

Approved
5/9/2019

1. Call to Order

Ms. Droubie called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

A. Roll Call

Present:

Suzanne Droubie

Gail Smith

Tamara Barrick

Laura O'Brien

Kristin Almquist

Andrew Squire

Patty Peth

Kristen Auerbach (non-voting)

Absent:

Pat Hubbard

Erin O'Donnell

Karen T. Baden

Rhonda Pina

B. Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Droubie led the Pledge of Allegiance

2. Adoption of March 10, 2019 minutes

Minutes unanimously approved

3. Vote on the By-Laws

The By-laws are not changing from what was previously voted on in December 2018. The bi-monthly sub-committee meetings will be publically posted. It will be up to the sub-committee on when they meet as it does not have to be the 2nd Thursday of the month.

4. Call to the Audience – 3 minutes or less. Please refrain from repeating comments of another speaker

Gail Spahr for Christy Hollinger – adopting dogs to homeless individuals

The letter in its entirety will be posted to PCACAC website.

Charley Van Bergh for Karly Ballestoros – adopting dogs to homeless individuals

The letter in its entirety will be posted to PCACAC website.

Cindy Kirlin - adopting dogs to homeless individuals

The letter in its entirety will be posted to PCACAC website.

Jo Wishnie – adopting dogs to homeless individuals

The letter in its entirety will be posted to PCACAC website.

Cathy Neuman – adopting dogs to homeless individuals

The letter in its entirety will be posted to PCACAC website.

Carrie Clark – – adopting dogs to homeless individuals

Spoke to the committee about her experiences with homeless people and their wiliness to give up their dogs for money

Marcie Velen – Sub-Committee procedure

Spoke to the committee about the sub-committee procedure outlined and voted on at the last meeting but was voted on after the call to the audience. This did not provide the public with an opportunity to voice any concerns they might have.

Jane Schwerin – Suitable Homes

She told the committee that she agreed with everything that the speakers said about adopting animals to homeless. She said that the law requires every animal is adopted to a suitable home and adopting to homeless is not a suitable home.

5. Standing Items:

a) Director's Communication/Monthly Report – Kristen

Kristen spoke to the highlights of the January/February report:

- Working closely with Hermitage Foundation to get ready for kitten season.
- No Kill Pima County – Marcie Velen provided training for PACC admission staff about intake diversion and community resources to help keep pets with their families.
- Hired a Critical Cat Care Specialist Lauren Curtis and a Cat Foster Coordinator Katie Pappenhagen.
- Hired two new veterinarians – one will be starting in April and the other upon graduation in June; which will fully staff the clinic on vets.

b) Friends of PACC – Tammi Barrick

- Your Love Saves Lives! Campaign \$5million goal was successfully met
- Sponsoring the Adopt Love Adopt Local event in April

c) Volunteer Report – Patty Peth

Patty told the committee that they are working to get the volunteers and staff working more closely together. They are holding four social events throughout the year for the volunteers and staff to attend. The first event was at Bear Canyon Brewery and attendance was 35 to 40 people. The next Volunteer Appreciation event is in April 7 at the MSA Annex.

6. GIS Maps Walk Through – Kristen/Bennett

a) Pima County GIS worked with PACC to create interactive maps which shows a street level view to show where are dogs are coming from. Bennett walked the committee through the different map layers and demonstrated the mechanics of the maps.

7. Animal Protection Update – Veronica Sanders

Address the committee regarding safety issues. She told the committee that there is a set of protocols in place regarding animal attacks on humans or animal attacks on other animals. These are considered high priority calls and an officer is immediately dispatched to meet with the victim. Priority 2 calls are if the animal is not at large any longer.

8. Website Redesign Unveiling – Sarah Aguilar

Sarah went over the front-page layout and highlighted the found pets map. Still working on interactive forms and a page to highlight animals in need. She also told the committee that PACC is third out of 10 most viewed pages in the county.

9. Resource-challenged adopters –Kristen

Kristen spoke to the committee on PACCs resource challenged adopters and that there is not a policy in place that lets homeless people adopt animals.

10. Volunteer Award Presentation

Claudia Folch
Shari Mollencoph
Ruthy Esbeck-Nahrgang

11. Announcements

None

12. Shelter needs and Volunteer Opportunities

13. Agenda Requests

None

14. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

My name is Gail Spahr and I am reading for Christy Holliger of Botteri Drive.

Until recently I was unaware that PACC had a policy of adopting dogs to people who live homeless. Through advocacy, I have met dogs and their people in our homeless community. I have experiences to share.

I stopped to help a man and his just adopted dog walking down Silverbell in 108 degree temps. The dog was wearing a cone and was in distress. I offered them water (they had none) and a ride back to the shelter. The staff agreed to let Buddy stay a few days to recover from surgery. I drove the man to his camp. Buddy was diagnosed with valley fever.

That week a dog named Adler, adopted from Maricopa died of heat exhaustion after walking 4 miles.

Vinnie was lost by his adopter. I helped search for him for weeks as he was literally passed around the homeless community, used for panhandling and bribes. What I saw during that experience was disturbing; drugs, abuse. Not safe for a dog or child.

