

Centre County PAWS, Inc.
Board Meeting Minutes
January 22, 2019, 5:45 – 7:00 pm
PAWS Adoption and Education Center

Board Members/Staff Attending: Yvonne Riley (presiding), Lisa Bahr, Kris Clark, Bob Conn, Brian Eppley, Chris Faust, Reenie Ferretti, Bill Harvey, Ginny Ishler, Ginny Newman, Heidi Petruzzi (recording), Monica Wright

PAWS Members and Guests Attending:

Tess Crossen, Ashley Green, Ben Jones, Alysha Kronz, Kira Rigg, Winter Sims, Ali Schwartz.

Yvonne Riley called the meeting to order at 5:47 pm.

Member Questions and Comments

Tess asked about the procedure for nominating Board members. Bob replied that the procedure is in the Bylaws and that he will email the appropriate instructions and email addresses to Tess.

Action Item - Approval of December 11, 2018 Board Meeting Minutes - Heidi Petruzzi

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

Officer Reports

President Report – Dave Abler was not present.

Vice President Report – Yvonne Riley noted that nominating committee has met and will start interviewing prospective candidates for the Board within the next month.

Treasurer Report– Reenie Ferretti did not have a report this month.

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

Staff and Committee Reports

Director of Operations Report, Part 1 – Lisa Bahr emailed her report. She noted that two meeting attendees were present in order fulfill a class assignment to observe a committee meeting. Lisa presented information regarding the Dog Behavior Program and the resulting special dog adoptions. In October, she created the Dog Behavior Team, led by coordinators Alysha and Kira. The team objectives are to serve as resources for adopters and fosters, increase the number of Play Pals and play groups, raise the level of dog handling and training skill of volunteers and staff, improve effective adoption rates for dogs with special behavioral considerations, and improve the Pet Partner program. Since its inception, the Dog Behavior Program has seen a lot of success. The Dog Behavior Program ensures a systematic approach to how dogs are introduced to the public. Pet Partners have become the primary contact for dogs, as well providing enrichment, exercise, training, increased socialization, and temperament testing. Ali is the Pet Partner program coordinator. The dogs also receive enrichment toys or snacks twice a day. Since the Dog Behavior Program's inception, PAWS has adopted out quite a few long term residents with behavioral challenges. Lisa particularly highlighted Ben's and Ali's extraordinary efforts with Diesel and his adopters. Bob gave kudos to Kira for her patience with an adopter over the winter break

Director of Finance Report – Brian Eppley distributed the financial report. December was a super busy month for both income and expenses. Expenses were higher than usual. Some of the costs were due to medical expenses and spay/neuter vouchers. Also, the Fur Ball bill was higher than usual. For the year, PAWS was over budget by about \$2,000. Payroll and medical were significantly higher than expected for the year and there were several approved capital expenditures. Ginny N. asked if the 2019 budget should be changed, given the year end numbers. Some line items were increased in the approved 2019 budget, but Brian will discuss the 2019 budget and 2018 expenses at the finance committee meeting and will bring any resulting suggested changes to the Board.

Director of Operations Report, Part 2:

Lisa pointed out that the cat adoption numbers are significantly lower for 2018 over 2017. The difference appears to be due to kitten promotions. In 2018, these promotions did not occur because there was not a sponsor for the events. Currently, there also is not a sponsor for the 2019 kitten promotions. One possibility is for PAWS to subsidize adoption fees in order to increase cat adoptions; this would require Board approval. Kitten Days of Summer promotions were done in 2015, 2016, and 2017 and adoptions were higher in those years. While the total number of cat adoptions for 2018 is disappointing, knowing the impact of the kitten promotions is valuable information. Lisa and Yvonne will go back to the cat team to discuss the lower numbers and ask for suggestions. Kitten promotions greatly increases shares and clicks on social media platforms, elevating visibility for PAWS. One problem with a high volume of kitten adoptions is keeping up with spaying and neutering them. This was mitigated starting in Fall 2018 by implementing a Foster To Adopt procedure so that kittens can go to their new homes before being altered. Also included in Lisa's report are pictures of the new Intake Room arrangement, which is designed to increase the number of cats PAWS can receive at any one time. Recently, the cat wait list was reorganized; it includes about 150 cats. The SNAP coordinator proactively sends information to those on the waiting list. Last year was a good year for SNAP.

Development and Marketing Report – Chris Faust emailed and distributed the development report. In December, PAWS received two donations, totaling \$75,000, for the cat wing expansion. Chris F. has 6 donor appointments scheduled. She received many positive responses to the organization's role in helping Mayflower, who came to PAWS through a local vet when the owner brought her in to be euthanized because she was no longer useful for breeding. The Comedy Club event is sold out; Joan Ritchie and Ritchie Veterinary Hospital stepped up to be the lead sponsor. The recent Happy Cat Yoga sold out quickly and raised a record amount for the event. Since there was a waiting list, another yoga session was scheduled for February 9th.

