

City of San Antonio



Animal Care Services Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 22, 2023, 5:55 PM
800 Historic, Old Hwy 90 W, San Antonio, TX 78227

I. Call to Order:

Board Chair Braeutigam called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

II. Roll Call:

Present: Cynthia Cox (Dist. 1), Lorena Havill (Dist. 2), 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)

Ex-Officio Member: Shannon Sims

Absent: Amin Tohmaz (Mayor), Sallie Scott (District 10)

Ex-Officio Members: Dr. Marilyn Gotbeter, David McCary

III. Chair's Statement

IV. Director's Report

ACS Director Shannon Sims provided an overview of the new ACS Strategic Plan and the Fiscal Year 2024 budget development. He discussed the passing of Ramon Najera on February 24th and that most severe bites are preventable and the result of irresponsible pet owners letting pets roam off their property.

Sims discussed ACS' plan for the next 5-10 years should not singularly focus on enforcement, but other key tenants of responsible pet ownership also. He discussed a comprehensive approach to ensure both the safety of the community and the safety of animals coming into ACS.

V. Consent Agenda:

1. Approval of the Amended Minutes from the ACS Advisory Board Meeting on November 17, 2022.
2. Approval of the Minutes from the ACS Advisory Board Meeting on January 18, 2023.
3. Approval of the ACS Advisory Board Statistical Reports for February 2023
4. Approval of the ACS Advisory Board Contracts Performance Report
5. Approval of the ACS Advisory Board Facility Inspections

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

Vote: Ayes: Cox, Havill, Garcia, Braeutigam, Speer, Davis, Moore, Jarl,
Beldon

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Scott, Tohmaz

Action: **MOTION PASSED WITH 9 AYES, 0 NAY, 0 ABSTAIN, AND 2
ABSENT.**

VI. Items for Individual Consideration

Board Member Tohmaz arrived at 6:22pm

Ex-Officio Member McCary arrived at 7:02pm

6. A Briefing on ACS Strategic Plan.

Director, Shannon Sims, Assistant Director, Brad Davenport, and Assistant to the Director, Shannon Oster-Gabrielson, shared a presentation on the current overview and progress of the ACS Strategic Plan. They recapped how various input for the Strategic Plan was obtained and how the input and additional research led to the determination of five Focus Areas for the Strategic Plan, with each Focus Area having respective Goals.

They discussed items that ACS is taking immediate action on, such as Bite Cases and Dangerous Dog Investigations.

VII. Public Comment

- a. Silvia Avila of Districts 5 & 6 discussed aggressive dogs only being owned by responsible pet owners. She stated support of House Bill 4759. In reference to February 24th incident with Mr. and Mrs. Najera, she said this is a shared responsibility and responsible parties should look at why this happened.
- b. Alfonso Avila of Districts 5 & 6 recommended that if City of San Antonio employees are not doing their job that a percentage of their salary should be returned and go towards positions that will do their jobs.
- c. Sumita Jonak of District 1 discussed the ACS euthanasia list and that healthy, adoptable pets are euthanized while medical cases are not and that medical cases end up pulling more resources. She stated this is a mismanagement of taxpayer dollars.

- d. John Atwood discussed accountability being on the owners. He discussed lack of help from City of San Antonio Leadership. He stated that it is the individuals that are making the dogs dangerous.
- e. Pamela Cravets of District 5 asked about the different designation levels of Aggressive Dogs and if people were covered other than designation Level 1.
- f. Karen Pearce of District 7 discussed restraint laws and the importance of containment.
- g. Melissa Friesenhahn gave her time to speak to Mary Ann Rivas.
- h. Mary Ann Rivas discussed what the meaning of “no kill” is and what the meaning is not. She provided examples of when no kill was not being met and what no kill should mean.
- i. Raymond Najera of District 8 discussed the February 24th incident involving his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Najera. He stated that multiple calls had been made regarding the owner(s) before the incident occurred. He discussed support of House Bill 4759. He encouraged that if you see something, say something.
- j. Christine Ortega of District 5 discussed alleviating burden of reporting on victims of bite cases. She stated that if an authority figure sees the victim, that should suffice for reporting and investigating. She recommended having a community advisory taskforce.
- k. Emily Casso stated that ACS is not picking up the problem dogs. She stated there are a lot of open cases in her area with no follow-up from ACS.
- l. Angelica Tate discussed a “hot spot” in District 4 where dead/abused/abandoned animals are left. She discussed the stress the roaming dogs are causing.
- m. Vicki Steerman of District 7 discussed hospice dogs deserving a chance to find placement. She voiced support of the ACS Strategic Plan goals. She discussed that there is no way to rescue our way out of this problem and to let rescues handle transports rather than ACS using funds to create a transport program/team.
- n. Katrina Rangel discussed the need of everybody to work together and that finger pointing is not helping. She suggested pet healthcare grants and recommended expanding partnerships to help create solutions.

VIII. Determination of Next Meeting Date

The next ACS Advisory Board meeting was scheduled for May 17, 2023.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

APPROVED

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