

Washoe County Regional Animal Services Advisory Board

DRAFT OF MINUTES-SPECIAL MEETING

Monday, May 15, 2023 @ 9:30 a.m.
WASHOE COUNTY REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES
RENO CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
ONE E. FIRST STREET, RENO, NV
~VIA ZOOM TELECONFERENCE~

MEMBERS

Naomi Duerr (Chair)
Irene Payne (Vice Chair)
Paul Anderson
Jill Dobbs
Trudy Brussard
Julie McMahan
Mariluz Garcia

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: Naomi Duerr, Irene Payne, Jill Dobbs, Trudy Brussard, Julie McMahan, Paul Anderson, Mariluz Garcia (late).

ALSO PRESENT: Clerk Tom Schley, Director Shyanne Schull, Attorney Jennifer Gustafson.

ABSENT: None.

2. WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS BY ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD (ASAB) CHAIR NAOMI DUERR [Non-action item]

CHAIR DUERR: Opened initial discussion what the role of WCRAS Advisory Board's role is in the community. Focusing on ordinance improvement, shelter matrix, looking for ways to improve. Continued discussion about intake of animals and after the 5-day hold, the animal is transferred to Nevada Humane Society ("NHS"). NHS will then provide vaccinations and adoptions into the community. NHS is a critical partner with WCRAS. Commented on the continuity of care and working together between the two agencies.

Today's special meeting is to discuss possible improvements, recommendations and handling of the animals at NHS. Need to make sure the continuity of care is effectuated and is effective. All of the parts have to work together.

It is hopeful after the meeting that everyone will be more educated, will understand the current situation, provide advice for the future, which will result in accountability, transparency and make things better.

Discussed recap of the past three weeks on what has happened since last Advisory Board meeting. Confirmed relations with NHS was becoming more challenging and possibly hiring a facilitator to make things smoother. Approximately 30 letters of concern have been received in the last three weeks discussing operating issues and personnel.

Also discussed one NHS employee was fired and perhaps several volunteers were let go. Numerous media articles and attention has been drawn to NHS. Three NHS board members have resigned and the CEO resigned. New NHS board officers were selected.

Commented NHS has extended the olive branch for a BBQ, implementing tours within the facilities, to create a team environment. WCRAS is currently 85% full which is a dangerous level of occupancy. There needs to be room in capacity to be able to take in more animals.

Continued introduction of how to handle public comment. Chair Duerr and the clerk discussed public comment and additional correspondence received and provided to board members.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT [Non-action item]

MR. HOVORE: Edward Hovore introduced himself and was a former employee who worked at NHS. Further discussed caring for animals. (Audio is cutting out). Believes that NHS is an excellent shelter, however, the suggestions and/or criticism wasn't handled appropriately.

Further discussed Clay Johnson's letter who claims NHS is attempting to silent staff. (Audio cuts out). Feels like the complaints made should be seen as an opportunity to improve not as an attack.

If NHS was given the opportunity to work with the people complaining, they would have, and they could have. They chose not to. There is proof that NHS is mismanaged because the Special Meeting was scheduled.

MR. NELSON: Joel Nelson. Was suspended by Greg Hall as a volunteer in April for bringing complaints on record. His letter is on record, however, will share two suggestions on how NHS needs to restore trust in the community. Number one, appoint an interim CEO with shelter experience and animal care experience. Feels that the appointment of Bonney Brown is the perfect candidate for the CEO position and outlined her specifics and expertise.

Suggested a complete overhaul of the NHS Board. Currently, no board members have animal care or shelter experience. Commented that the remaining board members were all present while NHS decayed in the community. Feels the board members have lost trust with the community and need to step down. Asking for resignation from all board members.

MS. A' COSTA: Lauren A'costa. Was on the Board of Directors a long time ago and was part of the group that hired Greg Hall. Feels things ran fairly smoothly, but there's always been turnover at the shelter. Feels that Mr. Hall was a good candidate when initially hired, but perhaps his personal life created problems. She's glad he quit when he did.

Suggested that whoever does the hiring/recruiting for NHS, that one person can't do it all. Feels they need some animal shelter background, but the COO should also have the appropriate experience. A CEO needs organizational management experience and they should work together and be paid the same amount of money.

Discussed the volunteers who she feels they need to be praised and respected more. Wants to see two people hired for NHS.

MS. APARONES: Fran Aparones. Has been involved with NHS indirectly from 2004. Recalls Best Friends in Utah was contacted regarding how best to make NHS a true no kill shelter, so that not only do the animals come into the shelter, but they be adopted from the shelter. Community needs to be knowledgeable. She became an animal rights activist in 1984. Feels the Bylaws need to be accessed at all times.

MR. KIDD: Mitch Kidd. Was a volunteer dog walker at NHS. Started 8/10 years ago. Feels the friendly people left and were replaced by people who were more concerned with enforcing rules than getting animals adopted. They couldn't go back into the kennels. It required online application. Indicated the back kennels are all open and shouldn't have been made to have people apply to see the animals – more than enough room.

Discussed when one of his co-workers went to adopt a dog at NHS and the process was so terrible. He and his wife tried to adopt a dog with NHS, but it was so restrictive and unfriendly, so they went elsewhere. He stopped his volunteer services. NHS was more about control and following the rules than taking care of the animals. Quit volunteering about two years ago.

MS. HALKIN: Virginia Halkin. Has been a dog walker at NHS for 12 years, 3-5 days a week, 2-3 hours each day. Addressed a concern stated in an email that long-term volunteers are being looked at for complaints. Recalled an email from a fellow volunteer stating that dog walkers were incompetent to walk dogs. Volunteers because she loves the animals. Believes there should be more training, but the two people currently making complaints are not dog trainers, and are telling the volunteers they are doing something wrong.

