

ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC)

MEETING MINUTES Thursday, December 5, 2024

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

I. Call to Order 7:00 p.m.

Meeting called to order by Jennifer Hughes.

Present In-Person: Jennifer Hughes, Interim Acting Chair; Vicki Thomas, Vice Chair; Kim Haden; Elizabeth Mullen; Judith Vaughan-Prather; Dr. Gregory Lawrence, Chief Vet; and Bonnie White, Business Operations Manager.

Present Virtually via Microsoft Teams: Maureen Smith and Dir. Caroline Hairfield

Absent: Jan Armstrong and Sandy Yuen.

Staff Present In-Person: Trish Ranshaw.

Handouts: 11/7/24 Draft Meeting Minutes

II. Review and Approve November 7, 2024 Meeting Minutes 7:02 p.m.

Kim Haden made Motion to Approve Nov. 7 Minutes. Vicki Thomas 2nd Motion. Vote - Approved by all.

Judith Vaughan-Prather attended her first ASAC meeting tonight. Judith gave an introduction and Committee members and staff introduced themselves and welcomed Judith to the Committee.

III. Update on ASAC Vacancies & 2025 ASAC Meeting Dates – Dir. Hairfield 7:07 p.m.

Beth Mullen was confirmed on 12/10/24 for a Full Term (Exp. 8/31/27) remaining in the seat of “a person with expertise in animal or pet behavior”.

Kim Haden was confirmed 11/19/24 for a Full Term (Exp. 8/31/26) filling the seat of a “person representing Friends of Montgomery County Animals (FMCA)”. Kim moved from the non-profit animal fostering seat filling the seat of a person representing FMCA vacated by Linda McMakin. Judith Vaughan-Prather was confirmed 11/19/24 (Exp. 8/31/26) for a Partial Term filling the seat of a “Public Member” preceded by Melissa Rubin.

Two interviews took place on 11/1/24 for the seat of a “person representing an animal rescue org. operating in the County. One of the candidates also qualified for the vacant seat of the non-profit org. to provide animal fostering. The Nominating Committee (NC) consists of: Dir. Hairfield, Jennifer Hughes, and Beth Mullen and will conduct one more interview (next week) of an applicant who applied for seat of a “person representing a non-profit org. that provides animal fostering in the County. Once interview is completed the NC will make a recommendation(s) to the County Executive (CE).

The CE’s office re-advertised the licensed vet vacant seat on 11/20/24 and is open until filled.

The Committee discussed the 2025 monthly meeting dates and time for future meetings. The Committee agreed to meet every month in 2025 except the month of July. The Committee will continue to meet on the 1st Thursday of each month. The hours have changed from 7-8:30 p.m. to 6:30-8:00 p.m.

IV. Update on the Implementation of the Spay/Neuter Program – Dir. Hairfield 7:17 p.m.

Dir. Hairfield plans to begin the pilot S/N program mid-January or week of January 16, 2025, targeting disadvantage persons in the County. Susan Rich has voiced her concerns of persons in her neighborhood with unaltered pets and cannot afford to have their pets altered. Caroline will begin offering low-cost spay/neuter surgeries starting in Susan Rich's neighborhood.

The pilot S/N program will involve a lot of changes and considerations. Changes and issues will be ironed out as the pilot program evolves and takes shape. Dir. Hairfield plans to meet with Dr. Lawrence to work out scheduling.

Committee members offered their thoughts and discussed on how to begin or run the S/N program as follows:

Dir. Hairfield is working on three forms that may be introduced as part of the pilot S/N program. (These are working documents until finalized and approved by the OCA before introducing them for use.)

Currently OAS is in the middle of having most all staff change their schedules from ten-hour days to eight-hour days to provide more coverage throughout the day. These changes are governed by the Union. Negotiations and biddings for the changes occur mid-January.

Committee member asked for a new organization chart. A new organization chart will be submitted to the Committee at the Jan. 2, 2025, meeting.

V. Discuss Goals & Objectives for the Near Future & Process for Implementing the Goals 7:59 p.m.

Jennifer Hughes: Where are we going in year 2025, outward facing goals instead of inward facing goals.

J. Hughes put forth below, four goals to provide a starting point for discussion.

1. Assist with Community Engagement - Develop or provide input into creation of a survey instrument that determines what the community wants from OAS.
2. Identify ways to develop MCASAC and OAS as community resources and develop an action plan to achieve this goal.
3. Develop policies around community/outdoor cats.
4. Identify improvements in communication strategies, including events.

J. Hughes: Caroline can focus on internal processes and focus on how ASAC can help work with OAS to build on the outward facing four goals suggested by J. Hughes while OAS works on internal changes.

Kim Haden, after lengthy discussions on how to begin the goals, proposed to:
Look at the four goals and decide does the Committee focus on one goal at a time or should the Committee prioritize the four goals and focus on all four but in order.

Maureen Smith made a motion to define the Committee's overarching goal as: Advise and develop policies resulting in Community Engagement and Action. Kim Haden seconded the motion. After discussion, the goal a friendly amendment was made to change the goal to: Community Outreach and Action, Kim 2nd the Motion. All in favor – Unanimous vote: Motion Approved.

The four goals revised accordingly:

1. Assist with Community Engagement resulting in Action –
Develop a survey instrument that determines what the community wants from OAS.
2. Develop and advise ways to develop OAS' community resources and an action plan to achieve this goal.
3. Community Outreach and Action: Develop community/outdoor cat policy's; Provide education to the public on-community/outdoor cats and assist OAS with developing policy on community/outdoor cats.
4. Identify improvements in communication strategies, including events.

J. Hughes: Next meeting Committee to finalize the goal and objectives. J. Hughes to send out an email summarizing the Committee objectives and the process for finalizing the goal and objectives for 2025.

VI. Public Comment: Public comments made by Stephen Roznowski and Susan Rich **8:36 p.m.**

VII. Adjournment:
Motion by Kim Haden to Adjourn, 2nd by Vicki Thomas Unanimous vote: All in favor. **8:45 p.m.**