

ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC)

**MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, February 1, 2024**

Office of Animal Services
7315 Muncaster Mill Road, 2nd Floor Conference Room
Derwood, MD 20855

I. Meeting Called to Order by Melissa Rubin, Chair 7:00 p.m.

Present In-Person: Melissa Rubin, Chair; Vicki Thomas, Vice Chair; Jennifer Hughes; Jan Armstrong; Kim Haden; Dr. Gregory Lawrence; Lex Lepiarz; and Bonnie White.

Facilitator: Ken Hartman, Director of Strategic Partnerships for Montgomery County Government.

Present Virtually via Microsoft Teams: Maureen Smith, Sandy Yuen, and Beth Mullen.

Present In-Person Staff: Trish Ranshaw.

Vacant Positions: Person representing non-profit org. that provides animal fostering in the County; One licensed veterinarian; and one person representing Friends of Montgomery County Animals (FMCA) or similar org. operating in the County.

Handouts: February 1, 2024, Agenda, and January 4, 2024, Meeting Minutes.

II. Review and Approve January 4, 2024, Minutes 7:02 p.m.

Reviewed and approved with one edit by J. Hughes **Motion by Jan Armstrong to approve minutes, 2nd by Jennifer Hughes. Vote – Approved by all.**

III. Updates from Melissa Rubin, Chair 7:03 p.m.

Committee needs to take votes for ASAC positions of Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. Melissa Rubin made Motion to step down as Chair and appoint Jennifer Hughes as Temporary Chair, Vicki Thomas remain Vice Chair, and Sandy Yuen as secretary. Discussion on motion occurred by members.

Motion to vote Jennifer Hughes as Chair for an interim period of three months and Vicki Thomas remain Vice Chair.

Motion Approved by M. Rubin, J. Hughes, V. Thomas, J. Armstrong, M. Smith, and B. Mullen.

Motion abstained by S. Yuen and K. Haden.

S. Yuen agreed to be ASAC's faux secretary to take minutes for three months.

M. Rubin informed interviews were conducted by the Nominating Committee on 1/25/24. A recommendation(s) was made; memo forwarded to the County Executive's (CE) office of said recommendation(s).

IV. Ken Hartman – Facilitator Updates

Ken will inquire to the CE about the current vacant positions on the Committee (FMCA or similar org. in the County, a licensed vet, and an animal foster org. in the County). He will have these vacancies advertised. Policy regarding current re-appointments with expired terms have no worries and would be re-appointed if they sent in their letter of interest to the CE to continue to serve on the Committee.

V. Updates from Dr. Lawrence, Acting Executive Director

7:24 p.m.

- Vet suite performed 155 surgeries in December and 180 surgeries in January.
- Population of 213 animals in house, 62 in foster, total of 275 animals in OAS care as of 2/1/24.
- 75% increase of active fosters volunteered from September through December.
- 139 animals were placed in foster homes through the foster-to-adopt program, including 58 dogs.
- OAS and volunteers hosted an Open House “Holiday for the Animals”. Twelve plus rescue groups and/or fosters attended.
- OAS attended the Montgomery Parks Holiday Barket. Volunteers brought eight adoptable dogs.
- Surrenders to the shelter is down since staff members are providing proactive resources and counseling to prevent owners from surrendering their pets.
- Pre-appointment adoptions to walk-ins started in December. The transition was rocky at first but is now smoothing out.
- Fosters began pre-adoption for unaltered animals to Foster-to-Adoption with a conditional to be altered.
- Safe Keeps reduced from 90-days to 30-days. OAS will require all animals to be altered to participate in the program.
- Length of Stays has reduced by 20 to 16 days.
- Safekeeps have been reduced from 90 to 40 day stay and all safekeeps will be altered.
- The OAS call center is currently understaffed by 4 positions.
- ASAC members agreed to email Dr. Lawrence with any of their concerns.

Jennifer Hughes suggested that ASAC lobby the CE and CC for OAS’ funding needs. For ASAC to draft a letter in support of OAS’ top two priority staffing needs.

Kim Haden moves to support writing a letter supporting OAS’ funding needs for the foster/rescue coordinator position and for two registered vet technician positions, and for an ACA dog walker position recommended in the Maddie’s Fund Report.

2nd by Jan Armstrong

Jennifer Hughes makes Motion to Amend the letter for a need of County funding for a spay/neuter program inclusive from OAS’ priorities.

Kim Hayden agreed to draft letter of ASAC’s support. ASAC to meet virtually on 2/12/24 at 7 p.m. to discussed/edit support letter.

Vote - Approved by All

VI. Public Comment By

Jeanie Miller
Susan Rich

8:19 p.m.

VII. Meeting Adjourned

Motion by K. Haden???

2nd by Jan Armstrong.

Unanimous vote: All in favor. Approved.

8:26 p.m.