Discussed the allegation of “being dragged by dogs.” She is not being dragged. The dogs are excited and want to get out, but not dragging. There were many more incidents and written complaints about the volunteers. She would prefer whoever is complaining to come and talk instead of writing complaints. Feels the animals were not mistreated. She still remains a volunteer and will continue.

MS. BECKER: Kim Becker. Has been involved with NHS for a long time. Can’t understand that if complaints have been coming in for three or four years, why is it brought up now? Feels that board members should take a tour once a month and talk to the employees, talk to CEO, talk to vets, and find out what is going on.

Discussed term limits for board members. Can’t understand how NHS imploded after it was considered an example in the United States. Feels it is because there are staff not educated in shelter business and animal shelter life. Thinks board members need to sign a document indicating they will go through NHS, talk to staff. So many of the employees need to be trained.

MS. JOHNSON: Jodi Johnson. Has been a volunteer at NHS for 10 years. Has interacted with almost all staff. Has a special needs dog. She was told initially she would need a foster to take over the care if she wanted to go on a vacation. Has tried many, many times to find someone to take her. The dog is 14 years old. Can never get a response when she’s looking for a volunteer to help her with a foster for her dog. She is considering other shelters because of how NHS is handled.

ZOOM PUBLIC COMMENT

MS. PERRY: Ardena Perry. Commented regarding Options being a vendor, going back to Bonney Brown. She would be happy to provide anyone with information. Commented that NHS is not doing its job, not following the PSA, avoiding public intake. The animals are suffering. Has previous administration photos of five dogs in a kennel. She read verbatim a letter from a Las Vegas shelter that had to kill 3,000 animals due to overcrowding.

MS. SHEPLEY: Cindy Shepley. Has been a foster for kittens and puppies for many years. Advocating for the shelter employees. The staff always steps up and takes care of the puppies and kittens by taking them home, resulting in no sleep and then reporting for work the next day to feed the bottle fed babies. Suggested support needed for the staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT

MS. BROWN: Bonney Brown. President of Humane Network and former Executive Director of NHS from 2007 to 2013. Addressed comments made by Ardena Perry. Discussed a case of Carrie wherein Ms. Perry intervened in the adoption of Carrie where the animal was drugged. A protective order was obtained against Ms. Perry who was coming to NHS knocking over water bowls, taking pictures, and egregiously adopting a dog under false pretenses, drugging the dog and having it euthanized because the dog had pannus. The case has been adjudicated and she has the records to provide to the board. Asked that Ms. Perry's comments be disregarded about no kill sheltering.

MS. GRIFFITH: Brittan Griffith. In 2021, she sought out a board seat with NHS. Served the term. Worked closely with the staff, foster team and vet services. Fostered several animals. Participated in several community animal fundraisers. Commented on the NHS staff and volunteers and was a terrific team to work with who built marketing campaigns, raised money, strengthened NHS as a whole. Commented that during board meetings, red flags began to arise. Lisa Felder, who lasted 10 months, and Rory Adams, who lasted 4 months, and then positions could not be filled. Vet staff was being lost. When Greg Hall was confronted, he indicated NHS staff were leaving due to inflation and seeking more pay. He also commented that women take his verbiage to be yelling or too assertive, but he feels he is passionate about NHS and isn't yelling. Indicated she is defending NHS staff and volunteers.

CHAIR DUERR: Reminding everyone what the purpose is of the meeting. Knows everyone cares about the animals. What matters is what we do next.

Discussed that the county entered into a Professional Services Agreement with NHS and with participation from Reno and Sparks, they built a joint facility. One of the requirements of the PSA was to have an audit every five years. Initially, the audit was to be together. ADISA was contacted and both sides of the house would be audited simultaneously by the same group. That did not occur.

NHS went on a different path. Washoe County hired ADISA and funded the entire cost. The findings were discussed previously. The last meeting is when the NHS audit was to be discussed because Mr. Hall did not attend the AB meeting. A special meeting notice was posted and the letters started coming in.

Announced Ray Gonzalez will present.

4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATE ON NEVADA HUMANE SOCIETY'S ("NHS") FACILITY ASSESSMENT AND CHANGES IMPLEMENTED IN RESPONSE TO FACILITY ASSESSMENT [Non-action item]

CHAIR DUERR: Introduced Ray Gonzalez who was appointed Chair of NHS.

MR. GONZALEZ: Commented on the previous speakers and a job well done. He is the newly elected and appointed Board President of NHS. Discussed the concerns raised with the letters, emails, etc., are genuinely appreciated and welcomed.

Commented that the problems are being taken seriously. The breakdowns in communication and standard procedures have been brought to attention and it is realized that more support is required to improve efficiencies and operations at NHS. Significant change needs to happen as soon as possible.

The assessment is only a starting point. There is a lot of work to be done. The health and wellness of the animals has to be the first priority. It has been recognized that a method for reporting concerns directly to the Board is a must. An email account has been created independently from NHS and anyone can email to: nevadahumanesocietyboard@gmail.com which will be provided to all board members so the complaints can be addressed when the Board meets.

Also working on a third party solution that will enable individuals to be able to report anonymous concerns from within NHS which will be routed to the Board. An evaluation of staff compensation has been approved. Wants to empower staff and provide appropriate skills and tools so they can perform their duties with professionalism and education. Approves audit practices to better strengthen NHS.

