

Washoe County Regional Animal Services Advisory Board

MINUTES-VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

Friday, April 22, 2022 @ 9:30 a.m.
WASHOE COUNTY REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES
CENTER CLASSROOM
2825 LONGLEY LANE, #A, RENO, NV

MEMBERS

Naomi Duerr (Chair) (absent)
Irene Payne, (Vice Chair)
Kitty Jung (absent)
Jill Dobbs (absent)
Paul Anderson
Trudy Brussard
Julie McMahon

STAFF

Shyanne Schull (Director)

LEGAL COUNSEL

Jen Gustafson (Deputy DA)

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1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL [Non-Action Item]

The meeting was opened and a quorum was established.

PRESENT: Irene Payne, Paul Anderson, Trudy Brussard, Julie McMahon

ABSENT: Kitty Jung, Jill Dobbs, Naomi Duerr

2. PUBLIC COMMENT [Non-Action Item]

No public comment.

3. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 11, 2022 MINUTES [For possible action]

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Motion to approve Minutes of February 11, 2022.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Seconded the Motion.

No public or Board comment. Motion carries.

4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATE ON OPTIONS VETERINARY CLINIC [Non-action item]

Humane Network President, Bonney Brown, joins the meeting.

MS. BROWN: Thanked the Board for the invite to attend.

Discussed Options Veterinary Clinic. They are non-profit, affordable, high quality clinic to provide vet care for limited income residents. Rely on donations and relationship with WCRAS and SPCA.

Surveyed 95% of Americans consider pets to be a part of the family. 40% of American adults can't afford a large vet bill. Discussed a diabetic dog who is treated with Options. Nationwide vet care is due to financial constraints. Helps prevent animals being euthanized for purely economic reasons.

PetsMart Charities found over 50 million American pets are not getting much, or any, vet care because of affordability. Many Nevadans have difficulty providing pet care because of the cost. In Maddy's Fund research from 2019, 36,000 go without vet care due to financial barriers in Washoe County each year.

Options is a full-service care offering wellness care, general medicine, diagnostics, surgery and dental care. Incremental care, working with partner organizations, grants and donations help cover costs for Options to run.

Incremental vet care is the way vet medicine was practiced some years back and also still in animal shelters today. It is experienced based medicine and the vets use a problem solving approach to get the best possible income in situations where clients have limited resources. Private practice vets use this type of care to help clients who are able to help financially, to some degree. The vets use their own clinical judgment and experience and they take a tiered diagnostic and therapeutic approach. Treatment will start, and if necessary, additional diagnostic tests will be done to find the solution. This is a viable alternative for patients.

Valued partners are WCRAS, SPCA, Shakespear Animal Fund, and other local organizations.

Shared stories of animals who have benefitted through partnership with WCRAS. Introduced Magoo who had a bladder blockage and stones, Options was able to cover full cost of Magoo who is home healthy.

Puppy was introduced who had a broken leg. The break was so bad that he required an amputation. WCRAS contributed to Puppy's care who is doing well with his family.

Meese's owner is on disability. Meese had a mass on his face and it was removed with the help of WCRAS because Meese's owner didn't have the resources.

Rosie was attacked by dogs. Her owners are on disability and have low wage income. Rosie had multiple lacerations and WCRAS contributed to save Rosie. She is doing well.

Juda was attacked by another dog while on a walk. Owner lives entirely off of Social Security income and Juda's eye needed to be removed. WCRAS contributed with this case.

Starr broke his leg. Owner on very limited income. WCRAS also contributed.

Mona became unable to eat and had almost all teeth removed. Owners have very limited income. WCRAS contributed.

45% of Options' clients are senior citizens. 30% work in low wage jobs. 15% are disabled which includes disabled Veterans. Remaining 10% are rescue groups and community cat groups in our area. 30% of people who come to Options cannot afford to pay anything and don't qualify for credit programs. 30% are able to pay something, but need a payment plan. The remaining 30% are able to pay the cost because it is substantially lower than a normal for-profit vet clinic.

Most clients live in Washoe County. Some come from different parts of Nevada and in parts of Northern California. Owners are willing to travel long distances to get affordable care for their pets.

70 calls per day is the average for request for services. The demand is very high. In the first year, Options provided care to over 7,000 animals. 670 patients a month is average. Provided video to members.

Options welcomes people to join on Facebook. Also an E-newsletter on website. Also welcomes sign ups to support Options which is on Amazon Smile. Offered to WCRAS Advisory Board Members and attendees to come for a tour of Options.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Added that there is sufficient time to allow Bonney to show the video. Added that the partnership between Options and WCRAS is priceless. Opens the ability to enable pet owners to comply with minimum requirements that are sometimes difficult. Confirms the difficulty in community members with financial issues and providing vet care. Options Vet Care provides such affordable vet care and outreach programs to be able to vaccinate pets that go into shelters where pets are allowed.

