

Oregon Coast Humane Society
Board Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2022
VIA Zoom video call

Present: Shauna Robbers, Laurie Arms, Sandy Davidson, Mary Henry, Judy Thibault, Elizabeth Thompson.

Shauna called the meeting to order at 10:59. No executive session was called for.

Approval of Minutes – Mary distributed draft minutes prior to the meeting and thanked the board for their corrections and additions. Judy moved and Sandy seconded approval of the regular session minutes; passed unanimously. Shauna moved and Laurie seconded approval of the first Executive Session’s minutes; passed unanimously. Laurie moved and Shauna seconded approval of the second Executive Session’s minutes; passed unanimously.

Executive Director’s Report – Elizabeth provided a written report prior to meeting.

MARCH ANIMAL UPDATES: As of today, we have 114 animals in our care.

FEBRUARY INTAKE: Twenty animals were surrendered by their owners, including 14 chihuahuas from Lakeside. Three adopted pets were returned: a chihuahua whose owner had health issues, a cat who was bullying another cat in the home, and a cat who didn’t get along with the adopters’ child. We had 42 strays come in. The board was curious why so many. Elizabeth said it was many things: a litter of bottle baby puppies, numerous cats trapped in preparation for Dr. Schaad’s availability for spay/neuter surgeries, a cat who had been found in a parking lot. We had two cats come in for protective custody from survivors of domestic violence; Elizabeth reached out to Siuslaw Outreach Services to collaborate in these situations. Mary asked about the definition of “stray,” wasn’t it an animal without a guardian that we took custody of? Elizabeth explained that in the case of feral cats, often the mother cats are returned to their colony after being spayed or neutered, while kittens can often be socialized and adopted. Shauna inquired about a colony of cats being cared for at a store in town. Elizabeth said that the cats were not brought in but had been seen in the most recent clinic; she checked back and offered more assistance if needed.

OUTCOME: The board congratulated Elizabeth and the team on finding homes for 42 animals in the last month. Sadly, two animals – a newborn kitten from a large litter and a bottle-baby puppy – died in care. Sixteen animals were reunited with their families. Smokey, a 15-year-old cat, was the sole euthanasia.

EVENTS AND MARKETING UPDATES:

*Pet Grief Group continues to meet on Fridays. We are building goodwill and have found several volunteers, including a new dog walker and someone helping with administrative tasks.

*2 new public service announcements recorded at KCST for spay/neuter and pet food bank. Will record at KXCR also. Intend to add one on kids and dog bites soon.

*Youth volunteer momentum continues to build. Hosted a thirteenth birthday party with a group from Portland – brought lots of donations, socialized animals, made adoption bags and crafts.

*Kennel Naming Event –Nine out of 15 kennels are sponsored. An outbreak of kennel cough from newly arrived dogs caused us to delay, but we are tentatively scheduled for 4/13 if the donors and their families are available. Kudos to Amy, who is volunteering to assist with events.

*Bottle Drop Give event is April 11-23rd. We will get a 20% match above usual during that time and are planning publicity. There is currently \$3,900 in our account.

* “We Foster Challenge,” offering cash prizes through Maddie’s Fund, starts May 1st with trainings starting April 1st. Shelter staff and volunteers, including youth, are taking part in the trainings, with many online offerings available that can be done from home. Our goal is to increase the strength of our foster program, with special emphasis on developing foster homes for puppies, who need home environments to stay healthy and thrive.

*Thank you to the Western Lane Community Foundation for awarding OCHS \$1,500 to support our database transition to Salesforce. They were only able to fund 21 out of the 86 proposals they received. Elizabeth participated in the online awards ceremony Tuesday at Rotary.

*Adopt a Shelter Pet Day is April 30th, and we are planning a big shelter event. Stay tuned for details.

*We are hosting a booth at Rhody Days Show & Shine May 21st and hope to have a float in the parade. Since Show & Shine is at the middle school, no animals are allowed, but we plan to bring our big stuffed dog and lots of information. Volunteers are needed to staff the event.

*Elizabeth met last week with the executive directors of Habitat for Humanity and Florence Food Share to collaborate around the Power of Florence day of service held in July in the Grocery Outlet parking lot. They hope to add SOS and the Boys & Girls Club and plan to engage kids in building structures for animals and a food pantry. Mary questioned building a doghouse, since we want dogs inside and with their families, and Elizabeth agreed. She will suggest building cat perches or cat towers instead.

TEAM TRAINING: Elizabeth asked if anyone had feedback about the new handbook she emailed to the board. Those who had taken a look found it to be very thorough and detailed. Sandy will work towards a complete review. Pam is also reviewing. Pam and the team are creating daily checklists for each area, and Pam has been given the goal of updating standard operating procedures, with the first two due tomorrow.

