

City of San Antonio



Animal Care Services Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 17, 2024 5:55 PM
4710 State Hwy 151, San Antonio, TX 78227

I. Call to Order:

Board Chair Braeutigam called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call:

Present: Amin Tohmaz (Mayor), Charlene Ducote (Dist. 1), George Garcia (Dist. 3), Rita Braeutigam - Chair (Dist. 4), Karen Speer - Secretary (Dist. 5), Kathleen Davis (Dist. 6), Valerie Moore (Dist. 7), Katie Jarl (Dist. 8), Susan Beldon – Vice Chair (Dist. 9), Sallie Scott (Dist. 10)
Ex-Officio Member: Shannon Sims

Absent: Lorena Havill (Dist. 2),
Ex-Officio Members: Dr. Marilyn Gotbeter, David McCary

Ex-Officio Member McCary arrived at 6:01pm

Ex-Officio Member Gotbeter arrived at 6:29pm

III. Chair's Statement

IV. Director's Report

Animal Care Services Director, Shannon Sims, discussed the recent response to the winter storm. He mentioned that ACS supported Resiliency Centers for residents that brought their pets with them to escape the winter storm. He noted that ACS implemented a zero-tolerance mandate for owners that leave their animals in the elements while temperatures were below 32 degrees Fahrenheit. As a result, Animal Care Officers covered double-shifts and came in on scheduled days off to ensure ACS was able to maximize response times. As many as 19 first responders were in the field at a given time.

Sims provided an overview of important ACS projects. He stated the new ACS clinic hospital bond project is in the Design/Development stage which includes room-by-room planning and layout. It is anticipated that it will go out to bid in August. Sims also discussed that planning for new community spay and neuter clinics is underway. GIS analysis was used to determine equity, trafficability, and veterinary deserts within San

Antonio. ACS is working with real estate professionals within the City of San Antonio to identify available locations.

Sims mentioned that the Live-Release division of ACS has implemented a change in nomenclature to better address individual positions from a Human Resource naming convention. The Live-Release division has been reclassified as the Placement division.

Sims briefly discussed a recent puppy sale sting conducted by the Field division in collaboration with SAPD. He indicated more details would be given during the ACS Field Operations Brief.

He concluded the Director's Report by mentioning that the new ACS Strategic Plan is posted on the ACS website under the About ACS section.

V. Public Comment

- a. Robert Ramos discussed animal welfare issues in his district. Ramos mentioned the gap between what ACS is trying to accomplish and what community animal advocates want accomplished. Ramos suggested sharing ideas to bridge the gap.
- b. Eliza Guerra expressed concerns about the lack of spay/neuter services, and the lack of information about available services.
- c. Lea Kucik gave her time to Mike Kucik.
- d. Mary Anne Rivas gave her time to Mike Kucik.
- e. Mike Kucik discussed the importance of setting goals. Kucik expressed dissatisfaction with ACS' new Strategic Plan. Kucik discussed concerns about separate "camps" created in this work and how that becomes an issue.
- f. John Atwood discussed contracted spay/neuter and rescue partners. Atwood expressed frustrations that the Mayor and City Council deem dogs dangerous to cover up underlying issues.
- g. Laura Linam discussed working together to help prevent animal cruelty/neglect and the cycle of unwanted cats and dogs.
- h. Jacqueline Fonseca discussed the misconception within the community that San Antonio has reached "no-kill" status, and that San Antonio was never actually at "no-kill" status. Fonseca said that the community needs help and that the new ACS Strategic Plan should be revised.
- i. Vanessa Acosta talked about helping over 1,000 residents with their cats and dogs on her own. She expressed frustrations about never having seen such a level of animal cruelty and neglect like she has in San Antonio. She stated that ACS needs to do more.
- j. Richard Bryan discussed how acts of animal cruelty are often tied to other severe crimes. He stated that dogs in ACS' care are not being accurately assessed. Bryan expressed concerns that San Antonio is the seventh largest city in the nation, but Animal Care Officers are not Peace Officers like in other major cities.