Discussed work with CARES program that is funded by donations. Appreciate the citizens of Washoe County and other places that donate to donation fund to help reach beyond the shelter walls in the community to facilitate vet care, and keeping animals in their homes with their people.

Thanked Bonney for her presentation. Encouraged Bonney to play the video.

(Played Options video presentation)

MS. BROWN: Thanked everyone for listening to her presentation. Invited discussion.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Thanked Bonney Brown for all the hard work. Wondered how Options started.

MS. BROWN: Has been involved in animal rescue since 1990. Started a Humane Society in Massachusetts. Was the director of Nevada Humane Society from 2007 to 2013. She and a colleague started an organization to assist animal services all over the country to be more successful through affordable consulting services.

The need for vet care became huge. It's a nationwide crisis. There are other clinics like Options around the country. Collaborated with others to start Options in Reno and raised funds to get clinic open. Humane Network is her organization. Options is a program of Humane Network that is based in Reno.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Asked about volunteers.

MS. BROWN: Indicated not very many volunteers and would love to have more. Some do transport, go into the clinic and assist, and paperwork.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Asked for additional comments.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Asked how clients find Options Vet Clinic.

MS. BROWN: Confirmed most of it is word of mouth. They have a Facebook page and a website for Options Vet Care. The search engine should provide the information when searching. When people call a partner organization, they are also referred to Options.

Many vet clinics also refer to Options. Options feels they are not competition, but support, for the local vet community.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Wondered if she asked her own vet about Options, if they would provide the information.

MS. BROWN: Suggested to make sure their own personal vet knows about Options and has additional information. Also discussed that people surrender their pets to animal shelters because they can't afford vet care. The goal is to keep the pets with the people who love them rather than straining an already strained animal shelter system. They all work together.

Encouraged discussion with their own vets to provide information about Options. Most find Options online, but there are referrals from shelters, partner organizations, and vets. The goal is to help owners who can't afford vet care, and definitely not to be competing with the really great vets in the area.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Follows a lot of social media groups. One of the most commonly asked question is, "Where can I take my animal for affordable vet care?" Words travels quickly when an affordable vet option is provided. The power of word of mouth is very valuable.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Suggested Advisory Board Members to like Options Facebook page, and to share content, to help get word out.

MEMBER McMAHON: Seconded sentiment. Discussed that allowing clients to get through to a point where Options can be an option has been important where euthanasia may have been the only other option. Example, an emergency vet care is approximately \$900, and they can offer palative care to allow owners to seek out affordable care. As she is on the emergency side working with clients and families every weekend, she is very thankful for the Options' services.

MS. BROWN: Confirmed a lot of work with emergency vets in the area. The costs are often beyond affordable. Thankful emergency clinics are there 24/7 and

appreciates the partnership.

Again, welcomed everyone to tour the facility. Email is bbrown@humanenetwork.org and a tour can be scheduled.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Thanked again for the presentation.

5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT [Non-action item]

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Provided brief update of Animal Services. A lot going on behind the scenes. Discussed what feels like an endless recruitment, filling and training for positions. Very taxing to an organization. Struggling with keeping a full staff, and feels like they are always crippled slightly in one division or another.

Have been working on the Board's last request to bring forward what training and planning for emergency disaster fire season is. Decided to table the item until the next meeting in July, but advised that since the Caldor fire last summer, they have been reorganizing resources. Staff trains all year, not just during fire season. Code 3 is at WCRAS today doing useful livestock lessons about how to handle livestock and stay safe. Upcoming academy going on for Animal Control Officers in our region. Always training and always trying to prepare for disaster season.

A lot of resources were reorganized after the Caldor fire. There was a challenge in staffing at that time and there were not enough people to stand up in an emergency shelter when the call came because staff had been allocated to Carson City to assist NHS set up shelter. Summertime is vacation and makes it difficult to have extra bodies to maintain normal organization, as well a set up emergency shelter 24/7.

Volunteers were incorporated from outside of organization. Several months in preparation and conducting emergency drill next month at the shelter. Classroom will be set up as emergency evacuation center to prepare. Fire season is expected to be as bad as last year.

To be discussed at the next meeting is the five year strategic plan. A lot of organization, planning, coordinating, setting goals and action items with the team has taken place. Looking forward to sharing results of strategic plan action items and objectives.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Last quarter animal intakes for the third quarter of this

fiscal year is up about 17%, over 400 animals. Means higher number of animals in shelter day to day, but also a higher need for animals that need care. Discussed correlations that relate to higher number of animals.

