

City of Saginaw
Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the City of Saginaw
Animal Shelter Advisory Committee
Held at Saginaw Public Works Conference Room
205 Brenda Lane, Saginaw, Texas
January 23, 2024

Present at the meeting:

Tammy Southard	Place 2	
Joe Stout	Place 3	Chair & Welfare Org Member
Jose Wheeland	Place 4	City Official
Breanna Farley	Place 5	Involved in Shelter Operations
Judy Deller	Place 7	
Spencer Meara	Alt 1	

Absent from the meeting:

Karen Metzler	Place 1	Veterinarian
John Peet	Place 6	
Laura Yandell	Place 8	
Stacy Liebel	Place 9	Secretary
Megan Le	Alt 2	

Visitors at the meeting:

Lee Howell	Assistant City Manager
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(A) Call to Order

Joe Stout, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:43 p.m. with a quorum present.

(B) The Committee unanimously approved minutes from the October 10, 2023, meeting.

(C) The Committee opened discussion of proposed changes to City Code, Chapter 6, Animals, with initial focus on the draft of a Stray Animal/Shelter Occupancy Management Plan that has been requested by the City Council. Animal Services Manager Jose Wheeland explained that the content of the plan is largely contained in the existing Chapter 6 and proceeded to explain elements of the plan including Intake Types and Release Types. Committee Member Deller asked about livestock enforcement, and Jose Wheeland explained that these matters are usually referred to the appropriate County agency for enforcement.

The Committee Chair asked for additional information on why the plan was being requested, and it was explained that a member of the City Council had raised questions about the length of time some animals stay at the Shelter and had suggested a maximum hold time of perhaps 14 days be established. The Committee Chair mentioned working with a number of other area animal shelters as an Animal Welfare organization representative and said he had not seen such a requirement in other cities. Cities typically give the Animal Services staff discretion about how long to hold an animal based on the animal's temperament and other adoptability factors, he said. The Committee Chair expressed concerns that such a limited hold policy could result in negative publicity for the City, bad morale on the part of Animal Services staff who would have to destroy more animals, reduced donations to the 501c3 Foundation, and a rapid decline in shelter live-release statistics, which are used by organizations to provide grants and other support based on their assessment of Animal Services operations. He said it would in effect change the focus of the department from animal care to animal disposal.

Further discussion by the Committee members followed and included other ways to reduce the census at the animal shelter, such as a Trap-Neuter-Return program. Moved by Committee Member Deller, seconded by Committee Member Southard, "that the City Council adopt the Stray Animal/Shelter Occupancy Management Plan as written, and not consider establishing a set number of days for animals to be held at the City shelter." Motion was unanimously approved.

Animal Services Manager Wheeland opened discussion of proposed changes to Chapter 6, reviewing highlighted portions of the ordinance document and answering questions pertaining to the changes. Stopping on item 2 of page 7 of the 33 pages, the Committee agreed to table further review until the next meeting. Moved by Committee Member Meara, seconded by Committee Member Deller, to schedule a special meeting of the Committee on February 27 at 6:00 p.m. to continue review of the proposed changes to Chapter 6. Motion was unanimously approved.

(D) Committee Member Farley reported on the Train & Grain event that was held October 21, 2023, including funds of \$138 raised for Animal Services and funds of \$543 raised for the 501c3 Foundation. Eleven dogs were taken to the event to be offered for adoption although none were adopted. Fourteen volunteers assisted. Committee Members Farley and Wheeland said the event was considered a success and provided some good public exposure for Animal Services, and resulted in lessons learned that will be used in the 2024 event.

(E) Animal Services Manager Wheeland reviewed the status of fundraising ideas including additional restaurant nights, engraved bricks, sponsorships and Dog Park banners, some of which had been suggested at the October 10 meeting. The banners were found to conflict with a City Code and will not be considered further at this time, he said.

(F) There was no public attendance and no Public Comments at the meeting.

(E) The Committee reviewed future meeting dates in 2024. Moved by Committee Member Meara, seconded by Committee Member Deller, to return to the previous meeting start time of 6:00 p.m. for all future meetings. Motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 p.m.