

Oconee County Animal Services Advisory Board

Minutes

Wednesday, October 4, 2024

Animal Services Conference Room, 6:00 pm

1. Call to Order-6:01 pm by President Melodie Brooks

Present: Manager Crystal Berisko

Member: Terry Ruffen

Member: Fran Leathers

Member: Kelsey Fox

Member: Nancy Baumann

Guest: Nathalee Simoneau

Guest: Angie Eades

Guest: Nina Wingrove

2. Approval of July 10, 2024 minutes

Motion to approve made by Kelsey Fox. Seconded by Fran Leathers

Minutes were approved

3. Public Comments

None

4. Manager of Animal Services Updates-Crystal Berisko

Budget: Budget going well so far. Effective October 1, 2024, Spay and Neuter prices will be increased. Dogs weighing 2-99 pounds will cost \$150. Dogs weighing 100 pounds and over will cost \$225. On July 1, 2025, Spay and Neuter price will increase to \$175. Spay and Neuter for cats will be \$90. A budget amendment at midyear will be necessary to help cover the increase in spay and neuter fees. A capital fundraising

campaign, a mobile spay/neuter van, and requesting Oconee County to increase funding is necessary to address the spay/neuter cost increases. Projects: Pricing for the Interactive Areas (formerly Livestock area) is between \$2100-\$2300. Request will be made for donations of materials. Oconee County is doing an overhaul on cameras. Add Oconee County Animal Services camera request with the rest of the county. Cameras will include facial recognition, tag reader and many additional features. Oconee County Management Analyst Tristen Thomas has provided helpful and easy-to-read statistics on cats and dogs. Crystal will request Tristen to help retrieve data from Pet Point.

Ordinance: Crystal is requesting a Mandatory Spay and Neuter for outside cats. The County Attorney will review this proposal.

Statistics for July 1, 2024-October 2, 2024

Intakes: 195

Stray: 150

Owner Surrender: 32

Return: 10

Clinic: 1

Transfer in: 1

Seized: 1

Outcomes

Adoptions: 137

Clinic Out: 1

Died: 2

DOA: 2

Euthanasia: 23

RTO: 10

Transfer Out: 87

5. Events

October 12-Friends of OCAS & Pack Hike Volunteers: WoofGang
Bakery Adoption Event at Wire Park

October 18-Friends of OCAS Event at Bank South 2-5 pm

October 21-27-PETSMART NATIONAL ADOPTION WEEK

Michelle will be present during the week for Cat adoptions.

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday will be Dog Adoptions. Volunteer help is requested for Dog Adoptions.

November 2-Friends of OCAS is hosting a Drive-through Rabies clinic at
Athens Seed and Lawn

FRIENDS of OCAS UPCOMING EVENTS

United Community Bank-Adoption Event

Rescue Paws-Adoption Event

Akademia Brewing-Fundraiser Event

Santa Paws-Fundraiser Event

Other

On October 26, Bar G is holding a Customer Appreciation Day to raise funds for OCAS.

Michelle W. is doing an excellent job at PetSmart. She is helping with adoptions. This position may not be permanently funded.

Kelsey Fox is doing an outstanding job reaching out to rescues. She reports that rescue groups love OCAS.

Crystal is holding new volunteer training before any offsite events on October 4 from 10-12pm at OCAS. This training is for new volunteers before offsite events. Training is mandatory before an animal may be taken to an offsite event. Training includes: how to properly fit for a

collar, body language, working within your comfort and experience level, how to approach a dog, and safe distance and separation.

New Volunteer Training with Adrianna, Georgia dog trainer, will provide leash walking and reactivity. Training will be held on Saturday, October 19 at either 9 or 10 am.

Signs on kennels display who can go on Pack Hikes and other important information which must be followed. Recently signs have been ignored especially when the staff has given directions to volunteers. Volunteers must NOT arrive before 12 noon as this is cleaning time. Volunteers must show respect to the staff.

Grant: Best Friends-Rachael Ray Saves them all Grant. Purpose is to close the lifesaving gap. Crystal can apply for up to \$50,000. She will submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) by October 15. She will be talking to her regional strategist regarding the Save Them All project. Her idea is for another contract labor position for Adoption & Rescue Coordinator, and advertising and marketing materials.

Crystal is striving to educate the community on the importance of spay/neuter and microchipping their pet(s). She is trying to keep the cost of these services low so owners will be able to spay, neuter, and microchip. Friends of OCAS is holding rabies vaccinations for owners. Crystal and her staff work to socialize animals to help them become more adoptable. Statistics prove this by having the number of animals being euthanized and positive outcomes drop significantly from 6/1/2018-9/30/2024. Intakes went from 6,058 to positive outcomes of 5,189. Euthanasia went from 1,805 in years 6/1/2012-6/1/2018 to 570 in years 6/1/2018-9/30/2024. Education of the public and community events promote adoption of animals needing homes. Crystal and her team strive to maintain a 90% or greater placement. Philosophy is that every adoptable animal makes it out.

6. Meeting Dates: 2/5/24

This is the start of the Budget season.

7. New Business

Michelle W. at PetSmart contract ends in January 2025. Crystal will request money from the Board to be added to the budget for this position. Grant funding is needed for Michelle's position.

Kelsey Fox gave an update on the 320 by 40 interaction pens in the Ag area. Fencing the area will provide a bigger area for animals to run around and for adopters to be able to meet pets.

Chelsea Grayson, new administrative assistant is doing a good job.

Spring Flea Market-fund-raiser with hot dogs and hamburgers. Invite Marine recruits to assist with activities. A good time to clean out the barn of items.

Athens Area Humane Society is helping in North Carolina after Hurricane Helene. OCAS could be a back-up shelter for cats.

8. Closing Comments

Kristina and Abbie held a sleep-over during the night of the storm related to Hurricane Helene. Power was not lost until the next morning when Crystal arrived. All pets slept well.

The Laundry service is working very well.

Pack Hikes are the first Saturday of every month.

Fran Leathers asked about new orientation for board members.

9. Adjournment

Kelsey Fox called for the meeting to adjourn at 7:02

Terri Ruffin seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Baumann