It is a must to have the Bylaws. Approves an Ad hoc Bylaws Review Committee for NHS, last amended in 2015. Outside individuals will be welcomed. Interim CEO will be brought in as of this meeting. Still working on national search for permanent CEO. The process has begun to add potential new Board Members.

Wants everyone to work together to ensure the animals are the first priority. Feels that what has transpired in the last two weeks is a blessing so the vision of NHS can be recognized and the mission can be carried out to be successful.

Introduces James Pumphrey, Executive Director, Wenatchee Valley Humane Society. He was the primary assessor during the assessment conducted for NHS in 2022.

CHAIR DUERR: Thanked Mr. Gonzalez for his passion and commitment. Asked for the information on the Interim CEO.

MR. GONZALEZ: Announced the Interim CEO for NHS, Jerleen Bryant, originally from Maui but lives in Reno.

CHAIR DUERR: Confirmed the search will be national for the CEO.

MR. GONZALEZ: Confirmed the crisis situation currently and needs someone with experience and who can work well with all staff.

CHAIR DUERR: Asked for questions from the Board.

MEMBER DOBBS: Wanted to know what NHS's official stance is and why Greg Hall didn't come to the last meeting. Very disrespectful to WCRAS and the Advisory Board.

MR. GONZALEZ: Indicated that Mr. Hall wasn't ready to give the presentation due to certain allegations being said.

MEMBER DOBBS: Wanted to know why communication wasn't provided.

MR. GONZALEZ: Relied on PR for information.

MEMBER DOBBS: Wanted confirmation that Mr. Gonzalez is committed to dramatically improving communication with the Board and WCRAS and the community from this point on.

MR. GONZALEZ: Indicated there was no other way to do it if direction is to be changed. Drastic commitment.

MEMBER DOBBS: Inquired as to public chat being turned off on zoom.

MR. SCHLEY: Confirmed. Comments are coming in and those will be given to the Advisory Board and posted later, but chat is closed.

MEMBER DOBBS: Wanted to know why it's turned off.

CHAIR DUERR: Indicated that in the public meetings, the chat is not on. People can speak publicly and raise their hand and speak. It's not helpful to have it enabled during public meetings.

MEMBER DOBBS: Reiterated the process. Requested to reserve the right to ask Mr. Gonzalez additional questions.

CHAIR DUERR: Introduced Mr. Pumphrey.

MR. PUMPHREY: Confirmed he did the assessment in February 24-25, 2022, as part of the Dave and Cheryl Duffield Foundation. The assessment is 41 pages, but will provide a quick overview based on the 90-day plan created.

The assessment was finalized in June of 2022. He returned to NHS in August of 2022 for follow up visit and update. The assessment is made to be a blueprint. Not all will be accomplished in one year.

The importance of impact focused on two primary areas. Important to have the right people in the right roles, the right Board and staff working together as partners. Does the direction match the focus? Are there the right people to undertake the work at hand? Is there balance between leadership and staff?

Managing how animals enter the care. Need to ensure they are evaluated on intake on what is needed. Supporting owners to keep/retain their pets whenever possible. Offering self-service rehoming. Scheduling intakes. Returning community cats to their home in the community.

The National Association of Animal Care Control indicates that all animal shelters replace their practice with an employment based system to include assessment and case management approach for all non-emergency requests. Recommendations are echoed.

Continued discussion re: assessment and protocols to take place. Removing bottlenecks that get in the way of an animal's outcome. Measure the length of stay daily, weekly, monthly and yearly. Length of stay is a crucial component to effective animal sheltering. The longer animals are housed, the fewer are able to be helped.

Remove barriers to outcomes. Prioritize reunification of animals to their original home, both Animal Control and NHS. Mandate open adoptions as a key organizational principal. Ensure non-biased adoption practices. Expand and facilitate adoption from foster.

Capacity for care is key for success. Implement all restrictions to adoption. Waive fees at 14 days length of stay. Organizational restructure. Facility re-do so that animal housing and offices be reorganized. Implementing an adaptive change management plan. Implementing disinfectant and spot cleaning. Improve animal welfare by decreasing stress and increasing choice for animals.

Key action items: Core learning opportunities through Maddie's Fund for the leadership team. Population rounds at NHS.

Adaptive change. Developing all staff communication plan. Making adaptive change a part of weekly progress review and team meetings.

Improving welfare. Double-sided housing and hiding spot for every housing unit, including temporary housing. Implement treat buckets. Replace food bowls with food puzzles. Measure fear, anxiety and stress scores daily. Measure behavior and medical daily monitor sheets.

Rescue and spot cleaning. Develop schedule on spot cleaning and deep cleaning. Create infectious disease prevention program which is key for a high intake shelter.

CHAIR DUERR: Opened for comment.

MEMBER DOBBS: Inquired about model protocols to share with the Board and Interim CEO so the training and animal care necessities can happen immediately.

MR. PUMPHREY: Indicated he had model protocols that he could share.

CHAIR DUERR: Opened for public comment.

MS. ANTONE: Nikki Antone, owner of Designing Destinies. Employment engagement consultant and certified with Gallop and uses the Q12 elements of engagement of assessment, as well as strength finders. Has been a consultant for five years.

Referenced to Duffield Assessment. NHS hired her in April of 2022 and she began EQ work to work on employee engagement. Continued to outline her tools used per recommendations.

Assessment was received in July of 2022. Made more formal recommendations for the team management skills and to refine tools for management. Helped to build management consistency. Indicated that the number one reason people leave organizations is because they don't have a development plan in place.

In September of 2022, she was hired to work with the C-Suite Group on management training. Reviewed management skills with team members to facilitate communication and collaboration. Process, development and accountability was instructed.