VI. Consent Agenda:

1. Approval of the Minutes from the ACS Advisory Board Meeting on November 15, 2023
2. Approval of ACS Advisory Board Statistical Reports for October, November, and

December 2023

3. Approval of the ACS Advisory Board Contracts Performance Report
4. Approval of ACS FY 2024 Quarter 1 Report
5. Approval of the ACS Advisory Board Facility Inspections for September and December 2023

Board Chair Braeutigam pulled Item 3, ACS Advisory Board Contracts Performance Report.

Motion: Board Member Moore moved to approve the Consent Agenda.
Board Member Tohmaz seconded the motion.

Vote: Ayes: Tohmaz, Ducote, Garcia, Braeutigam, Speer, Davis, Moore, Jarl, Beldon, Scott

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Havill

Action: **MOTION PASSED WITH 10 AYES, 0 NAY, 0 ABSTAIN, AND 1 ABSENT.**

VII. Items for Individual Consideration

6. ACS Advisory Board Contracts Performance Report.

Board Chair Braeutigam noted an error in the Plan Amount on Page 2 under the SNAP Brooks Clinic section. The listed Plan Amount shows a Total of 3,000 when it should show a Total of 6,500. Board Chair Braeutigam requested this miscalculation be corrected.

Motion: Board Member Tohmaz moved to have the ACS Advisory Board Contracts Performance report corrected.
Board Secretary Speer seconded the motion.

Vote: Ayes: Tohmaz, Ducote, Garcia, Braeutigam, Speer, Davis, Moore, Jarl, Beldon, Scott

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Havill

Action: MOTION PASSED WITH 10 AYES, 0 NAY, 0 ABSTAIN, AND 1 ABSENT.

7. A Briefing on ACS Director Recruitment.

Human Resources Deputy Director, Krystal Strong, provided a briefing on the timeline of recruiting for and filling the ACS Director position. The current timeline noted that February through April would see the City of San Antonio doing outreach and vetting of potential candidates. April and May would see interviews being scheduled with a final decision being submitted. The selected candidate would then see onboarding occur during Summer 2024.

Deputy Director Strong noted that current candidate outreach was taking place through multiple platforms. This included the CoSA website and social media platforms as well as industry websites and job boards.

8. A Briefing on ACS Citation Process and Municipal Courts.

Municipal Courts Presiding Judge Obledo provided an overview on the Administrative Hearing process. She went on to distinguish between Criminal Hearing and Civil Hearings.

ACS Assistant Director, Brad Davenport, followed up with provided a comparative analysis of ACS' Field division metrics as it related to Criminal and Civil violations.

9. A Briefing on ACS Field Operations.

ACS Assistant Director, Brad Davenport, discussed Field division personnel and hiring updates. This included the addition of more First Responding Officers as well as more Investigators and another Field Manager.

Assistant Director Davenport continued with a comparative look at Bite incidents as well as Dangerous/Aggressive Investigations.

He noted additional efforts being made to disrupt roadside puppy sales, noting that a recent sting resulted in 76 citations being issued and 25 canines being microchipped.

Davenport concluded the brief with an overview of the neglect, cruelty, and injured/sick Calls for Service that were received as a result of the winter storm.

10. A Briefing on Veterinary Care Deserts.

ACS Assistant to the Director, Shannon Oster-Gabrielson, with reference to the possible locations for new community spay/neuter clinics, discussed the absence of veterinary care in certain areas of San Antonio. She used GIS analysis to show Board Members current deserts, using criteria where there was no veterinary clinic within 1-2 miles, there was an Equity Atlas score of 7 or higher, and there were households that

were likely to have 1 or fewer vehicles.

VIII. Determination of Next Meeting Date

The next ACS Advisory Board meeting was scheduled for March 20, 2024.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

APPROVED

Rita Braeutigam, Chair
Animal Care Services Advisory Board
City of San Antonio