

St. Clair County Animal Services

Minutes for Meeting

Conference Room: 6:00 P.M.

August 18th, 2025

Members Present:

Robert Trentman, Chairman
Scott Greenwald, Asst. Chairman
Mike O'Donnell
Lonnie Mosley
G.W. Scott, Jr.
Robert Wilhelm
Harry Hollinsworth

Others Present:

Ann Barnum, Human Resources
Ken Easterly, County Board Member
John Coers, County Board Member
Marty Crawford, County Board Member
Lexi Cortez, Belleville News Democrat
Debra Moore, County Administrator
Annie Markevich, Zoning Director
Robert Allen, County Board member
Phil Henning, County Board member
Eddie Johnson, Animal Services
Dawn Blackwell, Animal Services

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mr. Trentman.

Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum

Stand for the Pledge of Allegiance

Roll call and a quorum declared present.

Public Comment:

Mr. Trentman: Public comment. Please keep your comments or questions to about 2 minutes and if you have anything direct them towards this chair.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: by Mr. Wilhelm to approve the minutes of July 21st, 2025, meeting. Second by Mr. Mosley.

Vote: Yes: 7 No: 0 Motion Carried.

Ashley Report

Mr. Trentman: Reports from Ashley Jett, our AC Director.

Ashley: So, we had a live release rate this month of July of 99.2%, which is pretty good for us this year. We've struggled a lot lately; we brought in 127 animals into the shelter in the month of July and had 21 adoptions; we put 20 of those animals into our adoption center; had 12 returns to owners and 65 transfers to rescue organizations. As far as the animals that were pulled, GPG took 1 dog, Second Chance Ranch took 1 dog, Helping Strays took 3 dogs and then the Humane Society took the remainder, which was I think 59 of those animals: 7 dogs, 1 puppy, 9 adult cats and 42 kittens. Yeah, so we had a pretty good month. We did have Empty the Shelters Bissell Event in July as well, and I believe we had 14 adoptions go through on that and then like I said a total of 21 for the month of July itself. We're having lots of litters come in, lots of litters of kittens, lots of litters of puppies. We are having to make accommodations for dogs that are pregnant that are coming into the shelter and not being able to find rescue organizations to take them in time, so we are having to make accommodations for dogs having puppies and then finding fosters for an extended period of time. We just had one on Saturday that gave birth to 3 puppies, so she'll be with her foster for about 8 weeks before those puppies will be available and momma will be available for adoption. I'm trying to think of what else we have. A Empty the Shelters Event again coming up in September or October; the first week of October, so that'll be good and help us get through those adoptions. I mean for the month of July being mid-summer bringing in 127 animals is pretty average and to have a 99.9% live release rate and not have any dogs on our wait list currently to come into the shelter, is- it's a pretty good achievement for us. We're doing our best trying to make sure that we don't keep dogs for an extended period of time, finding rescues for them, finding adoptions for if we can squeeze in a couple extra adoptions for the stray side of the building or surgeries for the stray side of the building, making sure we're taking some of those dogs and getting them fixed or just even offering dogs that aren't fixed yet and making accommodations for them to get spayed or neutered before they go home. So, we've been-

Dawn: I had the book of all of them where animals that we feel with our assessment hugely compatible animals and so people have been really excited about that I said they haven't been altered yet but if someone was interested and fills out an application and goes through.

Ashley: We have to figure out obviously something because our transfers out are not as great as we would like them to be for adult dogs, and that seems to be our problematic area is trying to find places for our adult dogs to go and having them coming in. Today alone, we had a dog left in the play yard, an owner tried to surrender 2 dogs to us and then turn around and try to leave them in our play yard. We had 4 strays come in and 2 bite cases already on a Monday. I mean we were busy today. And we were able to take in almost all of those dogs except the owner relinquished request, so we're trying, we're doing the best we can. The extended medical and the extended long-time stay residence is what's going to end up getting us in the future. We don't have the resources obviously to have a lot of medical expenses to incur for the majority of these animals, and luckily, we have an amazing foster who fell into our lap, she fostered Jell-O and her puppies and the fostered Heidi and her puppy and now she's got Brenda and her 3 puppies.

Dawn: She's wonderful. I send a text message "Hey" and a picture, "let me know".

Ashley: Most definitely. The only other thing I was going to talk about; well I have 2 other things, I'm sorry. I have a vaccination clinic coming up next Wednesday, we have not posted anything out for this, so I still have plenty of appointments left if anybody wants to take a flier to pass out to anybody if they know someone looking to do low-cost vaccinations and microchipping, there is those fliers. Then, I'm working on something new for next year, we're going to try to do these new rabies tags. These new rabies tags are going to be, instead of your rabies tags having 2 sides, having information for the pet on one side and animal services on the other side, it's all going to be on one section of it. And on the other side now is going to have a QR code. The QR code can be registered by the owner for \$2.99 and then that way they have access to, if your dog is ever found, they scan the QR code and here comes your information and they can contact you right away without having to contact animal services. So, I think this is going to be our go-to. I am still waiting to make sure that our software program is compatible with these and a 3y tag, because I am also looking at getting a 3y tag. So, you pay one registration for 3 years as opposed to having them every year. We have to send out reminder notices for that. I am still trying to make sure our system is compatible with the 3 year option, but I do think that we are going to go with this. It's 0.08 cents more for us to get these tags that for us to get the normal tags. So, not a huge cost difference. It's more convenient for people on the weekends and after hours who always find animals. So, that is all I think I have. New building status, if you would like an update on that. We were out today; they have finished up all the masonry and the internals of the building – the main walls of the building. They had a delivery of all of the structural roofing beams, trusses, things like that. They were supposed to be there at 7am today, they got everything else that they won't need until later this week. So, the actual delivery should be there at 7am tomorrow and then they will start setting all the trusses and metal beams – structural metal; everything for the building so its coming along. Then after that they will work on doors, frames, interior walls, and things of that nature. Should be – its coming, another year but progress is being made.

