



INDIANAPOLIS
ANIMAL CARE SERVICES

Indianapolis Animal Care Services Advisory Board Meeting Minutes from Monday, March 25, 2023, Meeting

Board Members Present

Chris Roberson, City County Council Appointee
Stacie Hurrel, Marion County Public Health Department Representative
Brett Kruger, Mayoral Appointee
Kelly Diamond, Deputy Director of Animal Care Services

Approval of February Meeting Minutes

- Stacie Hurrel motioned to approve, motion passes, minutes approved.

Field Operations (Kaelyn Helson)

- Reviewed February statistics report
- 223 total reports, 85 bite reports, 84 citations, 55 investigation impounds, 2,164 service calls
- Average response time – 1 day 22 hours 5 minutes
- Citations were broken down by code and reported
- Pending Runs as of 3/1/2024: 403
- Brett Kruger: Reports between January and February are up this year from last, any idea why this is the case?
 - Kaelyn: Cold snaps contribute a lot to reports that come in.
- Chris Roberson: What about the drastic decrease in care and treatments from January to February?
 - Kaelyn: More than likely that is due to January having a large-scale case. More animals are more citations issued.
- Chris Roberson: Response time for different priority calls. You'd expect the lower priorities to have a longer response time.
 - Kaelyn: With priority 4 calls there is complainant information that is required, without that information we are able to close them immediately. Due to this they are getting closed out sooner to when they come in.
- Chris Roberson: What in your opinion is the biggest challenge that the ACO's face? What are your thoughts on how the city can better support them?
 - Kaelyn: Ability to get to runs, which is impacted by many different things. One of which is our vehicles. We spend a lot of time with vehicles at garages for repairs and that means ACO's have to share vehicles which inhibits the amount of runs we can get to.

Kennel and Foster Report (Domingo Kalmes)

- Reviewed February statistics report
- Intake: 424 dogs, 158 cats, 5 birds, 4 livestock, 28 others, for a total of 619 animals.
- 187 adopted, 73 returned to owners, 197 transferred, 0 returned to wild, 15 shelter-neuter-return, 126 euthanized, 5 missing/unaccounted for in the system, 17 owner-requested euthanasia, 7 died in care, and 20 other. Total outcome of 647 animals.
- The live release rate was 78.28 % for all animals and 77.75% for dogs and 86.36% for cats and 80.42% for dogs and cats combined.
- Length of stay - 21 days
- 22 adoption returns
- Started March with 472 animals in ACS care, 80 animals in foster
- 128 Indy CARES Diversions
- Stray appointments are currently booking 2 days out, owner surrender appointments are 5.5 weeks out.
- Chris Roberson: Is it possible for the outgoing statistics to be broken down by cats and dogs?

- Domingo: I'm sure that is possible.
- Brett Kruger: Any idea about the jump in euthanasia rate from January to February?
 - Domingo: I was not here for that month but can look into that.
 - Kelly Diamond: The increase in Euthanasia is not just dogs and cats. It includes wildlife or anything else that comes in.
 - Brett Kruger: Is there a way to get euthanasia broken down for just dogs and cats?
 - Kelly Diamond: We are working to revamp the statistics that we share. Mike from Best Friends is doing a deep dive into this.
- Brett Kruger: Also, the decrease in animals in foster at the start of the month.
 - Domingo: It is down a significant amount. I am not sure what the exact reason is.
- Chris Roberson: Do we have a goal for our live release rate?
 - Domingo: Above 90% is our end goal.

Volunteer Report (Kelly LaRoche)

- Reviewed February statistics report
- 27 new volunteers in orientation, 94 applications processed, 149 volunteers in training, 261 active volunteers.
- 2,271 hours volunteered at the shelter, 19 hours volunteered at special events, 51 hours volunteered for Freedom for a Day, 44.5 hours volunteered by service-learning groups. 2,315 total hours volunteered.
- Program update: Court Mandated community service will be managed by the Volunteer Coordinator. Their numbers are excluded from the hours reported.
- 10 dogs had Doggy Day Outs.
- Currently have 8 service groups scheduled for throughout March.
- Chris Roberson: What are your thoughts about increasing volunteer retention?
 - Kelly Diamond: It is something that Lauren and I have been talking about over the last few weeks. We are trying to figure out why volunteers are not coming back after initial orientations and trainings.