Blue is a PACC dog, a gentle giant with a history of dog fights and severe allergies. He had swollen, raw feet, difficulty walking even short distances. His meds cost more than 100 dollars a month. Yet Blue was adopted to Joe, a man who lives homeless and walks 10 miles a day. When volunteers checked on Blue, his feet were bleeding. He was reacting to dogs and almost bolted across the busy street to one. PACC had given some meds but Joe had no plan after that. I offered to pay for a vet visit. Volunteers provided food and support. Joe found after a few days that he could not manage Blue. He could not reach PACC so he called me for a ride to choose a new dog. He lost Blue's meds.

Joe adopted Mallory and called me several times for help. Volunteers assisted with supplies when his were stolen. Mallory was very strong and small dog reactive. Again, Joe called and said he could not reach PACC but needed to give her up. He had no one to watch her when he needed to shop or get medical care. Friends didn't show up. He caught a stranger mistreating her. I tried to reach PACC for him but I got no response, so volunteers gave him and Mallory a ride to PACC, then to his doctor.

Joe said it was well known that homeless folks could get free dogs and supplies from PACC. I trust he had good intentions but misjudged the challenges of owning a dog while homeless. The environment is harsh; not

everyone is as responsible as the feel-good stories we are told. There is another side. Many do not have people to help them with their pets. PACC does NOT have the infrastructure and outreach (even to answer the phone) to provide the kind of support that folks like Joe need to care for a dog, therefore we MUST reconsider adopting to them at this time. A monthly outreach event is not enough.

Would these dogs have gotten the care they need, or would they suffer and die from untreated medical conditions? Get hit by a car or put down for going after another animal? We MUST consider these risks and do our best to provide responsible, safe placement for our dogs.

My name is Charly van den Bergh and I live on W. San Juan Terrace in Tucson. I am reading this for Kyla Ballestoros, a PACC volunteer and medical practitioner who was unable to attend.

Dog ownership is a privilege, not a right. I am in full support of providing assistance to those that need help caring for their animals, but placing animals in a potentially harmful situation is a different story. Recently, I witnessed a man panhandling at a street corner with a dog while I was at work. I could see through the window that the man was shaking and choking the terrified dog. Many cars passed by and did nothing. I pleaded with the man to stop hurting his dog, who appeared very fearful of this person. He came in the building, left and moved on with his dog.

Later that night, the man and dog were seen again down the street. Terrified for the dog's safety, a concerned citizen offered money in exchange for the dog. The man freely gave up the dog at the sight of cash. I soon discovered this dog was adopted from PACC. His name is Chili. He was known to be skittish on his walks, had a history of fearfulness and on his last adoption (where he was kept outside of a camper with no utilities in a small kennel run) he escaped the run and was lost in the desert for days. At the request of the adopter and PACC staff, a volunteer responded and rescued him. The owner returned him.

Chili was obviously not an ideal dog for a homeless man frequenting busy streets. It was discovered that the man that adopted Chili had documented complaints to PACC of abusing his previous dog named Roadkill, who had

been in and out of PACC each time this man lost him. Roadie (who PACC renamed) was even delivered back to the man's homeless camp by our protection officers. Yet despite the complaints, Chile was still adopted to him. A simple records search shows this man is a felon with convictions of child/adult abuse which he served a year in prison for.

This was very clearly an adoption that should have never occurred. Thankfully, immediate help was available for Chili from community citizens. PACC was not there to help or support him. His collar, harness and leash were so tightly intertwined they had to be cut off. Chilling was shaking, filthy, scared, incredibly hungry and thirsty. This dog was knowingly placed into a very unhealthy and dangerous living situation that could have been avoided completely.

Why are we placing dogs into the hands of known dangerous people? Why are we willing to trade the life of a dog for a statistical improvement? What would have happened to Chile? What happens to so many dogs placed into the hands of people that view dog ownership as a right and not a privilege? These are not questions we should have to be pondering in the first place.

I respectfully request that this statement in its entirety will be added to the minutes of this meeting.

Cindy Kirlin

Our community has spoken, they said "Yes". They said yes to a new shelter and the tax hike that came with it. They said yes so that the homeless animals living on our streets have a safe haven to spend their days while waiting for a new loving home. A safe haven that will provide shelter from the harsh desert elements, full bellies so they never feel hunger and receive necessary medical care when needed.

Our community has a force of good Samaritans watching over the homeless animals living on our streets. Many go to work late or miss a commitment because they found a stray dog while heading to their destination. Instead of driving by hoping for the best, they stop and do whatever is needed to get that dog off of the street and into a safe place. Often times this can take many hours out of their busy day. For those of us who use social media the stories are endless. The stories are the same over and over again. A good Samaritan is spending their time and financial resources to try and befriend a scared dog that has been hanging out in their neighborhood, or hanging out in the desert or maybe on a trail they go hiking on. They spend days, sometimes weeks or months to gain the dogs trust and get them to safety. For those of us who have lived this, we know how emotionally draining it is, how defeating it can be. But the day it finally happens and the dog is safe at the beautiful shelter they helped build, with animal loving staff and volunteers that will do everything they can to make sure that dog will never be in harm's way again, the tears of happiness come, the feeling of pride and joy take over knowing that you just saved a life. He is in good hands and now has a second chance at the life he deserves.