In January and February, she was hired again to train next level of management. In March and April, she was hired for a third round for up and coming talent.

Her contract has been extended due to Mr. Hall's resignation. Looking forward to collaborating and getting the groups together.

CHAIR DUERR: Inquired as to one of the letters that referenced tremendous turnover in the last year. Wondered if it felt like a revolving door in terms of training.

MS. ANTONE: Felt that a lot of employees felt they were in the wrong role when they started finding job descriptions. Leveled out and opened up communication to find the right role for the employee.

CHAIR DUERR: Wanted to know what change may have taken place since assessment. What has happened this last year in terms of progress?

MR. PUMPHREY: Indicated that NHS in collaboration with WCRAS should review the 90-day plan and assessment and make a time line to implement the recommendations. Did not observe progress during his August visit.

CHAIR DUERR: Asked about Ms. Bryant if she was in attendance. Mr. Gonzalez indicated she had a planned vacation and was not able to attend. She will return on the 23rd.

MR. GONZALEZ: Discussed adoptions remain steady with a slight increase. Currently at capacity for care due to the influx of kittens. As of 05/12/23, 742 animals on site and in foster were being cared for.

The employment engagement expert was redirected on focusing her time and efforts on developing a leadership plan and processes.

CHAIR DUERR: Asked about the 120 employees with NHS, split between Carson City and Reno.

MS. ANTONE: Indicated one-third are in Carson and two-thirds are in Reno.

CHAIR DUERR: Discussed the care and welfare of the animals. Wondered if kittens should be fostered out and not staff responsibility. Asked Director Schull for comment.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Agreed that fosters are vital to expanding the capacity of any animal shelter. Feels any kittens or puppies are definitely safer in a home/foster environment versus in a shelter. A valuable resource for any shelter to consider.

MEMBER McMAHON: Discussed her role as a foster for NHS and has kittens in her home since December of 2022. The foster situation is completely overwhelming.

MR. GONZALEZ: Commented on the learning experience, the amount of work that it takes fostering kittens.

MEMBER DOBBS: Commented on some things that need to happen very quickly in the 90-day plan. Wanted to know when it will be enacted because Washoe County is backing up. NHS is over capacity of care. WCRAS is approaching capacity of care. All rescue organizations are doing a lot. The 90-day plan needs to be to get all animals out of NHS. Adoption events need to be happening. Wants reasonable expectations for when WCRAS and community can expect things to take place.

MR. GONZALEZ: Indicated the 90-day plan cannot be postponed.

CHAIR DUERR: Doesn't want anyone taking any hits. All are focused on animal care. Maybe bring in the community to bring in experienced people, not necessarily ground zero.

MR. GONZALEZ: Cannot be a collaborative effort. It doesn't solve the situation. Not where we need to be. Not even close.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Voicing concerns that over the last year about working on improvements in the last year, and after a year, things are still off the rails. How did we get there? Why is it not better?

MR. GONZALEZ: Commented that sometimes it takes a few steps to go back to move forward.

MR. PUMPHREY: Commented that the assessment was done free of charge as part of Duffield Foundation. Follow up action plan was not to implement the changes, but to advise and assess for NHS. Did not participate in any way in terms of changes that needed to occur.

MS. ANTONE: Concurs with Mr. Pumphrey. She was hired as a consultant and not to actually manage the team, but to provide and teach the tools. The tools are only as good as the leadership team that takes it and runs with it, or doesn't.

CHAIR DUERR: Hopeful to have answers today.

MR. GONZALEZ: The accountability is the team.

MEMBER DOBBS: Has concerns about communication getting worse over the last year. Asked if Ms. Antone was staying in the building as well even with the Interim CEO appointed.

MS. ANTONE: Confirmed she is contracted for three years with employee engagements. Will be here for the next two years.

MEMBER DOBBS: Suggested regular meetings with Ms. Antone, Interim CEO, Director Schull and Assistant Director Tammi Jennings. Wants to ensure Director Schull is part of the conversation.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Requested clarification re: NHS capacity and the impact on WCRAS. What can be done to help because there could be very unpleasant challenges to address if a solution isn't created.

MS. GUSTAFSON: Agreed that it should be a topic for the next agenda item as well.

MR. GONZALEZ: Once people hear what is happening, response will happen. Capacity is an issue and public will help once it hears about it. Challenges everyone to put the message out.

CHAIR DUERR: Will have further recommendations. Asked for public comment.

(Member Garcia joined the meeting)

PUBLIC COMMENT

MS. WANG: Jodie Wang. Wanted to ask NHS will release its Conflict of Interest policy and will release all Director's Conflict of Interest forms so transparency can be had from the Board. Also wanted to know if Ms. Antone and Mr. Gonzalez knew each other prior to having been contracted for NHS work.

MS. SHEPLEY: Cyndi Shepley. Wanted to know if there was a short term solution for the staffing in both foster care and veterinarian staff.

MS. PERRY: Ardena Perry. Wanted to note Member Dobbs' comment re: NHS being over capacity. The difference between SPCA and NHS is that SPCA is not a designated intake facility. Her concern is Director Schull and County staff being able to meet requirements. Wants to see the County side of the building being able to have the correct air exchange. Cannot have finite resources and infinite input. It will not work. Her concern is protecting County agency and employees and the air intake. Needs to get Animal Control back on board.

MR. SCHLEY: No one else on zoom.

MS. McCREARY: Heather McCreary. Commented about Mr. Gonzalez being on the Board for three years and wondering why none of the red flags were brought up. Wants to know if Mr. Gonzalez has any animal background experience. Why hasn't it been addressed in the past? Where was a CEO found in a week? Have locals been asked

to contribute?