Discussed the alarming number of hoarding cases this year. Between January and April there were seven hoarding cases; 77 total dogs, 131 cats. The need for shelter space, vet care, volunteers – all are compounded with hoarding cases. Puts a big strain on the department. Newer officers are finding hoarding cases. Also discussed community member struggling financially to keep their homes, and seems to contribute to hoarding situations because of housing being shared.

Discussed challenges when department comes upon these hoarding cases. Busy season is the warm months of the year. Capacity averages about 80 dogs and 102 cats on a daily basis. When animals come from hoarding cases, they are special needs and are health compromised.

Discussed adjudication of cases. If an owner is cited for cruelty or neglect, the cases can take months, or a year, or longer to adjudicate. The animals remain in the shelter waiting for the case to dissolve.

The needs that Animal Services has is the rescues to come to the table to help with these situations. Animals that shouldn't be returned to their neglectful owners should not be made available in Washoe County. Network with NHS, SPCA and Pet Network and rescue groups to help place animals into permanent, loving homes. Working on a plan when the animals are released from the DA's Office and/or owner to get the animals up for adoption and placed into an appropriate home.

Another struggle with Animal Services is enrichment, exercise and time. When large volumes of animals are involved that are part of a case, careful consideration is taken for the care of the animals. There isn't an exercise area for the animals, or long term enrichment. Shelters aren't set up for long term housing. Figuring out a plan for the animals for physical interaction for the time they are at WCRAS. Feels this is a huge weakness currently.

Third struggle is getting the cases adjudicated, heard, and resolved in a more expeditious fashion. The animals need the care and trying to figure out how to better meet the needs of the animals of the community.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Wants to know what can be done about the exercise

area?

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Agrees it's a difficult dilemma because there isn't a lot of room to grow for the facility. Areas for an exercise yard is challenging because of limited space.

Staff has been utilizing enrichment resources within the shelter system. The barn in the back is used by staff with some animals to let them smell and exercise. Discussed the possibility of a dog walk and park area proposed with NHS because of the location behind the old Reno shelter. Wants to further discussion joining forces and share that space for the critically needed animals.

Feels there will be suggestions from the ADISA assessment report that will discuss areas to consider having some redesign. Parking spaces can't be given up. Office space is limited. No where to grow for exercise area. Will continue to work towards some type of solution.

Animals microchipped were down 6% from this quarter last year. Is hopeful that getting back into the community that there will be more awareness. Also need a veterinarian to assist with vaccine clinics. Veterinary services are stretched to the limits. Looking into contracted services for vets to help on a monthly or rotational basis to assist with vaccine clinics and help with outreach events.

Prior to the pandemic, there were many more events and clinics. Working on getting back to that place to see microchipped and vaccinated animals.

Animal outcomes. Seeing a significant increase in numbers transferred to rescue this quarter over same quarter last year. Slightly decreased number of animals returned. Feels like the last two years of statistics are an anomaly – nothing to benchmark against or predict for the future because of the pandemic. The 38% of animals being transferred to rescue is significant.

Four animals died in this quarter while at WCRAS. 106 animals were euthanized. 315 were disposed of (deceased already). 1,070 transferred to rescue groups. 989 returned to owner. Total of 2,487 animals. The number of returns is 40%.

309 were returned in the field and deferred from having to be impounded and brought into the shelter. 683 were returned after impound. 69% of all animals returned. Hopeful to increase the numbers to get pets reunited with owners out in the field.

58% of animals that came in were returned by way of microchip. Announced she is giving a presentation at the Best Friends Animal Society Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina, regarding our microchip program and return to home percentages because we are a leader in our industry for number of animals returned. Credit to microchip program. 574 were returned by microchip out of a total of 989 animals.

Field services and calls. Over 6,000 field service calls last quarter. Stray animals calls is the highest volume of calls. Welfare calls come in at 809. Bite investigations is 628. Almost 600 noise complaints and over 400 unrestrained calls. Decrease in calls for service last quarter over prior quarter in last fiscal year.

Commented that there used to be a “slow time of year,” and that doesn’t occur any longer. Doesn’t seem to be a break in calls, services or demands. The complexity of the calls has changed. Example used of a loose animal call, then turning into a hoarding case, turns that one call into several weeks or months of time. Still has a big demand for field services.

Welfare calls. 262 welfare calls of which 98 were unfounded and 81 were charged. Struggling to keep up with the complexity of some of the calls.