Community Outreach Report (Kelly LaRoche)

- Facebook and Instagram likes are up.
- Twitter and TikTok are down.
 - TikTok could be due to being less active.
- Love is Blind campaign was very successful.
- Pet Pleas with WTHR, Fox and Axios with 2 for each.
- Stacie Hurrle: How is the free heartworm prevention for dog adopters going? Is the public excited to receive that?
 - Kelly LaRoche: They do. It is a nice surprise. Unsure how much traffic has been brought through this promo.
- Chris Roberson: Are these the right outcome metrics to track for community outreach?
 - Kelly LaRoche: I don't think so. It is another statistic that will be revamped in the coming months.

Staffing Updates (Kelly Diamond)

- Packet update is for end of February. I will share what is current as of today.
- Kelly LaRoche is now the Administrator for Policy and Programming.
- Kelly Diamond is now the Deputy Director.
- Adoptions Coordinator position has been filled. Looking to have individual start in the month of April.
- Kaelyn Helson is now the Enforcement Manager
- Vacant:
 - 1 Part-Time Adoption Counselor
 - 3 Animal Control Officer
 - 1 Part-Time Customer Relations Officer
 - 1 Enforcement Supervisor
 - 3 Full-Time Senior Animal Care Technician
 - 3 Part-Time Senior Animal Care Technician
 - 1 Foster Coordinator
 - 2 Indy Cares Case Specialist

- 2 Vet Assistants (1 currently in progress)
- 1 Vet Tech

New Shelter Update

- HUD has approved the transfer of land ownership. Closing documents are in process. Survey of the land has been completed. City is working on assembling a team of construction partners. Construction bids are due April 19th. Goal of a groundbreaking ceremony by end of 2nd Quarter. Final designs are not done. We are looking to get staff feedback. Half of the kennels will be indoor-outdoor, other half with be both sides are indoor, more laundry areas, more office spaces, more medical space, more intentional pathways for dog movement through the building.

Action items – to be carried forward until complete

Item	Owner	Status	Due	Outcome
Bylaws	Entire Board	On hold	TBD	

Statuses: not started, in progress, complete, tabled, on hold

Old Business

- Kelly Diamond: We have not received any communication from the county closes to the Humane Society of the Dunes. They are still not pulling animals from IACS.

New Business/Sub-Committee Update *(IACS feedback in italics)*

- Welcomed Chris Roberson to the board. Chris has been voted Interim Chair for the board.
- Medical Sub-Committee
 - Did not meet.
- Volunteer Sub-Committee
 - Volunteers are very passionate about getting dogs out and into the community. They are excited to take dogs to Farmer’s Markets and other events.
 - Could we offer a volunteer buddy system for when they come in the first time. They could be a mentor to this new volunteer.
 - A few volunteers are working to look at the dogs at the shelter that are in various length of stay at the shelter and why. How can we market them better?
 - Working to implement a way to know which dogs need photos.
 - Next meeting will be held on April 11th at 6pm virtually. Link will be e-mailed to volunteers and posted in the Facebook group.
- Field Operations Sub-Committee
 - FIDO has hired a new case manager position that will be focused on pro-active outreach and the regular runs to help the ACO’s.
 - Peaceful Souls year to date have trapped 58 loose dogs.
 - Indy Neighborhood Cats is concerned about TNR numbers.
- Rescue Sub-Committee
 - Did not meet.
- Foster Sub-Committee
 - Did not meet
- Kelly Diamond: Facebook stats, we are working to make that more transparent and post information that is more informative and helpful for everyone. We have had special protocols in place in different areas of the shelter due to one of our dogs testing positive for parvo. Today we were able to release most of those areas from these protocols, we do still have our front office area under these and are going to reevaluate them this Wednesday or Thursday. Laundry issues should start improving, we lost an employee who was instrumental in keeping it moving, and our other employee was out sick. Our volunteers really stepped up and helped out. We did some retraining with staff that handle cleaning to help with the laundry accumulating. Updated process for morning cleaning. This means getting dogs out sooner, finishing cleaning sooner, less cross-over traffic (all dogs going out one way and in another way). With the help of Best Friends we have identified procedures that affect our sanitation. One of these is that we are way over-feeding our dogs specifically. We are looking at a better quality of food and better amounts being fed. At the beginning of March we had 50 dogs in crates and today

we only have 37. We went from 20 dogs in offices to only 9 today. Last week Best Friends' medical team did hands on training with our medical staff in the surgery suite. They are also helping us to revise protocols. Best Friends also had a member of their behavior team visit and observe. In 2 weeks they will be returning to train our managers on how to do effective rounds on a daily basis. We have a second Best Friends imbed member who will be with us for 2 months, their name is Emory. Emory will be focusing on improving our community cat program, our foster program and our adoption program.