Do you think the good Samaritans in our community would have said "Yes" if they knew that PACC would willingly put a dog back out on the street?

- #8 Resource - CHALLENGED ADOPTERS

- WHAT OUR COMMUNITY EXPECTS FROM PACC

I am speaking today as a voting resident of Pima County.

As you know, in 2014, the citizens of Pima County voted "Yes" for a \$22 Million bond issue to build a new, better facility for the pets in our community. No more overcrowding, no more overflow tent, freezing cold in the winter, stiflingly hot in the summer. Nothing but the best for our animals.

What do you think will happen if the public learns that PACC is giving the dogs they trusted you with to homeless people? They would be horrified.

I spend a lot of time talking to people about how things are better at PACC, and that it's safe to bring animals into our shelter if they must. They can trust PACC to do what's best for them. The Community trusts PACC to do right.

Animals arrive at PACC for a variety of reasons, but the vast majority of them lived in a home, *inside*, in a loving home. Folks who can no longer care for their pets, owners who go into assisted living, owners get sick, owners die. They all trust us to find their dogs a good home.

Even stray dogs have mostly come from a home at some point. They got lost or they got dumped, but they came from a home. You can tell from their condition.

Our community expects that these animals will find another home, not be forced to live on the street, winter or summer, walking miles every day. Summers in Tucson are brutal. We have between 60 and 90 days a year with temperatures over 100 degrees. Probably just as many between 90 and 100 degrees. This climate is not friendly to dogs living outside.

I sympathize with the struggles of homeless people and I am not judging them. For whatever reason, they are in a tough place. I applaud the programs PACC has created to support these folks, whether persons without a home or those on the edge of poverty, who already have pets. But that does not mean PACC should be giving new dogs to homeless folks who do not have one.

That is not part of PACC's mission. PACC's mission is to care for the animals that come to us and find them new suitable homes. Life on the street is not a suitable home. The law in Pima County is that dogs must have shelter, water and food. Where is the shelter for people without homes?

There are people facing homelessness that actually come to us to relinquish their pets because they are losing their homes, being evicted, and have to move in with friends or family and cannot bring their animals with them. They entrust us with their beloved pets sobbing as they hand them over to us, trusting us to find them another home where they will be cared for. Can you imagine how they would feel if they knew that you have put their dogs out on the street to live? That is not what PACC is here for.

I implore you to stop this foolish idea that any part of our mission is to intentionally sentence our dogs to a life on the street. This is not a brilliant idea. This is not a great conversation. This is irresponsible.

Jo Wishnie

Good afternoon Madam Chair and Committee Members. My name is Cathy Neuman and I've been volunteering at PACC for 9 years.

Several years ago many volunteers were asked to collaborate with PACC on a new adoption policy, and I believe our approved mission statement says it all, "The fundamental objective of PACC is to find homes in which each animal may live out the rest of its life free from harm, with adequate food, water, exercise, protection from the elements, quality veterinary care, and frequent and positive interactions with human beings."

Volunteers later developed tools to help us achieve this mission and these included an improved adoption application, a customer handout, and a communication checklist. (These items were never implemented but I can provide copies upon request.)

Being an Adoption Counselor is extremely difficult and one of the most challenging roles at PACC. If you ask most volunteers you'll find they don't want to perform this duty. Why? After serving in this capacity for over 4 years, I have some thoughts and ideas I'd like to share:

- PACC often has those customers who we meet and know in our hearts they are not good candidates for a pet but we're told there is no policy in place to deny them. **We need to be able to say no and we need management to trust and support our decision to do so.**
- The adoption process often becomes the only opportunity to educate the public on how to care for a new pet. Education is certainly necessary; however, **customers should be educated and trained via other means prior to the actual adoption; maybe videos and handouts could help.**
- Conversation-based interviews should be occurring with customers but adoption counselors need more time to do this. Adoptions should never be easy and they should not be rushed. **PACC needs more adoption staff to accomplish this and perhaps the communication checklist should be implemented.**
- No adoption should ever be an "at risk adoption." **PACC should require proof of residency, perform background checks, and adhere to a do not adopt list. I also feel a more detailed application should be used.**

There will always be the argument that if we deny adoptions, customers will go elsewhere and this may be true but we can't control that but we can control what happens to our pets at PACC. There will always be arguments about best practices at other successful agencies, however, we are a county shelter achieving all-time records and setting unprecedented standards. We are the role model! We should never send a pet to a life on the streets or to any other questionable situation.

These pets trust us and rely on us to make the highest quality decisions we can for them. Their fate is in our hands and I, for one, never want to look into a pet's eyes as they leave us knowing I didn't do my very best to find them the best possible life.

I respectfully request that my statement today be made a part of the public record. Thank you for your time and allowing me to speak.