

City of San Antonio



Animal Care Services Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 17, 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 6:01 p.m.

II. Roll Call:

Present: Amin Tohmaz (Mayor), 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), Sallie Scott (Dist. 10)
Ex-Officio Member: David McCary

Absent: Cynthia Cox (Dist. 1), Lorena Havill (Dist. 2), Susan Beldon (Dist. 9)
Ex-Officio Members: Dr. Marilyn Gotbeter, Shannon Sims

III. Chair's Statement

IV. Director's Report

ACS Assistant Director, Brad Davenport, discussed the ACS trial budget and that ACS was approved for a Fiscal Year 2023 Mid-Year Adjustment of approximately \$850,000. He mentioned that ACS should also be increasing their Fiscal Year 2024 budget by approximately \$3.4 million and in Fiscal Year 2025 there will be an additional \$3 million added to the budget.

Brad Davenport recapped the recent City Council briefing, focusing on that since the dangerous dog incident on February 24th that resulted in the loss of life of Mr. Najera, that dangerous dog affidavits have tripled, resulting in approximately 60 affidavits a month being submitted.

He concluded the Director's Report with an update about hiring a third Staff Veterinarian at ACS as well as the addition of some contracted Relief Veterinarians.

V. Consent Agenda:

1. Approval of the Minutes from the ACS Advisory Board Meeting on March 22, 2023.
3. Approval of the ACS Advisory Board Contracts Performance Report
4. Approval of ACS FY 2023 Second Quarter Report
5. Approval of the ACS Advisory Board Facility Inspections

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

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

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Cox, Havill, Beldon

Action: **MOTION PASSED WITH 8 AYES, 0 NAY, 0 ABSTAIN, AND 3 ABSENT.**

VI. Items for Individual Consideration

Ex-Officio Member Gotbeter arrived at 6:56pm

2. Approval of the ACS Advisory Board Statistical Reports for March & April 2023

Item #2 of the Consent Agenda, Approval of the ACS Advisory Board Statistical Reports for March & April 2023, was pulled for individual consideration by Board Member Garcia.

Board Member Garcia had questions regarding how various Field division metrics are calculated, such as the SLA, Priorities of Calls for Service, and Calls for Service Completion Percentages. The Board Members discussed how the metrics are calculated.

Motion: Board Member Davis moved to approve the ACS Advisory Board Statistical Reports for March & April 2023.
Board Member Moore seconded the motion.

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

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Cox, Havill, Beldon

Action: **MOTION PASSED WITH 8 AYES, 0 NAY, 0 ABSTAIN, AND 3 ABSENT.**

6. A Briefing on Updates to ACS Operations.

Assistant Director, Brad Davenport, Chief Operations Officer, Bethany Colonnese, and Public Relations Manager, Lisa Norwood, co-presented on various updates to ACS operations and programs.

Brad Davenport recapped the new ACS Strategic Plan Focus Areas. He provided an overview of some current actions ACS is taking such as expanding wellness clinics, improving spay/neuter efforts, proactive enforcement and improving fleet and technology capabilities of the ACS Field division, the launch of the new ACS Customer Service team, and upcoming support roles to help improve overall operations.

Public Relations Manager, Lisa Norwood, further discussed the wellness clinics. She mentioned partnerships with Animal Defense League and that there will be at least two clinics per month in high-need areas. She also mentioned that ACS is about to continue having an on-site clinic once a month at the 151 Campus. The long-term goal is to serve 10,000 pets by Fiscal Year 2028.

Chief Operations Officer, Bethany Colonnese, discussed several capital updates that would be occurring at the ACS 151 Campus. These included renovating the four-existing agility/customer-interaction play yards into 13 play yards to be used for customer-dog interactions. Additionally, there would be turf and fencing repairs made to the yards in front of Building 1. Bethany Colonnese provided an update on the new ACS Veterinary Clinic building and that it is currently in the programming phase with architects and engineers. She concluded with an update on the Support Housing Building, which would be used for temporary holding of Cruelty case animals, dangerous dog investigations, and other temporary holding scenarios where the pet is not available for public viewing. She stated that they are still working on the programming and location selection with architects and engineers.