MS. BECKER: Kimberly Becker. Asked about letters and complaints. Nothing has been done. Why going out of town looking for help? Why were not the locals considered, the three women who have previously put NHS back together?

MS. BROWN: Bonney Brown, President of Humane Network in Reno and former Executive Director. One of the problems is it's not being looked at as a community effort. NHS has a problem with capacity for care. Community needs to be aware to move animals into good adoptive homes. Needs to be addressed immediately. Asking the community to keep an extremely close eye on what is about to happen and the history of the new Interim CEO and the handling of the Maui Animal Shelter in the past.

MAYOR SCHIEVE: Having anxiety hearing all the comments. Wants to know where is the relationship with Director Schull right now. Thanked Mr. Gonzalez, but wanted to know about the process of hiring the Interim CEO. Wants the people who are in the room and who are animal experts to be put on the Board.

Also concerned when consultant was brought on, nothing changed, and it is problematic. What do the next two years look like with consultant? Needs answers before everyone leaves today. Felt everyone knows and respects Ms. Brown, but doesn't know her personally. Also commented that the Interim CEO was on vacation and not in this meeting. Action needs to be taken today because crisis is coming.

Commented on a photograph she received that is alarming. People who are experienced in animal welfare need to be retained on the Board.

MR. NELSON: Joel Nelson. Commented on Interim CEO and that showing up is 90% of the job. Not off to a good start where she is on vacation, however, Ms. Brown is in attendance.

Discussed assessment report, paragraph 3, "... complaints from local community members were reviewed" a year ago and Mr. Gonzalez said he has no knowledge. Why?

Wanted to know about the relationship between Ms. Antone and Mr. Gonzalez who both worked at Wells Fargo at the same time, and did they have a romantic relationship.

Investment fees indicates \$96,500. Where are the investments? Who is the custodian of the investments? Who is the advisor of the investments? What specific

asset classes are the investments? What is the performance and/or management fees associated with the investments?

CHAIR DUERR: Will close out public comment after the last one. Will see if Ms. Antone, Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Pumphrey will answer questions.

MS. HELICAN: Virginia Helican. Addressed concerns about SPCA and NHS being overwhelmed with animals. Feels care can't be judged with care when they are overwhelmed, and with lack of resources. More staff and more help is needed.

When surrendering animals, the reasons are ridiculous. So many are being abandoned. People can't foster. People can't adopt. Volunteers are adopting and fostering. But due to economy and due to lack of resources in the community, it is very difficult. Can't "reach out to the community" because they are the people who are abandoning and surrendering the animals. How much of outreach can be done? Can't attack personally. Need to come together.

CHAIR DUERR: Commented that the staff who left in the last year or two were good people with good skills. Maybe they can be encouraged to come back.

Asked Mr. Gonzalez who the next most senior manager is at NHS?

MS. ANTONE: Customer Service gal, Tatum. Taylor and Stacey Sanchez. She feels Ms. Sanchez is the most qualified when it comes to animal care. Only works there five hours a week. Now works 10 hours a week. Doesn't know animal welfare.

CHAIR DUERR: Taylor, Tatum and Stacey are who are running it right now. Suggested in addition to Ms. Antone, an animal expert is needed to fill in that would compliment management.

MS. ANTONE: Answered the question if she and Mr. Gonzalez knew each other. She retired from Wells Fargo in 2015 and did not meet Ray Gonzalez until a few months ago. Absolutely denied a relationship. Didn't know him before.

MR. GONZALEZ: Doesn't think it's a problem to release Conflict of Interest Statements. Needs the public to feel comfortable and have transparency. If it's not provided, it will be an issue.

Discussed animal expertise on the Board. Would love to have Jill Dobbs on the Board. Has spent a lot of time with the ex CEO re: success and empowering staff. The

Interim CEO lives here. She has 17 years of experience in non-profit management, development implementation, operational assessments and consulting. Won't bring in someone who doesn't have experience.

CHAIR DUERR: Commented that there is a lot of support for Bonney Brown in the community. Suggested she would be a good add to the Board. Member Dobbs is full time over at SPCA. Chair Duerr is full time Council Member on 14 Boards.

MR. GONZALEZ: His plan was to meet with Bonney Brown.

MEMBER DOBBS: Wants to clarify the Conflict of Interest policy and how it pertains specifically to non-profit organizations. The 990 tax statement requires that non-profits have a Conflict of Interest policy in place. Every Board Member has to submit their own statement of interest which is how you determine how you have an interested or uninterested Director.

Has been on the Board since inception. She is terming off. She will be available to sit on NHS Board.

MR. GONZALEZ: Commented that the Board would be honored. (Audio issues - cut out).

CHAIR DUERR: Commented that Jill Dobbs and Bonney Brown are potential new Board Members pending review and application process. It would inspire the community. Asked for any final Board comments re: NHS assessment. Suggested that the NHS website include Board Member's contact information, conflict forms, Bylaws, etc.

Wanted to know if a 45 minute break would be acceptable. Decided on 30 minutes and will return at 12:45 p.m.

MR. GONZALEZ: Wanted Mr. Pumphrey to return.

MR. PUMPHREY: Cannot return at 12:45. Wanted to congratulate the Board on Interim CEO Bryant. The comments regarding Maui Humane Society do not accurately depict the current status.

CHAIR DUERR: Confirmed recess until 12:45 p.m.

**** MEETING BACK IN SESSION ****

CHAIR DUERR: Welcome back.