Nominating Committee Report – Joan Ritchie was not present.

Personnel Committee Report – Yvonne Riley did not have a report.

Membership Committee - Ginny Newman emailed the revised membership report. She thanked the committee and the advisory group for their hard work and comments. The revised proposal incorporates input from the staff, advisory group, and Board. The hope is that this Board meeting will be for discussion of the proposal, with a vote taking place at the next meeting. Ginny I. asked if the key tags also can be used via a smart phone. Bob responded that PAWS does not have the infrastructure to support this technology. The key tags will be reissued each year in order to indicate current businesses and members. Since memberships are paid on an ongoing, monthly basis, there is some risk that members could take advantage of the benefits without paying for a full year of membership. PAWS will rely on the integrity of its members unless a significant pattern of abuse occurs, at which point counter measures will be discussed. With this proposal, the only way to be a PAWS member is to enroll in a monthly membership. Chris F. is concerned about turning off potential members who would rather make an annual donation to become a member. Bill suggested tracking these requests in order to gauge whether or not modifications are necessary. Ginny N. will take the suggestion back to the committee and also will investigate how other organizations handle this situation.

Chris F. also is concerned about the proposal's impact on the publicity committee. Chris F. and Ginny N. have discussed having Ginny N. talk through the proposal with the publicity committee, the web site designer, and the social media team in order to make sure those groups have the resources to implement the proposal. They also discussed that Brian currently must manually enter monthly donors and that a solution to this issue is under investigation. Chris F. feels that some pieces of the proposal have to be resolved before she is one hundred percent comfortable forging ahead. Overall, she feels the proposal is a great start and that the problems can be worked through.

Bob gave kudos to the membership committee and said that the proposal process was very well done. He is concerned about the capacity of the publicity committee to achieve the proposal's objectives. Particularly problematic is the technology for processing monthly payments, which may take a year to implement given all of the priorities already in the publicity committee's queue. Bob hesitates to suggest that the Board vote on the membership proposal without input from the publicity committee. He feels that it may take longer than anticipated to surmount the obstacles presented and that the timeline for implementation will be dependent on volunteers' capacity and resources.

Ginny N. emphasized that the membership program is a concept and can be implemented as quickly or slowly as is desired. Bob noted that the technology and publicity obstacles are foundational issues. Bill indicated that technology will be necessary for most future PAWS activities and that the Board owes it to the publicity committee to arm it with the resources it needs to be successful. Bob believes that it is important to leverage volunteers' skills and interests.

Ginny N. would like the opportunity to meet with the publicity committee and discuss what the membership committee is requesting and also when, and if, the publicity committee can help with the proposal. Reenie pointed out that it may be necessary to step back and look at the bigger picture, to evaluate the resources PAWS has and those that are required for the proposal, and then figure out what it would take to move forward. It is not that the membership proposal cannot be implemented, it is a question of what do we need and how we we move forward. Ginny N. would like Bill to join her in meeting with the publicity committee to help identify what resources may be necessary to move forward, not only with the membership proposal but also with other technology projects.

Unfinished Business

Action Item - Cat Wing Expansion - Lisa Bahr and Chris Faust

Lisa distributed preliminary plans for the new cat wing addition and explained its features. The majority of the funding for the project is in hand. Of note is that the plans do not include a commercial washer and dryer. Lisa consulted with Pete Popovitch at Mike's Video, TV & Appliance regarding commercial machines, and he indicated that the original price quote Lisa received was extremely high and that PAWS does not need a commercial washer and dryer. After hearing how PAWS uses the laundry machines, Pete recommended a high quality residential washer and dryer instead. While it was frustrating, the life span of the previous machines was appropriate and realistic. Kris C. asked if the addition is big enough. Since a larger addition would cost significantly more, it seems that this plan provides the best use of the funds currently available. However, Lisa is going to reach out to Chris Kunes, the architect, to see if the addition can be expanded slightly in order to incorporate a meet and greet room for the foster cats that will be housed in the expansion. Lisa noted that the original building was designed to easily accommodate additions. Relatedly, Lisa commented that converting the patio to two or more additional small rooms would be a more efficient use of that space, but that the patio is a named space and conversion would require contacting the named family. The patio conversion also would necessitate construction of new exterior walls and should be considered a separate project for the future. The new addition, as it is designed, would cost approximately \$80,000, with most expenses included in that figure. Fortunately, no new ductwork or plumbing will be necessary. Temperature will be controlled with mini splits like those used in the dog wing. Lisa anticipates repurposing the current cages by purchasing new bases. Bob moved to approve the plan and authorize Lisa go forward with it and announce it to volunteers. Kris C. seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Bob moved to adjourn the meeting. Kris C. seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 7:27 pm, followed by an executive session.

The next PAWS Board Meeting is February 26, 2019.