Commented on the dog named Bowie who was a dog they got a call for a welfare check. His mouth was tied up and left in a crate in someone’s back yard. It started out as a cruelty case. When he was brought to WCRAS he was provided support and vet care. NHS highlighted Bowie’s story and he has been adopted. Heels and Hound fund raising event occurred in April and WCRAS and Bowie were invited. Sharing video to show his story.

(Played Bowie’s story on video to Advisory Board Members).

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Reiterated the Heels and Hounds event that also shared this story. Commented on the way the story unfolded and all the collaboration of all to give Bowie a good home.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Inquired about the previous owner of Bowie.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Indicated the previous owner was charged with animal cruelty. Attempted felony charges and those were reduced to misdemeanor charges. The hearing is upcoming, and the outcome remains to be seen.

MS. SWEET: Discussed outreach progress for the last quarter.

Discussed the seven events – vaccination clinics, pet food distribution, attending pet events. Handled a record 70 CARES referrals. Previous quarter was 42, and before that, 21. Also saw an increase in homeless who have pets that need vaccinations to enter the shelters.

90 spay/neuters. Program was paused in February to work out staffing logistics. Provided food to 288 seniors with pets. 606 vaccinations were provided at the low cost vaccination clinics.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Asked Ms. Sweet about the CARES program – is it the Washoe County CARES Campus.

MS. SWEET: Indicated they provide support to the CARES campus – similar names. Provides support to the CARES campus, also to our community, low income or homelessness, or older adults. Provides support for the CARES campus, Our Place and Safe Camp. Provides pet supplies, vaccinations, supplies, etc.

Provided an overview of upcoming events. Invited to the 20th Century Club lunch/fund raiser where \$300 was raised to help with emergency evacuation efforts. Partnered with United Way of Northern Nevada to do the first pet bagging event where 30 bags of food became 200 bags of food for the seniors. Another event is planned in May to do the same service.

Discussed two upcoming emergency evacuation and preparedness events coming up. Looking forward to educational outreach preparatory to disaster season.

Advised approval to participate with United Way of Northern Nevada for the Door Dash partnership so Door Dash drivers can pick up pet food and supplies to be delivered to clients for free. Order kits will be assembled shortly.

Planning very first horse microchipping event in June. Appears to be a lot of interest. Beginning stages of planning.

Pets of the Homeless Clinics provide vaccinations and microchips and vet support to pets of homeless is coming up.

Social media. In quarter 3, added 763 new followers. Posted 87 times.

Had over 18,000 reactions from the public. Approximately 260,000 were reached on posts, and posts were shared over 8,000 times. Commented that it has been a great resource for the community to glean knowledge of Animal Services.

Shared photographs of pet food bagging event. Appreciated the volunteers that helped with this event.

MEMBER McMAHON: Asked Ms. Sweet about the preparedness fairs and wondered how the information gets out to the community.

MS. SWEET: Specifically invited to the two upcoming events. Information is provided in newsletters and on social media. Some events were a little short notice, so it had to be pulled together. Also tries to put flyers in the lobby if notice is appropriate.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Asked about the seniors walking to the pet food distribution event and how did the seniors know the location of the event.

MS. SWEET: Commented that WCRAS works with the Senior Center and they set up there. Since the seniors are already coming for their food distribution to the Senior Center, the pet food distribution is added to the pick up. Advertising is provided directly to the seniors through the Senior Center. Meals on Wheels program also incorporates the pet food to the seniors who require the same.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Wanted to confirm if the social media platform was mainly Facebook.

MS. SWEET: At the moment, yes. Plans are to expand to Twitter and Instagram eventually.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Invited any more questions. Seeing none, thanked Ms. Sweet for her presentation.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Upcoming future topics. Disaster planning and training will have more updates the next meeting. The Washoe County Code updates, hoping to have more solidified information before the next meeting about the Dangerous Dog tentative schedule. Currently working on the staff report to go to BOCC with updates and have met individually with the Board to discuss changes. Bi-annual report. Will have more information at the next meeting about the tentative schedule.

Concludes Director's Report.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Inquired about fostering animals with WCRAS and wanted to know if veterinarians have something equivalent to a PA where microchipping could be done to alleviate the demand for a full time vet.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Confirmed that Animal Services does not have a foster program is because it is similar to the needs and complexity of a volunteer program and they don't have the capacity to manage it. Commented that NHS and SPCA does a great job with fosters and volunteers. WCRAS relies on any foster care needs to go through those agencies.

The majority of animals that come into Animal Services are owned animals, so putting them into foster care comes with some level of risk. Most are not adoptable animals that have already gone through a stray hold which is another reason that there isn't a demand for a foster care program.