THRIFT STORE: Sales continue to increase over last year, and the store looks great. We are seeking people to help us open the store on Sundays. We continue to upgrade security, including redoing the locks now, with improvements to the safe next to be accomplished. Mary reported she met Renee and was impressed with her positive and welcoming attitude. During her visit, Mary observed that a denominational religious item was hung inside the entrance to the donation

room and expressed concern that OCHS always be welcoming and affirming to all faiths. Elizabeth, who also noted that we have a contract with the City, will follow up to explain this and request that the item be taken down.

When Elizabeth asked for questions, Judy asked if we had submitted a proposal to Three Rivers, which just awarded grants. Elizabeth responded that we had not applied, having the understanding that we were unlikely to meet with success. She added that we did apply to Mapleton for \$2,500 for spay/neuter services for their residents.

Shauna asked about how the Wine & Chowder event had gone. Elizabeth was pleased with the big turnout and wonderful support from the winery but was disappointed in the fundraising. Mary wondered about upgrading our solicitation at events. Elizabeth said we had a donation jar and literature table, but everyone agreed that staffing the table would be a good way to improve our efforts next time.

Answering a question from Shauna, Elizabeth said plans for an OCHS dinner are moving forward. She spoke with the team about ensuring that the event had a fundraising purpose: raising money, raising friends, or stewarding donors. Kudos to Jackie Parker for stepping up to solicit donations of wine. Elizabeth will keep the board updated, and Shauna hopes the entire board will take part.

President's Report –

Shauna had emailed her report, which highlighted good work by the Estate Sales Team with at least three more sales in the works. She is getting good results from volunteer recruitment on Facebook.

Shauna again reminded the board that **board elections** are coming up. She distributed the nomination form and encouraged board members to seek candidates among OCHS members who have time and skills to help the organization. Mary suggested advertising more broadly, at service club meetings, for example. Shauna reminded her that board candidates must be OCHS members in good standing for at least 60 days prior to the election. This limits who can run and may exclude talented candidates. However, since gifts to the winter appeal gave supporters a chance to qualify as members, membership has grown substantially.

Judy has spoken with several volunteers about board service, but many of them aren't yet dues-paying members. Mary noted that in general, volunteers give generously of both time and money when they understand that, while time is irreplaceable, money is also needed to pay our bills and our staff.

Beth is preparing a membership list, and nomination forms will be sent to members soon. They are due back no later than May 1. The board discussed steps to review candidates, including interviews with Elizabeth and a board member. The Nominating Committee, comprised of the President, Vice President, and another member of the current board, provides a slate of candidates for members to vote on in June. New and old board members will meet together soon after.

Judy complimented Elizabeth and the team on the **great videos** they're posting on social media. Elizabeth credited Valerie, Nicky, and Abby for their quality work.

Vice President's Report – Judy is following up on the **internal audit**. She emailed Laurie about teaming up to develop updated animal protocols, likely with Jenny. Also following up on the internal audit, the board discussed what needed to be done regarding a formal audit. Mary will review past minutes and report back. We will have a more robust financial record for fiscal 2022, including a detailed board-approved budget to track against. Mary suggested adding a discussion of the audit to our next board meeting. Sandy concurred and noted that closing of the 2021 books is still in process.

Treasurer's Report – Sandy has sent several emails over the past couple of weeks to keep the board apprised of her efforts and provide **financial statements**. She is still working with Todd and would like to finalize the statements with all due speed. Todd, although he has moved away, is doing OCHS a huge favor to assist in making sure the books are accurate. Mary inquired about whether we have someone with the necessary skills to carry his good work forward, and Elizabeth advised that Dot will take over this responsibility. Sandy directed the board's attention to the **Statement of Activity** showing monthly activity during the first quarter.

Sandy also announced that the county is finished with our **new lease**, which she forwarded to the board prior to the meeting. She requested a motion to approve the lease so that it can go to the Lane County Commissioners. **Mary moved and Shauna seconded a motion to approve the lease as it was presented to us. Motion passed unanimously. Sandy will move ahead to complete the process.**

Rick Yecny, CPA of Holloway & Associates has agreed to complete our **tax filings** (IRS 990 and Oregon CT-12) again this year. The board was without objection, and since allowance for these costs was included in the budget, no separate motion was needed.