7. A Briefing on the 88th Texas Legislative Session.

Board Member Jarl (Dist. 8) presented on the current status of several legislative bill proposals that could impact the field of animal welfare.

- SB 2226 – relating to the reporting method in determining that a dog is dangerous – Current Status: Awaiting Hearing
- HB 870 – relating to the source of dogs and cats sold by pet stores; providing a civil penalty – Current Status: Dead
- HB 4759 – relating to an attack by a dangerous dog; increasing criminal penalties – Current Status: Ongoing
- SB 876 – relating to the licensing and regulation of dog and cat breeders; expanding the applicability of an occupational license – Current Status: Passed Both Chambers
- HB 1348 – relating to the authority of a municipality to regulate veterinarians – Current Status: Not Needed Due to HB 2127

- HB 2127 – relating to state preemption of and the effect of certain state or federal law on certain municipal and county regulation; Current Status – Passed both Chambers
- HB 598 – relating to creating the criminal offense of possession of an animal by a person who has been previously convicted of an offense involving animal cruelty; Current Status – Awaiting Governor Signature
- HB 3439 – relating to veterinary services performed on certain animals in the care of a releasing agency; Current Status: Ongoing

VII. Public Comment

- a. Andrea Macias of District 1 discussed ACS' follow-up on dangerous dog compliance.
- b. Lea LaPort of District 6 gave her time to Mike Kucik.
- c. Mike Kucik of District 6 discussed science-based evidence of dog's behavior and cognition, understanding social rules, the authority to decide a dog's fate, and that animal welfare is a collective effort and that everyone should be looking for solutions.
- d. Eliza Guerra discussed frustration at the inability to have more spay and neuter programs and making them affordable.
- e. Melissa Zavala gave her time to Jenna Loos.
- f. Jenna Loos of District 10 expressed concern about dogs with suspected distemper being housed adjacent to puppies at ACS and that disease control should be a priority.
- g. Vicki Steerman of District 7 discussed citing roadside pet sellers. She also discussed her frustration with residents and a personal experience of trying to help a resident who ultimately returned the dog.
- h. Missy Brown expressed excitement about an upcoming free dog vaccination clinic. She discussed her passion for fostering and her personal experience fostering distemper-positive dogs. She shared her concerns about perpetuating the status quo and ACS getting the proper medical support it needs for animals.
- i. Joanne Knight gave her time to Vanessa Acosta.
- j. Ethan Jasso discussed his frustrations with irresponsible pet owners in the community.
- k. Edgar Soto shared concerns about residents being negligent and ACS not preventing further violations. He asked what could be done with repeat offenders.
- l. Vanessa Acosta discussed her frustrations with hoarders in the community and not seeing solutions for repeat violators. She discussed that there are citizens willing to help ACS, but there is no support from ACS. She stated the importance of focusing on children and teaching them how to be a good pet parent in order to break the current bad owner cycle.
- m. Dan Rossiter discussed needing a plan and having a better representation of the data ACS collects. He emphasized getting to the root cause of the symptoms and the need for accessible spay/neuter options and programs.
- n. John Bachman expressed his frustrations with misleading data. He stated that no-kill should be the goal. He recommended having an outside agency review ACS' operations and make suggestions. He discussed using spay/neuter to get to zero population growth.
- o. Jacqueline Fonseca of District 1 shared her perception that the community is moving backwards as stewards of animals and asked how we continue to make progress. She

expressed concerns that District 1 was not on the list of upcoming community vaccination clinics. She stated that ACS needs to have better communication and spread of information.

- p. Gracie Martinez gave her time to Mike Kucik.
- q. Mike Kucik of District 6 discussed program possibilities and utilizing the help of citizens that have expressed a desire to help. He stated that there should also be better publicity for programs. He expressed the importance of needing strong leadership that will lead from the heart.
- r. John Atwood discussed concerns about City leadership shifting blame from controlling the stray population to calling dogs dangerous.

VIII. Determination of Next Meeting Date

The next ACS Advisory Board meeting was scheduled for July 19, 2023.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

APPROVED

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