The liability that comes with the animals owned by someone else and involved in an open case and putting those animals into foster care comes with a high level of risk.

Confirmed that a vet is needed because of the component of the rabies vaccinations, not for the microchipping component. Confirmed that a vet is not needed for the microchipping.

MEMBER McMAHON: Wondered if it is legal to foster pets that are still technically owner owned. But felt that the question had already been answered.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Indicated there would be a number of things to iron out in terms of risk versus benefit ratio of having a fostering program. There are a number of risks that come with a foster responsibility.

Reminded everyone that the next meeting is July 22nd at 9:30 a.m. Updates will be sent out. Asked for a five minute break.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Thanked Director Schull for a great presentation. Confirmed break until 11:15 a.m.

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BRIEF RECESS IN ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

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VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Resumes meeting of WCRAS Advisory Board.

6. INFORMATIONAL UPDATE ON PROFESSIONAL WCRAS FACILITY EVALUATION [Non-Action Item]

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Opened informational overview of WCRAS's direct and interagency animal handling operations, facility, field services, community outreach, and administrative policies, as concluded by the ADISA Group. Heather Cammisa CAWA presenting.

MS. CAMMISA: Commented on physician assistants in veterinary space is currently being worked on to address the veterinarian shortage of vets in the country.

Invited Director Schull to do an introduction.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Reminded everyone this was previously discussed that the ADISA assessment group took place in December to February with onsite assessment evaluations by members of the ADISA team.

Discussed that Ms. Cammisa will discuss comprehensive report that was compiled for WCRAS.

MS. CAMMISA: Discussed the report and will cover all items addressed in report.

Report format is compiled beginning with introduction of Ms. Cammisa and the other lead consultant, Dr. Josie Robertson, who is a vet with a specialty in shelter medicine. She works with shelters all over the world.

Discussed working with Director Shull and Tammy to meet budgetary constraints as well as a good picture of the overall organization. Report provides a summary of each area, the methods, how the organization was looked at, and detailed recommendations.

Ms. Cammisa's background was originally an economist. Ended up full-time in animal welfare. Has worked with shelters across Louisiana and Mississippi after Katrina hurricane. Most shelters in Louisiana are municipally run and work with national agencies. She has run two animal care/control agencies. She is a certified animal control

officer and animal cruelty investigator. Is also a certified animal welfare administrator.

Under Article 5 of the Professional Services Agreement, WCRAS has the obligation to exercise the degree of care, skill and diligence ordinarily provided by professional animal service organizations and the obligation to have individual operations evaluated by qualified organizations a minimum of every five years.

ADISA was brought in to provide that information to provide detailed and thorough recommendations for WCRAS.

Did a document review and managed to obtain documents and materials to ADISA. Also had two site visits. Dr. Robertson and Jasmine Johnson, a registered vet tech, visited in December, 2021, and Ms. Cammisa came in February, 2022. Positive updates and new personnel in place, working on important projects. ADISA was able to see how things were being worked on and how it was going.

In summary, report is reviewed and recapped. Also discussed bench marking data and that 72.8% of budget are staffing costs which is below bench mark data of peers. Will also discuss volunteer program being on hiatus and WCRAS is a leader on return to owner services.

ADISA provides recommendations after reviewing each area providing some factual information. Under each, folders and links are provided. Verbal conversations are had with the Director and Assistant Director on recommendations and tools and techniques.

Animal Flow and Pathway Planning. Discussed the five day stray hold, animals coming in. Observed all processes and data. Not a lot of out of area partners to take animals.

Decision Making Process. Applying layers of logistical planning with the animals so they most efficiently move through the intake procedure, the planning procedure, animal placement and housing.

Recommendations. Recommended more structure and specific pathway planning. Elevated to the level of the Assistant Director to help get it going. Materials provided.

Developing Targets. Track what they measure against. Recommended

putting some target length of stays for different populations, especially ones that don't immediately pass the evaluation of partners for intake, and do stay with WCRAS until they come back.

New pathway options for dogs that don't pass NHS evaluation. The reason is SPCA evaluation is similar, so they look for very similar dogs for those programs. There is a lot of work being done in this country for transport programs. Offer very specific opportunities to look into that to expand partnership level.

Housing. Selected in the facility. Identify and parsing up differently for outcomes to animals versus using open runs in some cases. The building is separated with some of the holds that the public doesn't see because it's a hold case. Maybe segregating the animals in the front areas differently.

Foster Program. Recommending that the animals that are awaiting the behavior evaluations – looking for opportunities to relieve space while supporting the animals.

Memorandums of Understanding. Commented on the opportunities from Maddies Fund that would provide a scholarship to a full mentorship of how to build up that program.

