

Centre County PAWS, Inc.
Board Meeting Minutes
August 25, 2020, 5:45 – 7:00 pm
Virtual Meeting on Zoom

Board Members/Staff Attending: Dave Abler (presiding), Lisa Bahr, Maureen Casey, Mike Chilcot, Bob Conn, Reenie Ferretti, Ginny Ishler, Ryan Macaluso, Ginny Newman, Heidi Petruzzi (recording), Susan Strohm, Colleen Williams, Monica Wright

PAWS Members and Guests Attending:
None

Dave Abler called the meeting to order at 5:45 pm.

Member Questions and Comments

None

Action Item - Approval of July 28, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes - Heidi Petruzzi

Ginny N. moved to approve the minutes. Bob Conn seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Officer Reports

President Report - Dave Abler did not have a report.

Vice President Report – Ryan Macaluso did not have a report.

Treasurer Report – Reenie Ferretti did not have a report.

Recording Secretary Report – Heidi Petruzzi did not have a report.

Executive Director Report – Lisa Bahr emailed her reports.

Operations - The transition to the new operations management team is going well, but will continue to take a significant amount of Lisa's time in the near future. Lisa is pleased with the decision making strategies of the team and she is conducting weekly managerial and operations meetings with them.

Adoption numbers show that PAWS will have a record month in August, just after the record intake month of July. Dog intake numbers were up this month since there were two transports. Kira Rigg is working on another transport for the first week in September, which will leave room for a second transport later in the month, thereby potentially keeping the dog intake numbers up. Cat side interest in PAWS is very high, with groups of people waiting in their cars to enter the building. Nationwide, adoptions are up and intakes are down. Maureen attended a webinar recently that mentioned how foster videos have positively impacted adoptions and also reduced traffic flow in shelter buildings. The videos, which are posted to shelter web sites, give potential adopters a better idea how foster animals, particularly cats, behave in a home, rather than only seeing the animals' shelter demeanors. The adopters then come in with a particular animal in mind and also with some knowledge of the animal's personality, thereby spending less time overall in the building.

Events - Reenie noted that Christine already has pulled together good commitments for the Fur Ball. Monica and Reenie warned that this first online Fur Ball auction may not be as successful as the previous in-person auctions due to the transition to an online event. This year's Fur Ball is open to the public so that more people will have access to the auction items. If anyone in the PAWS community sees an auction item that might appeal to a specific person, please share the information with that person. There will be pre-event promotions as well as an event page with live activities that will be streamed to PAWS' social media pages. The Fur Ball, which will be held on October 9, will be promoted widely in the PAWS community. Monica gave kudos to Lisa and the Fur Ball Committee for thinking outside the box for this year's event.

Finance - July was a strong month for donations due to the Centre Gives deposit. August will look rough due to low donations and high expenses. Expenses were high due to a sharp increase in the use of SNAP vouchers. The mailer will go out this week, so there should be cash donations in September. Reenie noted that the YTD spreadsheet numbers are a good metric for PAWS' financial health since the budget has been severely impacted by COVID. Hopefully, the Fur Ball, brick fundraiser, unexpected donations, and COVID grants will keep the financials flat for this year. Next year could be difficult if COVID grants are not available again.

Development - Dave asked for Lisa's sense of donor enthusiasm. Lisa feels that donor enthusiasm is waning overall due to the extent of the pandemic. Monica agreed. Lisa hopes that there will be another stimulus package and hopes it will coincide with the mailer. The mailer directly addresses how COVID has impacted PAWS.

Lisa submitted a grant proposal to Centre Gives to pay for constructing a temperature controlled shed for Pet Pantry items since that service is in high demand. Given the current and projected economic conditions, PAWS would like to be able to help the community as much as possible and the shed would assist in that endeavor. Ginny N. said that Family Intervention Counseling Service in Bellefonte has clients who may need Pet Pantry items. Ryan mentioned that the Youth Services Bureau and the Centre County Adult Services Program also may have clients who need Pet Pantry items.

Personnel - Ginny N. asked about the Operations Manager search results and when Lisa plans to reopen the search. Lisa noted that the reasons the candidates did not accept the offers were financial and COVID related. Rather than begin another search during COVID, Lisa put together the current team as an interim solution. The time table for a new search is undetermined, but Lisa and Dave hope to revise the job description and begin the search process again at the end of 2020 or the beginning of 2021. Ryan and Susan are thankful for the opportunities available to Colin and Megan under the interim plan.

Other - Previously, Lisa mentioned a large verbal commitment from Fred Metzger for the new PAWS rehoming program. Maureen is looking forward to working on this project as it progresses. The program will be named in memory of John Thomas, a former colleague of Fred Metzger who died unexpectedly this year. Plans are moving forward, with the program initially launching as an emergency fund but with the intent to include chronic health management situations in the future.

Lisa's goal for the upcoming month is to update SOPs and to present a draft of Board and Operations policies for the Board to review. Longer term, she also will put into place a draft development plan; she is working with Molly Kunkel at Centre Foundation on the project.

Future Board meeting themes will be based on "guest speakers" covering various aspects of PAWS such as development, finance, and medicine. This will help keep the Board informed on a wide array of topics and make the meeting more interactive. Reenie noted that the idea behind this strategy is to shift the reports to a high level dash-board type format, similar to the new finance report, and reserve meeting time for questions, concerns, and in-depth interactions that pool Board members' collective expertise in order to produce higher level advisory interactions.

Susan moved to adjourn the meeting. Ginny N. seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 6:38 pm.

The next PAWS Board Meeting is September 22, 2020.