- Mike Sonsalla: I have been doing a deep dive into the statistics that we share and how we can change it to better represent what is actually happening in the shelter. This new format will probably not be ready by the next board meeting but hopefully for the following meeting. We have an upcoming transport of 17-18 dogs headed to 5 different groups in Maine. This transport will be leaving the parking lot here next Friday morning. Sound proofing in the kennels should be coming next week and Best Friends will have a team coming out to install them.
- Chris Roberson: Advocacy Committee/Effort is going to be combined into the Volunteer Sub-Committee as an agenda item at the end of that meeting. The goal of the advocacy effort is to promote a higher level of engagement with our City Councilors. We will develop talking points for when this committee reaches out to these Councilors.

Public Comments (*IACS and Board feedback in italics*)

- Erica Roganti: Is there a reason each animal in the shelter can't get a life-saving post before they are euthanized? Similar to the IACS Rescue Page, can there be posts on the main page for urgent adoptions.
 - *ACS: Not every animal that comes in can we do that with. We have recently started to our stray posts. It's not something we have thought about. We are making changes to be more proactive about how to promote animals in our care.*
- Erica Roganti: When IACS gives an animal a deadline on the Rescue Page, is there a reason why animals can't be given an extension?
 - *ACS: It depends on different things. If we are talking about an animal with a medical issue that is borderline to suffering or an animal that is self-harming in the kennels, is it humane to continue housing them? If we gave one animal an extension, we would have to give every animal one, and with our space that is not always possible. There is also a lot of behind-the-scenes conversations that happen. Extensions have been given when we know that we are close to securing a rescue for an animal. It is hard to find that balance.*
- Monica Griffin: Adoption returns are up from the past month. We are adopting less animals out. Why are these animals being returned and how can we prevent that from happening?
 - *ACS: We are well below the national average for adoption returns. We want to caution people into looking too much at that statistic. An adoption coming back is no different than the animal going to foster. If we ask the right questions we can learn valuable information about the animal to help us better place them.*
- Monica Griffin: Groundbreaking for the new shelter in June of this year?
 - *ACS: End of 2nd quarter.*
- Monica Griffin: Transparency is your friend. The new shelter will it have better bathing areas, isolation areas, grooming room?
 - *ACS: We are all for transparency. Transparency lessens rumors that can get started and impact the shelter. These areas are in our plans for the building.*
- Monica Griffin: Community engagement is more than just adoption events. Can we implement a minor adoption fee, \$20, and provide a better leash and collar instead of the slip leads.
- Ren Hall: What happened to the off-site dog program?
 - *ACS: Friends, who pays for the program, made changes to how we can use the money for that program. We also need contracts with the individuals or the facilities. Kelly and Domingo have been visiting these sites and ensuring that they are places that we want to partner with. We do not want to use these as extra crate space and actually using it to make an impact in getting the animal adopter. The program is being revamped and will be back, but do not have a timeline.*
- Ren Hall: The funding from Jefferson Shreve, was that earmarked for emergency medical? What is it being used for?
 - *ACS: This money is being used for emergency medical for animals.*
- Sydney Clemens: How have vaccination protocols changed since Best Friends has been

here?

- *ACS: One of the big things is that we were not giving boosters as we should to adult animals, only to young ones.*
- Sydney Clemens: Can we implement a survey question on the adoption applications about whether a walkthrough or social media post brought them into the shelter to adopt? To see if re-implementing the kennel walkthrough has been successful?
 - *ACS: We are currently working on revamping our adoption application.*
- Sydney Clemens: How is an animal coming back after a couple days a good thing? Sure, we get valuable information about them, but there's no where to put them?
 - *ACS: It's tough to find the magic formula. When animal's come back we want to take advantage of the opportunity to learn more about that animal. With Emory helping us focus on adoptions there are changes that we will make to find a better way to have adoptions stick.*

Adjourned. The next meeting is Tuesday, April 16, 2023, at 6:00 pm.