

**JANUARY 07, 2020 MEETING MINUTES OF THE  
ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION**

The Animal Services Advisory Commission (ASAC) of the City of Farmington (COF) met in a regular session on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, at the Executive Conference Room, 800 Municipal, Farmington, NM. Roll call was taken with attendance as follows:

Members Present: Karen Bayless, Chair; Corinne Wright, Chair Pro Tem; Kathy Hogan, SJ Animal League; Priyanka Bhatia, DVM; John Roe; Karen Mills; Cheryl Ragsdale

Members Absent: Judy Paquin (moved)

PRCA/COF Staff Present: Shaña Reeves, PRCA Director; Natalie Spruell, PRCA Assistant Director; Stacie Voss, FRAS Welfare Director; Dr. Rebecca Raichel, FRAS DVM; Linda Harris, PRCA Admin. Aide;  
Sgt. Soren Nielson, Code Compliance & Animal Control Supervisor

**INTRODUCTION** — Karen Bayless introduced newly appointed member Veterinarian, Priyanka Bhatia. Dr. Bhatia stated that she is a new Veterinarian and began working at Animal Haven Clinic in August. In order to gain further surgical experience Dr. Bhatia volunteers in the medical clinic at the Farmington Regional Animal Shelter (FRAS) on her days off. She looks forward to meeting new people and becoming more involved in the community.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Bayless called the ASAC meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. and asked for a motion to approve the minutes of October 1, 2019.

✚ A motion was made by Karen Bayless seconded by Kathy Hogan to approve minutes of October 1, 2019; upon vote, the minutes were approved as presented.

**COMMISSIONER BUSINESS** — Ms. Bayless opened discussion regarding officer elections. Failure to list elections as an action item in October, caused the vote to be postponed until April 2020. Ms. Bayless stated the challenge to voting in April as opposed to October is that member terms are due for renewal in August. Members agreed that moving forward they would prefer to hold elections in October. Office staff will seek direction from the City Attorney in order to follow proper steps to achieve the goal. Elections will be placed as an action item on April's agenda, then again in October.

**ANIMAL MICRO-CHIPPING/CITY CODE** — Ms. Bayless explained that six years ago the ASAC worked with the legal department to update the city's animal ordinances. City Council did not approve their request to require pet owners to license their animals, therefore the commission is now asking that the COF include micro-chipping animals as an ordinance. The desired outcome is to have animals at large returned to the owner as opposed to taking them to the shelter. Stacie Voss stated that a meeting is scheduled in February with the City Attorney to discuss the process for making changes to the city ordinance; she will bring updates to the next ASAC meeting in April.

**SHELTER REPORT, QUARTERLY** — Shelter reports for October-November-December of 2019 were sent to members in advance for review. Ms. Voss stated that December intakes and adoptions were up slightly and that public spay/neuters were up significantly. Ms. Bayless commended the shelter staff for the amount of animals that were adopted out. Ms. Voss clarified that San Juan County's numbers include spay/neuter costs as well as intake costs from the Navajo Nation.

Ms. Reeves reminded members that San Juan County had signed contracts with both City of Farmington and City of Aztec to pay a portion for the cost and care of county animals coming into their shelters. She reported that preliminary numbers for FY22 show these cost have increased for both agencies. COF costs increased \$120K, with \$75K incurred from medical line items alone. The county commissioners were stunned to see their portion increased by 69K (this is the second year the county has not been subsidized by the City of Farmington). Ms. Reeves continued, if the COF considers the county's request to streamline their agreement, the county's portion could decrease slightly

but would remain in the \$575K range for their annual share for cost and care of animals. FRAS staff are committed to actively educating as many people as possible to spay and neuter options, and where assigned drop off locations are for surrenders coming from the Navajo Nation. Animal Control Officers (ACOs) are increasingly more successful with their efforts at scanning and returning animals back to their owners. Ms. Reeves concluded by stating that animal care is a cost of service to the entire community and hopes San Juan County and the Navajo Nation see it as a cost of doing business. At the end of discussion, Ms. Bayless asked to be notified when the animal contract would be presented to the County Commission so that members could attend.

**ANIMAL CONTROL UNIT** — Sgt. Nielson reported the Animal Control Unit is down two officers. He was given authorization to hire two replacements but it will be two months before they would be on actual duty. Though more animals are being returned to owners because of micro-chip scanning it is not possible to track the exact number due to the way calls are coded when coming into dispatch. There have been a few minor updates to the Animal Control Policy and are awaiting final approvals.

**REGIONAL ANIMAL SHELTER FOUNDATION INC.** — Ms. Bayless reported the Foundation continues to raise money for shelter priorities; Ms. Voss and Dr. Raichel will present a list of shelter needs for consideration. Super surgeries are full days of spay and neuters to help expedite adoptions and increase available space at the shelter. The Foundation approved a dollar amount to be added as a line item so that funds are readily available for FRAS to cover additional costs needed on these days. Currently the Foundation is awaiting the results from a recent fund raising letter and discussion continues regarding which coming events to underwrite for the year. Two autoclaves were an unplanned purchase, but greatly appreciated by the medical staff.

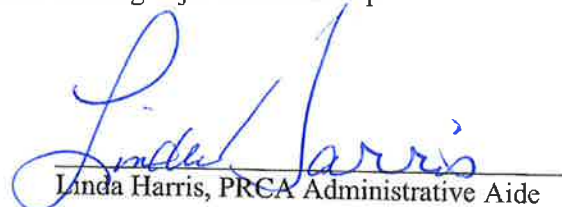
**SAN JUAN ANIMAL LEAGUE** — Ms. Hogan reported that San Juan Animal League (SJAL) bought a building at 201 E. Maple and is in the process of preparing it for operations. SJAL is excited that this new facility will allow them to increase their Trap, Neuter, Return (TNR) program, and provide scheduled vaccine appointments. SJAL is hoping to partner with Shiela Noyes, DVM to provide assistance with surgeries from her location in Bloomfield.

From January 1 to December 31, 2019 San Juan Animal League has completed 586 spay/neuter surgeries, 255 of those were feral; 6,076 vaccines; and 355 microchips, with a fair number of those coming from the Navajo Nation. SJAL charges \$20 for microchipping and have witnessed a positive, upward trend from pet owners regarding the service. If the COF would encourage the public to microchip animals, SJAL may approve doing some of the microchipping at cost. That would certainly contribute to more animals being returned to owners while decreasing the intake at the shelter.

Because SJAL's vaccine clinics are very successful fund raisers, they are able to expand the scope of their emergency fund protocols with the goal of decreasing the number of animals that are surrendered or euthanized. Everyone is welcome to attend the member meeting at the new building on Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup> at 1pm. Dr. Bhatia stated she heard that SJAL's vet clinic would be expanded and asked how emergency funds would be appropriated for that. Ms. Hogan answered they would know more after the planning meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> when they decide who will be overseeing the emergency fund.

**ADJOURNMENT** – With no further discussion, Ms. Bayless announced the next meeting will be April 7, 2020 and called to adjourn. Ms. Hogan moved to adjourn, Ms. Wright seconded; the meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

  
Karen Bayless, Chair

  
Linda Harris, PRCA Administrative Aide