Also discussed not realizing there is a demand in another part of the country for animals that we may not have in our own area. Gave the example of Southern California which is overrun with Chihuahuas. Many shelters have people wanting homes for dogs in abundance elsewhere.

Intake Procedures. Recommend the standardized intake process. Separate dog and cat intake areas. Prioritizing intake of animals in the morning so animals are not left in overnight areas. Recommends vaccination on intake. Physical exams can be done later.

Commented on small procedures. Instead of bringing a group of cats in, bring one at a time. Cats are a challenged because when they're stressed, they're sick. Most cats have been exposed to a virus before coming in.

Providing training on performing physical exams. Creating a standardized process for maintaining intake areas. Inventory of supplies. Small opportunities for improving communication on the intake process.

Kennel Count and Description. Looked at the number, the size, evaluated portalizing. Cats get stressed when they have to live so close to their litter box and they don't have free space. Areas of the building allow for portals to create side by side areas which allow the feeding/resting area separate from litter box, giving them the choice, which reduces stress.

Play Yards. One small concrete pen next to the barn which is utilized under certain circumstances. Play yards are needed with the long holds.

Found surfaces to be cleanable, disinfectable, repeatedly.

Cat Housing. Some were tiny. Portals in one part of the building. Other parts didn't have portals. Discussed with team about some of the challenges. It's a facility issue which is already in progress to sort out.

Dog Housing. Dog runs are all the same size, similar construction. No tripping hazards for staff. Walls can be repeatedly cleaned and disinfected. Found everything to be in good repair. One issue highlighted in recommendations is there are a lot of missing drain covers which creates challenges.

Quarantine and Isolation Areas. Very important. Disease control is the name of the game. Rabies and sick Quarantine. Isolation areas for disease control.

Mammals and Exotics. Has some capability for handling smaller exotic animals in a designated area.

Large Animal and Poultry Areas. Great sense of pride in this facility.

Recommendations:

- * Opportunity to improve rabbit housing.
- * Making sure portals exist in all of the cat enclosures, especially the tight ones.
- * Prioritize covering drain covers.
- * Separate areas for feline intake and canine intake.

General Animal Care:

- * Sanitation Procedures. In flux while visit occurred. Moving toward the

gold standard of disinfection. Moving to what is the latest/greatest. Using bleach is hard on the animals, staff and facility. Needs a 10 minute contact time to do the job.

- * Feline areas. Spot cleaning. Don't want to strip every cage. Very stressful for the cat to have everything pulled out and washed. Where appropriate, use that system.

- * Sanitation for other areas. Trucks, equipment, bay in the back. Still operating under some of previous cleaning protocol that was not kept up with. Encouraged it to be integrated.

- * Nutrition and feeding animals. Found some discrepancy between what people thought based on different ages and SOP's. SOP's need to be kept up with.

- * Scheduling staff assignments in advance. Helps staff hit the ground running when they start their day knowing their tasks.

- * Veterinary services. Contracted with NHS for vet care. Fee schedule is provided.

- * Medical records. Use Chameleon as a software. Excellent software package designed for animal care and control. Vaccines were entered, but limited medical records being entered. Treatment for common diseases.

- * Disease recognition. Staff training.

- * Isolation of animals. There are two cat isolation rooms. Need to separate diseases for the cats. Utilize the rooms accordingly.

Discussed "Fear Free" handling of animals. Reducing the stress of the animals and paying attention to their behavioral health and well being is very important. Staff can attend for free.

Stress Reduction/Behavior and Enrichment. Mental stimulation for dogs. Needs to be an area where dogs can get away from other barking dogs. Reduce cortisol level. By bringing down the cortisol level, the animals learn better. Suggested a "lights out" at noon, a zen time. The reduction of an animal's stress level encourages a better animal behavior.

Recommends daily out of kennel exercise for the animals, especially those

staying beyond the shelter stray hold. Different situations will create different outcomes.

Custody and Quarantine. Discusses animal enrichment. Provided information of an architect who works with vet hospital and animal care and control agencies across the country to have a discussion about what could be done to create enrichment spaces.

Instituting a dog walking program for the dogs that remain longer than the five day hold period.

In cage enrichment. First visit, there was a little bit less. Second visit, there was a lot more, especially for the dogs.

How to reduce the stress on the cats. Information provided.

Community and customer service. Reiterated the Facebook page helps serve the community. Great information to help with the community events and get animals placed.

Front desk area broken out. It separates the types of inquiries and allows for more private conversations, if necessary. The Chameleon data base connects appropriately. The process works great.

