the chewy donations of food and supplies which is only for community use. If we do get some donations that we cannot use, we will donate those supplies to other wildlife rescues. Home to home can facilitate animals to other owner by the public publishing about their animal that needs re-homing. **Gulley** asked, if this was something unique to Amarillo. **Victoria** replied with no, this is something that other shelters and rescues use nationwide. Another event that has helped push our message about responsible ownership was 'Community Helpers' at region 16/ HeadStart schools. This is a great way to get kids to start

understanding early on about how important it is and what it take to own an animal. AMW was also at the discovery summer camp June 3rd, Ty Vernon joined the kids and talked about the steps of animal ownership.

J. **Veterinary Services-** We have at AMW 5 contracted rotating Veterinarians, 3 full-time veterinarian techs and 6 Amtech summer interns. Our challenge is finding a full-time vet that is here 6-7 days out of the week and long hours, here at the shelter we found it better that our doctors are rotating everyday to relieve the stress and being overwhelmed; to which the contracted doctors have agreed and approved of this schedule. Our vet clinic provided walkthrough and notes for documentation that is uploaded to our system, anyone with access to the file can view doctor note and daily information. This information is given to new owner at the time of adoption. **Gulley** stated that shetler veterinary medicine is different from veterinary medicine, she then asked if the TTU residents are educated on treating these diseases with this type of medication and processes. **Victoria** replied with Dr. Lee going to conferences and educating herself with the differences and techniques that she brings back to share with the rest of the vet clinic. Texas Tech has different programs for the 4th year students offers students both experiences. **TTU 4th year students attend 30-day elective rotations at the shelter and ride along.** TTU provides their own vet and supplies. June 29th faculty performed surgery, which TTU paid for, and the city did not pay anything out of pocket, the total cost was \$3,920.00. TTU raider pup proposal what something that students can participate with their own social media page about weekly updates on the animal in care and the journey from medical to awaiting adoptions, this will help find these animals new homes faster.

K. **Questions: Martinez** asked how someone can go about going about getting a microchipped, Victoria replied that local veterinaries, also AMW is trying to get Fire stations to get microchips and give them out to the public whenever they encounter. Schilling Gives her thanks and appreciation over the amount of blame that AMW receives and how we have handled and strived though. **Schilling-** asked about the positions that are more challenging and harder to stay filled, are we doing any training for classes to help when those trying situations happen? **Victoria** replied with we are looking into de-escalation training at Amarillo college for our officers and hopefully intakes. **Gulley** asked if there are more option and educational resources for the public for spay and neuter and the positive outcomes. Are there any more affordable options or clinics other than P.E.T.S clinic to help those who can't afford it. Amarillo has a huge dilemma in strays and overpopulated shelter/ rescues, can AMW provide any help or assistance to fasten the process? **Victoria** replied with yes, we have been going to school and events, once our outreach manager position is filled, we will get ahead with getting our names and information to the public.

Item 5: Identify Future Agenda Items: 1. Public Education update on owner responsibility the cause and effects.

Item 6: Set the Schedule for the Next Advisory Board Meeting: September 18th,2024.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:27pm.

ATTEST:

Charlie Sanchez
AM&W Advisory Board Chairperson

Alyssa Mendoza,
Administrative Specialist II, AM&W