

**Centre County PAWS, Inc.**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**March 24, 2020, 5:45 – 7:00 pm**  
**Virtual Meeting on Zoom**

Board Members/Staff Attending: Dave Abler (presiding), Lisa Bahr, Mike Chilcot, Bob Conn, Reenie Ferretti, Ginny Ishler, Ryan Macaluso, Ginny Newman, Heidi Petruzzi (recording), Yvonne Riley, Joan Ritchie

PAWS Members and Guests Attending: Heather Mannion

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

#### **Member Questions and Comments**

Heather gave props to Lisa for all of her hard work keeping PAWS running smoothly in the midst of the sustained changes brought on by the pandemic.

#### **Action Item - Approval of February 25, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes - Heidi Petruzzi**

Bob moved to approve the minutes. Joan seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

#### **Officer Reports**

President Report - Dave Abler explained the new voting process for the upcoming election. The election will be held on Saturday, May 30, from 11 am until 4 pm to coincide with PAWS' open hours. PAWS members may vote anytime during that period. Various Board members will be present to hand out ballots and check voter names with the membership list. The ballots will be tallied after the voting period and announced at that time. Since the election occurs between the May Board Meeting and the June Board Meeting, the current Board members will serve through May 26 and the new Board members will have their first meeting on June 23.

Vice President Report – Virginia Ishler did not have a report.

Treasurer Report – Reenie Ferretti did not have a report.

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

#### **Meeting Theme: PAWS' Response to COVID-19**

**Executive Director Report** – Lisa Bahr emailed her reports. Lisa split her Executive Director report into marketing, education, IT, other, COVID-19, and staffing. She also compiled an abbreviated Operations Report since she continues to manage operations with the exception of the duties that Mandy has incorporated into her job as the new Kennel Manager. The COVID-19 crisis is causing delays with spay/neuter surgeries and rabies vaccines since these procedures must be done by a veterinarian and veterinarians are not as accessible due to the pandemic. The bulk of Lisa's time has been dedicated to PAWS' response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Marketing.* Currently, PAWS is not conducting traditional fundraising. Instead, the PAWS community is working to keep the organization visible through social media, such as the daily events that PAWS staff and volunteers stream on Facebook. The Marketing Team decided that PAWS would not try to piece together an event right now since it is not a good climate to ask for donations. Similar organizations are not seeing good responses to their fundraising efforts.

*COVID-19.* Lisa created standard operating procedures (SOP) for handling COVID-19 at PAWS. Animal Shelters are considered essential businesses under the Pennsylvania pandemic restrictions. PAWS is operating under minimum basic operations, which include adoptions, foster transfers, medical checks, and intakes. PAWS is limiting human interactions and time in the facility to minimize exposure. Lisa had two virtual meetings last night, one with Cat Shift Leaders and Cat Adoption Counselors and one with Dog Shift Leaders and Dog Adoption Counselors, to discuss how processes are working from volunteers' perspective and also to determine whether or not PAWS should help other shelters in need. The volunteers agreed that PAWS could assist other shelters as long as the animals are able to go out to foster quickly. PAWS has been inundated with requests to foster animals and does not have any more dogs in house that are appropriate for foster care. Tomorrow, there will be a modified intake of eight dogs from a small shelter with limited resources. Lisa is hoping to have a similar modified intake of cats from Huntingdon Humane Society in the near future.

The PAWS web site has current COVID 19 information, as it applies to PAWS, available through a link near the top of the page. Spring Bingo is canceled due to COVID-19. Volunteers and staff are taking precautions seriously.

There will be a couple *Centre Daily Times* stories published soon focusing what PAWS is doing relative to COVID-19. PAWS staff and Lisa will continue virtual meetings with volunteers and live streams. PAWS will conduct volunteer appreciation activities virtually.

Cat and dog adoption numbers are down for March, but have not cratered. Lisa noted that, under the COVID-19 restrictions, adoptions are handled primarily online with the animal being transferred to the new owner at PAWS. There is PPE (personal protective equipment) available throughout the facility for staff and volunteers; Lisa sent out an email about proper use of PPE. There have been a few emergency intakes, also conducted with minimal interactions. PAWS has not washed intake animals thus far. For tomorrow's intake, staff will follow the University of Wisconsin SOP that presumes animals probably are not fomites for COVID-19, but suggests wiping them with an animal safe solution due to transmission uncertainty. Lisa has not seen any pets surrendered due to concerns that the animals will transmit coronavirus, but anticipates that some could be surrendered in the future due to financial constraints brought on by the pandemic.

Ryan thanked Lisa for the great communications from PAWS teams. Dave asked how much lead time PAWS will need for summer camps. Lisa believes the lead time will be small since most of the organization is done ahead of time or online. Ginny N. thanked Lisa for the daily videos on social media and for keeping PAWS front and center in people's minds. Lisa noted that viewers seem to be interested in the

shelter tours more than reading to the animals. There are about 70 people tuning into the events as they air. Lisa enjoys the break from her routine that the streaming events provide.

*IT.* Lisa thanked Bob for the IT cost savings highlighted in her report.

*Other.* Lisa's "Principles & Techniques of Fundraising" in-person course from the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy was canceled and turned into a self study online course to be available at a later date. Upstate Canine Academy's Tom Davis recently contacted Lisa about showcasing PAWS in two videos about shelter dogs. Filming is postponed due to COVID-19, but it will be great exposure for PAWS since Tom Davis has 136,000 YouTube subscribers and 42,000 Facebook followers.

*Development.* Recently, Chris and Lisa secured a large donation to help cover the anticipated SNAP budget overage. Dave noted that SNAP numbers seem to be lower to date this year as compared to last year. The SNAP numbers could increase later in the year when COVID restrictions ease or we may see higher kitten numbers due to fewer spays and neuters.

*Finance Report* - Reenie reviewed the Finance Report. She noted that February saw PAWS operating at a loss, as is typical for that month. The financial impact of the canceled Bingo event will be partially mitigated if participants donate their Bingo ticket fee. Year to date income was lower than budgeted, as were expenses. As planned, a portion of the money from the matured CD was transferred to the Vanguard Star account, with a larger amount going to operational reserves.

Lisa noted that Chris heard from Centre Foundation that the organization hopes Centre Gives will make up for some of the losses that organizations are experiencing due to COVID-19. Lisa hopes to add a car raffle fundraising event at the end of this year to make up for a portion of the PAWS deficit. She and the other Directors also are looking at having a one-off campaign to bring in additional funds.

Kennel assistants are not working as many hours since there are fewer animals at PAWS. Currently, volunteers are working more hours than usual. Lisa is concerned that sometimes there are too many people in the facility to maintain adequate social distancing.

### **Committee Reports**

Nominating Committee Report – Joan Ritchie emailed three candidate resumes to Executive Board members. The Nominating Committee recommends that all three candidates appear on the ballot. These candidates will be up for a three year term. All three are excellent candidates. The last day to petition to be on the Board is April 11. Dave expressed his thanks to the Committee and to Joan.

Bob moved to adjourn the meeting. Yvonne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 6:41 pm, followed by an executive session.

The next PAWS Board Meeting is April 28, 2020.