Reclaim process. Commented that it was very smooth and efficient. Very respectful. WCRAS is a leader in the country for return to owner statistics. Of 6,569 stray animals impounded in fiscal year 2021, 70.3% were reclaimed. Unbelievably impressive. Microchip program, free ride home, and fix it ticket were commented on. 2021 data called Shelter Animals Count is the industry effort to collect data from across the country to view overall – regionally, and type of organization.

When a query of governmental agencies for Arizona, Utah and Nevada for 2021, the return to owner rate was 33.5%. 33.5% versus 70.3%. Many phase difference of what happens in other areas.

Community education. Information is provided on the website. Officers speak in the community. Good lost and found information. Disaster tips. Newsletter provides information.

Commented on partnering with other organizations on important messaging in the community – dogs in hot cars, etc. Public spay/neuter event was taking an

enormous amount of staff time. Currently on hiatus. Supports the hiatus until it can be explored to be more efficiently run.

Support in community is outstanding. Suggested learning how to keep people and pets together. How to reduce intake? How to solve problems? HASS participation should be continued.

Volunteer engagement. Recommends getting the volunteer program getting back up and running. Thinks it should be built slowly and properly, not just rolled back out. Offered a host of materials to support. Educating and supporting volunteer engagement leaders is a program called Energize. Extends a free scholarship process. Volunteers could help with social media pages, animal enrichment, cleaning the facility, a whole range of tasks that could be life changing for the staff.

Recommended a website audit. Suggested a third party person unfamiliar with all of it to assist.

Recommended expanding materials that are translated into Spanish. The animal surrender form was not available in Spanish.

Wildlife information. The organization used to be deeply involved with wildlife. It has gone another direction possibly out of a result how it was originally structured. Be the resource for the community. The National Animal Care and Control Agency supports and should not be taking in healthy wildlife. Work with the community to build education and understanding. Hopeful that the efforts of WCRAS will include the resources to do so. Build upon momentum. Thinks it would be helpful to have staff who was sweeping through all social media who could identify.

Keep spay/neuter events on pause. Restructure and relaunch volunteer program. Keep going with community outreach programs. Recommended Pets for Life for tools for community outreach.

Field services. Commented on a dedicated, well trained, well equipped team. Vehicles are fully functional – everything worked. Officers are checked on regularly. Everything is working as it should. Field officers go the extra mile.

Suggested a way for the field officers to reach NHS. There is so much information to share and communication should be offered for connection between the two entities.

Policies and Procedures. Made recommendations. Officers are well trained. Bringing in Code 3 associates. Outstanding agency to do animal rescue disaster response training. Commented on the events WCRAS is using Code 3.

Officer time is at a premium. Burdensome permitting processes around exotics and kennels. Fence repair. Working with DA's Office to try and get cases moved through faster. Fix it ticket and permit process. Feels the permits are really time consuming.

Hoarding is a psychological disorder. A limit law is not going to change hoarding in the community. Zoning, health guidelines and nuisance codes, can be addressed otherwise. Takes an enormous amount of officer time – at least 8 hours of officer time per initial application because they have four dogs. Recommending a hard look at the process to give the officers more time to do their work.

Hoarding cases are a big reported problem. Recommending doing a campaign like the dogs in hot car campaign. Consider Dr. Robertson do a session, bring in social workers, bring in emergency workers, and cross train and work together.

Recommend working with NHS to get the back line. Continue efforts to increase licensing ability through partners and new technology tools. Recommending working with Washoe County Sheriff and RPD to designate a liaison to work on cases and other things.

Discussed the group Red Rover that assists with cleaning during a disaster response. Based on California and have volunteers across the country. Train and certify staff.

Exotics. Not built to handle exotics. Need to go through permit process. If there's a problem with the process, it's more work on WCRAS.

Prepare facility disaster plan for WCRAS building.

Commented on a great staff at WCRAS and appreciated working together to provide a detailed and suggestive report.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Thanked the ADISA presentation.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Advised he needs to leave meeting. Complimented the ADISA presentation. Asked about prioritization.

MS. CAMMISA: Felt the disease recognition and staff training was a priority. Currently working with staff for the same. The behavior health and well being in some of the play yards and enrichment, is very important. The consistency and completion of updating some of the protocols. When different people are doing different things, you don't get where you want to go. The drain covers are important.

Also, some of the policy considerations would be helpful. Example is right now animals have to be taken in if rabies vaccine isn't current. Leaving that to officer discretion could possibly help keep animals in their home and not take up time/space.