5. REVIEW AND POSSIBLE DISCUSSION OF CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BY THE ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD (“ASAB”) FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC RELATED TO ANIMAL CARE AND OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS BETWEEN WASHOE COUNTY REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES (“WCRAS”) AND THE NEVADA HUMANE SOCIETY (“NHS); IDENTIFICATION OF CONCERNS/ISSUES RELATED TO NHS THAT ARE IMPACTING WCRAS OPERATIONS; AND DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS TO WCRAS TO INCREASE OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS BETWEEN WCRAS AND NHS AND/OR IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR ANIMALS IN WASHOE COUNTY [For Possible Action]

CHAIR DUERR: Commented to keeping it as is, modifying the PSA or terminating it. It would all be advice to the County and AS Director. Reno and Sparks have contracted with the County to provide animal services.

Discussed comments received. Approximately 30 letters have been received re: tense working conditions under Mr. Hall, unnecessary euthanasia, excessive drugging of dogs, incredible turnover that is higher than normal.

One of the concerns of the assessment was the 90-day plan, but it hadn't been started. A lot of catching up to do. Some complaints focused on operational problems. A complaint has been filed with the AG's office and possibly IRS. Financial issues are being looked at but not being commented on now.

Asked for recommendations for NHS and/or Animal Services going forward.

MEMBER DOBBS: Suggested a committee be convened to really look at the PSA. It is a complicated relationship, complicated business. There needs to be additional time to bring parties together to review. Asking for the Board and Director Schull's feedback on items.

CHAIR DUERR: Wanted clarification of separate committee including Board Members, or other.

MEMBER DOBBS: Thought maybe a subcommittee of this Board with Director Schull and additional operations staff, with NHS leadership representation. Has specific items she would like Director Schull's feedback on. Thinks there are things that need to be done immediately. The subcommittee would make additional changes and revisions and update antiquated language.

Comments on PSA revisions. Require more things from NHS. How do we hold accountability? This is not the first time that the relationship with NHS hasn't worked. Requiring to communicate through email to WCRAS Director and Assistant Director, any leadership changes in NHS that impact Washoe County's job to communicate accordingly. Big issue in the last couple of years. Changes need to be communicated to WCRAS leadership. Provide WCRAS governance documents, including all revision updates, and any other protocol or policy upon request – anything that will impact the flow.

Discussed monthly statistic reports that are submitted must be an added condition of the PSA to also share with WCRAS. Strongly encourage they be made public.

Operations info and statistics within 10 days, when requested. The lengthy responses are not acceptable.

Wants to see a provision added re: commitment to diversity and inclusion, in not only hiring practices but serving the community as well.

Regular meetings. These are all in addition to the report.

Feels a lot of additional work can be done to benefit the community.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Wants to make sure there are also employees from NHS as well as someone from the Board of Directors for range of input on what information people need. Believes PR in the past has been fantastic. Feels the upcoming series of meetings are going to require a lot of PR repair from both teams.

CHAIR DUERR: Inquired if Animal Services has taken a hit as well.

MEMBER McMAHON: Discussed the assessment. Concern is why is it almost a year later that even the simplest recommendations from the assessment have not even happened. Would like to recommend is a tangible action plan of implementation of those first 90-day recommendations.

Also discussed surrender animals. The assessment suggested everything be done through appointment, as in surrender or adoption. Feels the appointment system failed the community in that owners on the surrender side are waiting months to be considered to surrender their animals which puts them in dire situations. It puts Washoe County in situations where families are falsifying information indicating stray versus owned and/or putting owners in situations where their own animals are in unnecessary risk.

Suggested if the appointment systems are going to be implemented, the structure be looked at and see how they can be more efficient.

Also mentioned public comment about excessive use of medication on animals related to keeping them comfortable. Discussed the five freedoms for animals. If animals are needing medication to be comfortable, the environment needs to be looked at, not just the animal.

CHAIR DUERR: Also concerned. Did research on national statistics and read 40% of animals were on some kind of drug. Not acceptable. Adopting and returning is discussed. A tremendous strain on staff resources.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Reiterated significant damage to NHS reputation. Suggested a conscious effort to launch comprehensive PR communications plan to share information about upcoming plan and progress. Need to win the donors back.

CHAIR DUERR: Agrees it's the first step.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Agrees to be brave and honest enough for NHS to acknowledge they messed up and inform community what new things are to come.

CHAIR DUERR: Confidence in Animal Services also lost.

MEMBER GARCIA: Overwhelming to see the letters and try to understand from operational level. Wants to focus recommendations on rebuilding lines of communication.

MEMBER DOBBS: Agrees about the positive comments but agrees the PSA needs to be working and it needs to be updated as necessary.

CHAIR DUERR: Worried about the next 10 days, and next 10 years. Suggest to hire Interim COO who could manage the day-to-day immediately. Doesn't want to deal with another crisis. The COO and CEO could work together to cover the ground.

Also maybe add temporary employees to do basic things. Thinks NHS has enough cash to cover a summer of temporary employees. And to get them trained would be to rehire who was training the employees and volunteers. A contract needs to be done.

Feels inspired is to consider having Bonney and Jill Dobbs come on the Board.

Suggested an agenda item with NHS on standing agenda items. Asked if the Board would be interested in having a meeting for purposes of checking in with NHS to see how things are going. Suggested a special meeting after the next Advisory Board meeting to provide some ability for the public to come and comment.

MEMBER DOBBS: Agrees with Chair Duerr's suggestion about an additional special meeting. Also highly encouraged NHS Board to conduct town hall meetings on a monthly basis.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Agrees with more meetings. Feels it would be negligent not to meet more frequently to make sure things are followed up and supporting the community.

