

**Lincoln County Animal Services  
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

**January 23, 2024**

**Attendees:**

Dr. Ashley Oliphant  
Lena Jones, Health Director  
Stefanie Westmoreland  
Mark Connolly  
Diane Leatherman  
Doug Woods  
Jana Aviles, Animal Services Director  
Chelsea Cooper, Operations Manager  
Matthew Freudenberg, Field Services Supervisor  
Whitney McQueen, Animal Care Supervisor  
Lindsey Houser, Clerk to the Board

**Members of the Public:**

None

**Opening:**

After the board received their meeting materials, Director Jana Aviles opened the meeting at 6:30 PM.

**Adoptions of the Agenda:**

A motion was made by Ashley Oliphant to adopt the meeting agenda, with a second by Mark Connolly. Director Aviles advised that in the future, she would reach out to the Board a week ahead of the upcoming meetings to add any necessary items to the agenda.

### **Board Introductions, Staff Introductions:**

Each person present introduced themselves and their connection to animal welfare.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

A motion was made by Ashley Oliphant to adopt the minutes from the previous ASAB meeting dated March 24, 2021. A second was made by Doug Woods.

### **Chairman Nominations:**

Director Aviles requested nominations from the Board for a member to serve as Chairman. Mark Connolly and Diane Leatherman both nominated Ashley Oliphant as Chairman. Oliphant accepted. A second was made by Doug Woods.

Chairman Oliphant requested nominations from the Board for a member to serve as Vice Chairman. Doug Woods nominated Mark Connolly. The Board was in favor, and Mark Connolly accepted.

### **Animal Services Report:**

Jana Aviles gave the following report to the Board.

- 2023 Statistics
  - o 1,760 intakes, 1,105 adoptions, 421 rescue placements, 179 RTO's, 46 euthanasia, and 14 died in care
- Staffing Updates
  - o Operations Manager
  - o Feline and Canine Placement Coordinator
  - o Leadership team created
  - o Community Engagement Coordinator
  - o Feline Placement Coordinator position, interviews on 1/24/24
  - o Full time vet expected to be hired within 2024
- TNR Restarting by April 2024
- Twice daily adoption hours at Petsmart in Lincolnton in partnership with HATS
- Pet Food Pantry improvements
- Volunteer management software being utilized
- New events attended in 2023
  - o Denver Christmas Parade
  - o Apple Festival
- Employees attending 2 out of state conferences in coming months
- Plans to create a lifesaving manual to promote transparency in near future
- Website updates
  - o Centralized form location

- Upcoming FAQ updates
- Growing stronger partnerships with HATS, LCSO and LC Comm Center

Mark Connolly asked how the new ordinance had affected the Dangerous Dog board. Jana Aviles responded, advising that there had been no dogs deemed potentially dangerous, level 1, or level 2 dangerous since she took the position as Director.

Doug Woods asked if Lincoln County utilized Dogs Playing For Life. Jana responded, advising that HATS had sponsored training through the organization a few years ago, but there was currently no staff trained to roll out the program appropriately, though she hopes to facilitate training for current staff.

Ashley Oliphant asked how the restart of TNR had been going. Jana responded, advising that there had been a bumpy start but there is a solid plan in place moving forward.

### **Field Services Report:**

- Matthew Freudenberg gave the following report on improvements and accomplishments in LCAS' Field Services:
  - Officer Inventory completed
  - Uniforms ordered, are arriving this week
  - Priority 1, 2 and 3 response times had been added
  - Working hand in hand with Health Department on bite cases
    - 5 day and 10 day bite quarantine checks implemented
  - ASO's providing more resources to keep animals out of shelter
  - Plan to certify officers as CRV to administer rabies vaccines in the field
  - Hoping to add more to current ordinance to benefit ASO's:
    - Option to terminate owner's rights to animals
      - Would benefit animals involved in trials
      - Have taken out 8 misdemeanor charges and 3 felony charges
  - Abandoned animal section
  - Focus on exotic section
    - Disaster plan
    - Home visits
- Jana Aviles advised that there had been push back from exotic owners within the county who claim to have been grandfathered in to an annual \$25 exotic fee.
- Mark Connolly asked if the shelter offered rabies clinics. Jana Aviles responded, advising that she believed it was required, but there were currently none scheduled. HATS does currently offer rabies clinics regularly. Stefanie Westmoreland advised that there are six rabies clinics scheduled for 2024. Diane Leatherman offered that in the past, clinics were offered at Lincolnton High School, East Lincoln High School, and West Lincoln High School, for easier access to people across the county.
- Lena Jones advised that since she had been working closer with LCAS on bite cases, she has seen a need for education and campaigns for rabies vaccine and bite protocol

awareness. She also sees a need for educating citizens on county responsibilities versus citizen responsibilities.

- Ashley Oliphant recommended posting positive posts on Facebook to bring about awareness to the positive actions of ASO's in the field. Jana Aviles advised that LCAS frequently faces backlash on Facebook but cannot defend actions taken in the field and cannot delete comments on posts. Ashley Oliphant offered assistance with responding to negativity and educating the public. Mark Connolly advised that business pages can limit access to foreign countries and this cuts down on spam posts.
- Jana Aviles asked if the Board would be interested in a monthly newsletter on shelter updates, to which the Board agreed that they would be.

**Update on Vacancies:**

Jana Aviles advised that there are currently 3 vacancies on the ASAB, but there are applications in for each vacancy and the BOC would appoint these members in the coming days.

**Next Meeting Dates:**

- Tuesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30 pm.
  - o Lena Jones, Ashley Oliphant and Mark Connolly will not be able to attend, consider rescheduling
- Tuesday, August 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm.
- Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm.

**Public Comments:**

None

**Motion to Adjourn:**

A motion was made by Chairman Oliphant to adjourn the meeting, with a second by Diane Leatherman.

The meeting ended at 7:09 PM.