Mr. Trentman: Eddie, whatcha got.

Eddie: Pretty much the same. We are busy, that's all I can say. It's hot outside. A lot of animals running loose. Only thing I can say is to look into those dog houses, that would help me out a lot. A lot of the calls that I go out to, people don't have adequate shelter. It doesn't even have to be the wooden doghouses, if we could get people to donate the plastic houses. Just people don't have proper shelter.

Mr. Trentman: Right.

Dawn: That might be something that we could get a group of boy scouts to do as a service project.

Mr. Trentman: Belleville West and Belleville East were supposed to do it.

Mr. O'Donnell: I'll touch base with them Thursday or Friday. I am doing the courier for the school district. The guys in the hospital, so I am helping them out. I'll be able to touch base with one of the teachers.

Mr. Trentman: Mike O'Donnell – you are in charge of doghouses.

Mr. O'Donnell: I just hope it's like the guys that went to The Cave said, that they are all in for it. That's what I've got to figure out. So, we should be able to get them.

Mr. Trentman: I'll work out the supplies. I'll figure it out if that happens. Dawn, do you have anything?

Dawn: We had a couple long timers leave. Like dogs that are just fantastic, like she said it's just not been much of a river, and more of a reservoir for really solid and friendly dogs, you know. But Cyrus, he's listed on here and seeing him – he's been in the system since last September. Just a great, fantastic dog, he left, and he has been coming back to do his heartworm treatments. We have Dr. Koss helping with that, which is wonderful. She is a wonderful vet. Then today, Flora who is good with kids, cats and everything in the world, she's been there in the system since January, she left, finalized today. She went home with them for foster to adopt over the weekend. That's worked really well for us in situations where like there's more variables in the house, with the dog at home, can't really get a good read of it there, it's not hating something but it's just nervous and sometimes dogs loosen up when they go back home, and we've been successful with that. With people and their animals, people seem to really like that, we do that for a very short-term, like a Friday to Monday just to give a little more time. That's been going really well. We haven't got to do a couple of the Taco Tuesdays that Claire and Hannah were doing with the dogs, it's just been so hot, but hopefully next week we'll get some in there. But that's really what got us information to add to those animals into we feel like 'community compatible' and like what do you think of a patio, you know and if they can tolerate that at the Corner Chill and Grill, so that's nice. Fairgrounds went well this weekend, a lot of traffic, we had a lady come in today, she's from IDK, Missouri, came up here- they actually drove past yesterday to make sure they knew how to get here. So, and hoping to see us at the Fairgrounds on Sunday but there's just so much, only so much you can do but that's went really well.

Mr. Mosley: You come up with these names for the dogs?

Dawn: You see the trend there like, Stevie Nicks, Lindsay, Peter Green, right? That's kind of like you're playing a memory game there, words that go together. That's from Fleetwood Mac; Kamryn comes up with a lot of the names.

Mr. Mosley: They know you; you know them?

Dawn: Yes.

Mr. Mosley: They know you.

Dawn: Yes.

Mr. Mosley: (inaudible)

Dawn: Well, they don't necessarily know their names, but their puppies.

Mr. Mosley: You just seem to be that gifted, that's why I ask.

Dawn: Well, thank you.

unknown: (inaudible)

Ashley: If anybody has any name suggestions for next month, feel free to leave them because we're all running pretty thin. We name all the animals that come through.

Mr. Mosley: Great names, Great names.

Ashley: We name all the strays, and we name all the adoption centers and its-...

Mr. Scott: I can't even remember my name sometimes.

Ashley: We're running thin.

Mr. Trentman: I got a kind of funny story, kind of isn't. So, I've been on my wife, I was like- our dogs get out once in a while, and they got their regular tags but they don't have the dog name tags so I've been on her and on her. So, she goes to PetSmart and buys all of our dogs dog tags with their name on it, and she put my phone number on them, and I look at every tag and it says "Bob" on every tag, so if a dogs running loose and you got a dog and it says "Bob" on the tag, it's probably our dog.

Ann: Did she not get she was supposed to put their names on them?

Mr. Trentman: I said Kelly, it's the dogs name. She goes 'I don't know', you were saying something about dog tags, I was like - every one of our dogs are Bob, even the girl dogs.

Dawn: Bobbie?

Mr. Trentmen: So if you find a dog running loose, and it says Bob on the tag – its probably our dog.

MOTION: by Mr. Scott to approve Ashley's report. Second by Mr. Greenwald.

Vote: Yes: 7 No: 0 Motion Carried.

MOTION to adjourn by Mr. Scott. Second by Mr. O'Donnell.

Vote: Yes: 7 No: 0 Motion carried.