Also wanted to know who at NHS has the authority to hire? If there isn't someone, there needs to be. They need to have succession plan in place.

MS. ANTONE: Indicated she has approval to open jobs, get things facilitated. Has been told to hold off on any hiring until a CEO got in. Has been approved for posting. There is an HR assistant.

CHAIR DUERR: Commented on earlier comments in the meeting. All information is being shared. Needs to be a middle ground. It's what we do more than what we say.

MR. GONZALEZ: Wanted to clear up Bylaws and eligibility language for members or employees.

MEMBER DOBBS: Agrees. A lot of other large non-profits have their Advisory Board outside their Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is smaller and then have Advisory Board. Or consider revising Bylaws. Or open up part of Board Meeting to different outside advisory members and keep the more confidential stuff.

CHAIR DUERR: Also suggested ad hoc board members that are non-voting.

MEMBER GARCIA: Inquired if even as a body if it is within the purview to put out those ideas.

MS. GUSTAFSON: Confirmed she is talking about the scope of the Advisory Board's authority. The scope is to make recommendations to the County department, to Animal Services.

Also, commented on Member Dobbs subcommittee suggestion which gets a little tricky from an open meeting law perspective. All subcommittees are subject to the open meeting law. A brand new board and brand new public body would be created with a subcommittee.

CHAIR DUERR: Reiterates the Advisory Board's role is to potentially modify the Professional Services Agreement, put in metrics or other things that will demonstrate that changes have happened. Another option is to terminate the contract and move on with a different contractor.

Commented that making an actual motion on what's been discussed would be very tough. Suggested that the Interim CEO listen to the audio of today's meeting.

MS. GUSTAFSON: Commented that a motion doesn't have to be made.

MEMBER DOBBS: Wanted to clarify open meeting law. Clarified that the committee to work on the PSA as an ongoing, it would be outside of the Advisory Board. Would be more effective and efficient of everyone's time.

CHAIR DUERR: Agrees that most of the suggestions were aimed at NHS and doesn't know if specific recommendations can be made.

MS. BROWN: Bonney Brown. Appreciates the Bylaws being interpreted in a variety of a different ways, however, sat in NHS Board meetings for seven years. Agrees the Board needs to look at transparency. Conflicts of Interest are supposed to be disclosed and the Minutes have to indicate when such a topic comes up and how the Board managed that particular conflict.

Also suggested the letters be released.

CHAIR DUERR: Discussed the variety of how the letters were received. Those received within two hours of this meeting will be posted. Those that come in later will be posted for the next meeting.

MS. WANG: Jodie Wang. Wanted to reiterate about who manages the \$14 million in investments and who received the \$96,000 in management fees. Will Conflict of Interest be posted on website. Had previously asked if any contracts would be released that were made with past or present members of the Board. In the interest of transparency, she thinks it should be known when Board members have benefitted financially.

MR. GONZALEZ: Responded to Jodie Wang's question about the wealth management of the assets. (Audio cutting out). Will have someone look at the wealth management perspective but also put together a plan given strategy, how to engage donors. He sits on the fundraising committee. NHS is an \$8 million dollar budget organization. If donors aren't obtained, they don't have the ability to provide services and resources. It takes money to make money.

CHAIR DUERR: Wanted clarification if a fee would be charged for management.

MR. GONZALEZ: Indicated it would not be with Wells Fargo as it would be considered a conflict of interest.

CHAIR DUERR: Agreed that it should be cleared up.

MR. GONZALEZ: Doesn't have an answer about releasing the contracts. But anything that is supposed to be public should be on the website. Transparency is huge for the donors.

CHAIR DUERR: Doesn't believe there is a requirement in the non-profit world to publish those. It would take a step further to remediate the reputation.

MR. GONZALEZ: Answers should be given to the questions and that's where the real work gets done.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Makes a motion that Director Schull makes the Minutes and the video from this meeting available to the new NHS CEO when they assume the position for their consideration.

MEMBER GARCIA: Seconded.

CHAIR DUERR: Commented that an email from Director Schull will indicate to the new CEO to review Minutes and video.

Motion passes unanimously.

MEMBER DOBBS: Made a motion and reiterated to Director Schull to create a committee to evaluate the PSA with NHS.

MEMBER McMAHON: Seconded.

CHAIR DUERR: Motion passes unanimously.

MS. GUSTAFSON: Indicated that the Bylaws from the Advisory Board allow the Chair to call special meetings as needed.

CHAIR DUERR: Confirmed she will call a special meeting in between a regular meeting. Wanted to know if there is anything that the Advisory Board or Animal Services can do to help NHS through the next period. Discussed additional options as to who could provide additional help and/or cross training.

MR. GONZALEZ: Agrees there is tremendous resources and expertise available. The Interim CEO doesn't start on 05/23/23. Also, the Interim CEO has to have direct communication with Director Schull.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Agrees that communication is extremely important with the dynamics in place. Feels WCRAS and NHS need to put communication first.

MR. GONZALEZ: Wants to know what is needed from the Board immediately.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Feels very active steps are being taken immediately. The involvement from the Board is crucial and more day-to-day understanding and more of an open dialogue between the two entities.

MR. GONZALEZ: The CEO has a duty to hire the COO. Looking forward to what the future has to bring. Has such passion for what can happen.

CHAIR DUERR: Closes out item.

