

ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC)

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, August 3, 2023

Office of Animal Serv

7315 Muncaster Mill Road, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Derwood, MD 20855

I. Call to Order 7:01 p.m.

Meeting called to order by Jan Armstrong and 2nd by Elizabeth Mullen.

Present In-Person: Melissa Rubin, Chair; Jan Armstrong; Dr. Roxanne Borrok; Linda McMakin; Elizabeth Mullen; Vicki Thomas; Sandy Yuen; Thomas J. Koenig; Dr. Gregory Lawrence; and Bonnie White.

Present Virtually via Microsoft Teams: Stephanie Arrington, Vice Chair; Jennifer Hughes, Parliamentarian; Kim Haden; Maureen Smith.

Present In-Person Staff: Trish Ranshaw.

Handouts:

- August 3, 2023 Agenda
- June 1, 2023 Meeting Minutes
- Montgomery County Animal Services Advisory Committee 2023 – 2024 Committee/Staff Member – Contact List
- Montgomery County Council Bill No. 8-23.

II. Review and Approve June 1, 2023, Meeting Minutes 7:01 p.m.

Reviewed June 1, 2023, meeting minutes. **Motion by Jennifer Hughes to approve minutes, 2nd by Maureen Smith. Vote – Approved.**

III. Updates from Chair – Melissa Rubin, Chair 7:02 p.m.

a. Our Mission

ASAC's annual report was finished. Thank you to Kim Haden and Vicki Thomas for their help. A draft of the annual report was sent to Director Koenig and ASAC members for review. Director Koenig stated he had no changes or edits. Director Koenig stated he will forward the annual report to the Montgomery County Boards, Committees, and Commissions (BCCs) and the County Executive on Friday, August 4, 2023, and that it will need a transmittal letter. Maureen Smith noted that she was on the Animal Care Committee, but that there's no mention of this in the letter. Director Koenig will hold off sending the report until this can be updated.

b. Working Together – Moving Forward

A discussion concerning communications and how ASAC works together was held. Melissa Rubin stated all ASAC members need to participate and that

everyone's voices and expertise are important. Melissa Rubin also stated that the ASAC priority working groups are supposed to be meeting and working with staff. Melissa Rubin also opened up the floor for ASAC members to discuss barriers/issues to accomplishing the above topics.

Motion by Elizabeth Mullen, 2nd by Kim Haden at 7:23 p.m.: Each priority group will submit a monthly report/form (created by Kim Haden) that populates into a Google doc. From this data and information, a monthly report from each priority group will be generated and sent to ASAC members for review.

Melissa Rubin opened the floor up for ASAC members to discuss other issues ASAC members faced when working with each other. A lengthy discussion followed.

c. New Resiliency Hub

On June 13, 2023, MCASAC unveiled a new resiliency hub powered by renewable energy microgrids, and a ribbon cutting with County Executive Marc Elrich was held.

Background: OAS was selected as a site for a hub and will allow our facility to run independently of the larger power grid by combining clean and renewable energy sources.

OAS being selected as a hub shows Montgomery County realizes and is aware of how important OAS is and the services provided to the animals and the community.

The microgrids at the Adoption Center have already been operating and helping the community. This past November, the microgrids allowed MCASAC to stay open when a plane was caught in nearby electrical wires for several hours. Thanks to the microgrids, OAS was able to remain operational and continue to provide care for the animals in our care during power outages.

“The Montgomery County Animal Services & Adoption Center was not impacted because it was able to use stored energy from solar panels. That avoided compounding the emergency and having to move all the animals out,” said County Executive Marc Elrich following the ceremony.

IV. Maddie's Shelter Consultation – Melissa Rubin, Chair 7:55 p.m.

Maddie's Fund, an independent outside group, will be coming to review OAS's operations. Maddie's Fund will provide a report of topics, which may include what is working well, suggestions best practices, etc.

In addition, Maddie's Fund will hold the following meetings:

- a. Wednesday, September 27, 2023, 7:00 p.m.:

- Public is invited, 100+ people.
- Location: Executive Office Building (EOB)
- Details subject to change, and exact details TBA.

- b. Thursday, September 28, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
- Meeting for ASAC members.
 - Location: OAS
 - Note: because this meeting is very close to the October 5, 2023 ASAC meeting, there will be no ASAC meeting on October 5, 2023.

V. Other – Jennifer Hughes 8:00 p.m.

Jennifer Hughes brought up the topic of communications and the process of how to better communicate with each other and with OAS. Developing group norms was discussed, and work will continue in this area.

VI. Priority Groups Report Out 8:08 p.m.

a. S/N Update on Proposal – MCSNIP – Vicki Thomas, Vice Chair

Vicki Thomas stated that they are continuing to pursue county funding and will meet with members from the Public Safety Committee.

b. S/N Update on FMC – Linda McMakin

Linda McMakin stated that Metro Ferals offered a mobile unit to FMCA for a S/N program. FMCA has the funds for it, however, talks are in a very preliminary stage. FMCA and Metro Ferals will continue discussions.

VII. Update on the Letter to OAS re: the Facility – Linda McMakin 8:18 p.m.

Linda McMakin was confused about the letter she was to write and wondered if this letter was in reference to Allan Cohen (public member) commenting and bringing up that OAS chairs were old and should be replaced. Discussions expanded to include more than just old chairs.

Director Koenig stated the process for 25 chairs already began. Some items fit for fiscal impact. OAS has a list of items and submitted their priorities. Now waiting to hear what they will get or what will be done.

VIII. Update from Executive Director – Director Tom Koenig 8:23 p.m.

a. Expiration of Terms Process

The terms area staggard and have notified the Commission about members with the term expiration date of 8/31/2023. Five members' terms are up for renewal.

It's okay for these members to send interest letters to Director Koenig, however, they must wait for the position announcement to be posted.

If there are more than 3 applications for a position, interviews will need to be conducted, and there may be a need for a nominating committee.

b. Other updates

There's a Ketamine shortage, and no one is hoarding it. OAS is dealing with us as best we can. Dr. Lawrence is handling it.

Since the July 2023 press release regarding large dog adoptions (over 40 lbs.) went out, 41 dogs over 40 lbs. have been adopted! The response has been amazing, and OAS is very proud. 21 dogs went into foster, and 12 went into the foster-to-adopt program.

IX. Public Comment By

Alan Cohen

8:27 p.m.

Susan Rich

8:28 p.m.

Bruce Cohen

8:34 p.m.

X. Meeting Adjourned

8:35 p.m.

Motion by Elizabeth Mullen.

2nd by Dr. Roxanne Borrok.

Unanimous vote: All in favor. Approved.