Take a good look at prioritizing and consider offers made from ADISA.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Commented on the SOP's and that they are so critical. Wondered if there was a plan to do that.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Commented that the SOP's are part of the strategic plan. It has been a priority for the last 7 years, however, it is one of the most difficult things to get going and completed. Has started the prioritization process of which ones are most important by division area, and accepting feedback from ADISA about the oversight in medical care for animals. Disease recognition and feeding are at the top of the list. She will report further.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Thanked ADISA for a comprehensive and in-depth report. Commented on the spot cleaning for cats and how effective it was and wondered if it was true for dogs as well.

MS. CAMMISA: Commented that it is not as stressful for dogs to have the cleaning and disinfection and especially with taking in strays which will often have upset stomachs with the change of foods, etc. The recommendation for spot cleaning for the dogs in a really structured environment is not as stressful as it is for cats. Dogs can be put outside to clean and disinfect. The cats have to come out, possibly go in a carrier, while cage is cleaned. Very stressful on them.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Discussed that turning down the lights and the "zen" process with the dogs.

MS. CAMMISA: Suggested aroma therapy, audio, music, all found to be calming. Time with other dogs, being able to see another dog, is also calming. Time with humans, and out of cage time, petting the animal, calms them down and reduces the cortisol and creatinine ratios. Has been well researched and documented and is very

successful. There is certain music to be soothing and reduce stress in dogs in a kennel environment.

MS. BRUSSARD: Commented on her suggestion about disease recognition and also Options Vet Clinic using experience to recognize disease.

About the exotics, has it been discussed to partner with Animal Ark so the exotics can be taken care of? Is that possible?

DIRECTOR SCHULL: The reality of utilizing a sanctuary such as Animal Ark for animals that might come into care is on a case by case basis. But it's very unlikely that they would take in an outside animal and put their sanctuary animal to potential disease and upsetting the facility. Often times, they are at capacity and don't have the ability to take in any animals.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: The exotics like live wolves and coyotes, can Nevada Wildlife help?

DIRECTOR SCHULL: NDOW, Dept of Agriculture, and sometimes the federal level of government oversee particular animals. In some cases, they are completely prohibited, i.e., a coyote. Feels like WCRAS could tap into services if an emergency arose, but long term is not possible.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Commented on back line communication between WCRAS and NHS is confusing. Makes it apparent that the public doesn't have a clue.

D.A. GUSTAFSON: Commented that Paul Anderson has logged off. No longer have a quorum. She is also logging off. Go ahead and address Item No. 8 if they wanted to. Moving Item No. 7 to the next meeting.

MS. CIRONE: Wanted to know if she should keep recording since Member Anderson logged off.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Confirmed that the actual meeting concluded the second Member Anderson logged off.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Closed item of Item No. 6.

7. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS** [For possible action]

Will be addressed at next meeting.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT [Non-Action Item]

No public comment. Asked for suggestions for next meeting.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Asked Director Schull about the five year strategic plan and will it be included in the Executive Director's Report.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Confirmed the initiation of that. Last month was the first meeting. In terms of updates, it will be ongoing conversations and updates to all considering it's quite comprehensive.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Wondered if it needs to be a separate item on the agenda or in the regular report.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Will include in the Director's Report, but will highlight that it is part of the strategic plan. Plan for next meeting is to do a overview of what the strategic plan looks like and then additional items will be discussed each subsequent meeting as things are accomplished.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Inquired about the offer that Ms. Brown offered about the behind the scenes tour of Options Vet Clinic to the next agenda.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Suggested if the Board is interested in partaking in the offer, to do it individually so they don't have to call a meeting to do so because if they have a quorum then it's a meeting.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Wondered about the strategic plan.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Hasn't had an opportunity to digest the ADISA report because it was just received. Wanted to share with the Board to make it public and goals will be prioritized. A lot of things presented today have already been implemented or in the process of being implemented.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Confirmed that the drains will be addressed.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Discussed that prior to ADISA assessment, it has been a problem and a difficult time to find engineering to meet the need.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR WINES-JENNINGS: Indicated that the original drains that were built for the facility are plastic and they don't fit very well, so the dogs can pull them out and they chew them up. Need to find drain covers that are metal that they can't chew on that almost twist and stay in there. Kennel Supervisor is currently working on this issue.

Have already implemented the separate intake rooms for cats and dogs. The kennel staff has already taking Fear Free training that was recommended. Kennel Supervisor is already working with companies for new disinfectant discussed. It is expensive.

A lot of the recommendations have already taken place and added into the strategic plan so they can be kept track of. The lead caretaker has already started restructuring her behavioral program and has big charts set up with "scents of the days" and other things being worked on.

9. ADJOURNMENT [Non-Action Item]

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Since meeting has already been adjourned, extra portion has closed. Thanked all for attendance and participation.