6. DISCUSSION OF WASHOE COUNTY REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES (“WCRAS”) PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO 2015 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT (“PSA”) BETWEEN WASHOE COUNTY AND THE NEVADA HUMANE SOCIETY (“NHS”) [For Possible Action]

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Prefaced the discussion about WCRAS and NHS partnership. Tries to keep in mind what the taxpayer need to see and the success for the partnership. Will provide suggestions as to how to improve the operations and the partnership. Will discuss specific sections of the PSA.

Standards of Performance. Does not currently exist in the PSA, but is recommending addition to the PSA. Outlines the professional quality and technical accuracy of all services provided within Washoe County. NHS shall comply with all federal, state and local laws and regulations applicable to the performance of the PSA.

CHAIR DUERR: Asked for an example of a federal, state or local law.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: An example of animal welfare would be specific things that require care provided for animals that might fall under the animal cruelty section of NRS. Want to make sure all laws are being adhered to for treatment and care.

The hope is to have collaborative discussion with NHS. It is not just a unilateral decision.

Article 3.1 relates to adoptable animals. Currently, NHS has first choice of animals released by WCRAS. Proposing that due to challenges about capacity that parameters are created to protect capacity and the animals that need to be made available to other partners. If the number exceeds 15 cats or dogs, the first right of refusal no longer applies to NHS which allows the adoption potential be opened up to other partners.

If capacity reaches 85% or 85 adult dogs or 50 adult cats, the first right of refusal no longer applies to NHS to open up animals to other adoption partners.

CHAIR DUERR: Feels that NHS may be relieved for this amendment.

MEMBER DOBBS: Wanted to know why the 2-tier approach as opposed to the 48-hour suggestion.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: A protocol has been implemented to create a 48-hour transfer rule and NHS has to make a decision. If no decision made, then the other partners are welcome to come in and adopt. Never exercised or implemented in the prior months. Feels that the rule needs to be able to be overridden.

MEMBER McMAHON: Wanted clarification that both options were still on the table.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Confirmed.

Article 3.2, Animal Licensing. Currently, NHS agrees to direct new owners to WCRAS to license a dog, as is required by ordinance. Suggesting to increase the licensing rate in the community, but also interested in reunification. Wants to see Washoe County adopt a free license into the fee schedule for every adoption. Wants the animal license to go home with the pet.

NHS to provide a monthly rabies vaccination report to Animal Services on each animal that goes through adoption or vaccination program. It has not occurred in the last three years since NHS switched data bases.

CHAIR DUERR: Wanted to know if it was a requirement that rabies vaccinations be recorded somewhere.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Confirmed it is a requirement.

Article 3.3, Owner Surrendered Animals. Currently, NHS accepts owner surrendered animals and is responsible for euthanasia if they are deemed unadoptable. Preference is given to Washoe County residents. The discussion about appointment based surrenders is well understood from her perspective. Wants to put parameters of 10 days around the time for someone to hold onto a surrender.

Article 3.12, Pound Seizures. Suggesting to omit particular language of not allowing release of animals scheduled to be euthanized for purposes of tech training.

Article 5, Standard of Care. Currently, both parties exercise the degree of care, skill and diligence ordinarily provided by professional animal services organizations under similar circumstances. New goal is for more clear parameters and actions that can be taken if one of the two entities is not performing their functions. Results and actions should be made public by both entities. Quarterly progress should be shared as well.

Article 5.2, Evaluation of Facility. Both parties currently have the opportunity to pick own assessment organization every five years. Feels it would be extremely valuable to have the same firm conduct the assessment and it should be put in the PSA. NHS and WCRAS agree to make assessment report public and agree to publicly share quarterly progress reports.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Commented on the pound seizures and wanted to know if it was covered somewhere else. Feels it should be incorporated in some form.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Doesn't recall if it is somewhere else but the new committee to work on the PSA can look into.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Also inquired about the adoption with residents outside the area and the licensing would not apply.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: The bulk of dogs adopted do live in Washoe County and it is valuable information lost the moment they walk out the door.

CHAIR DUERR: The idea is to get licensed on the spot.

DIRECTOR SCHULL: Agreed. The PSA language will relate to NHS specifically. But WCRAS is working on partnering with SPCA, Pet Network, etc., so every dog that gets adopted in Washoe County goes home with a free tag.

MS. PERRY: Ardena Perry. Excellent changes to the PSA. Commented on Member Brussard's question about the pound seizures.

CHAIR DUERR: Requested motion.

MEMBER DOBBS: Motion made to recommend Director Schull to adopt changes as stated in the presentation.

VICE CHAIR PAYNE: Seconded.

MEMBER BRUSSARD: Wanted clarification on language.

CHAIR DUERR: Motion passes unanimously.

7. WASHOE COUNTY REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS AND/OR STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS, REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION AND SELECTION OF TOPICS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS [Non-action Item]

CHAIR DUERR: Will request a special meeting every other meeting for the upcoming year. Requesting Director Schull prepare a proposed meeting schedule to accomplish the same.

MEMBER McMAHON: Inquired about administrative change and structure from the top down. Feels a lot of comments were directed to customer relations, client handling and volunteer handling, which is all the heart of everything. Reminded everyone to not forget about the team.

MR. FESTA: Steven Festa. Newest board member of NHS. Joined earlier this year. Moving forward things will be about the welfare of the animals and the welfare of the staff, not just the leadership at the very top. Doesn't want to hire in leadership positions that doesn't have the proper empathy for the staff.

CHAIR DUERR: Closes out item.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT [Non-action Item]

CHAIR DUERR: Asked for final public comment.

MS. BECKER: Kim Becker. Complimented Director Schull on a tremendous job.

9. ADJOURNMENT [Non-Action Item]

CHAIR DUERR: Thanked everyone for their participation. Declares meeting adjourned.