Before the meeting, Sandy distributed to the board an **investment** advisory agreement and questionnaire from Oregon Pacific Bank Wealth Management. OPB's fee is set at .75% of principal. There is approximately \$150,000 in this account, which is currently in the house account at LPL. LPL is no longer working with Oregon Pacific Bank, and OCHS should have our own investment counselor. Mary expressed concern that the questionnaire was designed for individual investors, while investing on behalf of an organization has different priorities. She urged Sandy to make sure we are counseled by someone with experience with institutional investing. The board discussed our risk tolerance, with Sandy speaking to a conservative outlook that would ensure preservation of principal but little growth – perhaps 1-2%. Mary, given the high rate of inflation these days, suggested a balanced approach that would entail slightly more risk but provide a 4-5% return. Mary also suggested that the board follow up to develop our own Investment Policy; she had shared examples with Sandy in previous months. Sandy will confer with Mary, follow up with the bank, and return with additional information for the board.

Sandy next turned to the **budget**, acknowledging Mary's leadership. Mary responded that the budget development was a team effort. Sandy, Elizabeth, and Mary made projections for each line item, based on last year's actuals and their understanding of this year's planned activities. The budget takes into account several significant swings: staff costs are up significantly; we cannot count on a large estate gift such as was received last year; and loan forgiveness from pandemic relief funds was a one-time occurrence. We entered this fiscal year with a surplus in excess of \$450K, but we will spend two-thirds of that down this year if we follow the budget.

Mary asked the board if they had questions about the process or the budget itself. She clarified that there will always be variances from a budget. However, the budget provides guideposts, authorizes the staff to spend what is budgeted, and commits all of us, board and staff, to secure funding to offset our costs. The budget will also free the board from having to approve most individual expenditures. If it's in the budget, it can be spent. If additional expenses are proposed, they should be considered in light of whether they are more important than what is budgeted, or if additional funding is identified.

Judy moved, and Shauna seconded a motion to approve the 2022 Budget as submitted. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Judy complimented the committee on their efforts. Shauna concurred and committed to maximizing fundraising results from estate sales. Mary complimented Shauna on a list of ideas she had emailed to help us exceed our fundraising goals and noted that Elizabeth had already secured savings when negotiating our contract with Salesforce.

Judy asked who is working on updating our **financial policies**, and Sandy said she was taking that on. She is reviewing old board policies and adding language from our contract with Oregon Pacific Bank and will return to the board with updated policies to consider.

Secretary's Report – Mary reported that most of her time this month had been spent on **budget** development. She has created a rough draft for a **spring fundraising appeal** and will forward it to Elizabeth shortly. She also was pleased that the **database conversion project** is back on track now that Western Lane Community Foundation's grant has enabled us to secure a higher level of technical support. Mary met yesterday with Elizabeth, Brionne Boggioni, and Beth Hatcher with an initial goal to have donor data operational within 90 days. The volunteer module will follow, as well as an analysis of how to integrate information about animals and adopters. Sandy noted that Oregon Humane Society was advertising for a fulltime Salesforce administrator. Mary responded that OHS is one of the largest shelters using Salesforce, but that most clients are smaller. She looks forward to improved information to support planning, management, and fundraising.

Laurie's Report – Laurie reported that **eBay sales** are satisfactory, with \$473 earned this month. She tries to post 3-4 items each week and has several high-end coats to sell. She requested a mention of the eBay store on the OCHS website, and Elizabeth will follow up. When items are

sold, we thank purchasers and direct them to the website to learn more about OCHS. Shauna has several high-value dolls from an estate sale to photograph and post on eBay. She pointed out that this is another way that estate sales bring value to OCHS. Laurie is considering publicizing eBay items on our Facebook page, which Shauna thought was a good idea. Laurie will send Elizabeth the link to our eBay store.

During the open discussion period, Judy asked about progress on updating our **website**. Elizabeth said that Valerie is updating content and agrees that navigation could be improved. She also thought we should advertise eBay and the Thrift Store with a sign at the shelter. Elizabeth is working to find space, perhaps where merchandise is sold at the shelter. She wants to present a less cluttered appearance when visitors enter the shelter and is in the process of moving the old memorial wall to an online presence.

Shauna inquired about **volunteer recruitment**, noting that there seem to be more at the shelter but not at the thrift store. Elizabeth assured her that volunteers interested in the thrift store are directed there. She put up a sign at the post office and assigned Valerie as a point of contact to welcome new volunteers. Some volunteers have been at the store for twenty years, while some are just starting. Mary wondered if some are still staying out of the public because of COVID, and Elizabeth agreed. She also noted that some wonderful thrift store volunteers are dealing with physical limitations that don't allow them to work there any longer. Mary wondered whether more experienced volunteers could be assigned as mentors to new ones.

Elizabeth spoke of her efforts to institute a **“customer first” culture** at OCHS, among staff and volunteers. She is encouraging our team to start from yes and provide information to explain policies and decisions. She credits volunteers with enabling staff to improve our ability to help the animals, freeing their time to provide additional value for the animals. Elizabeth also stressed the value of “catching people doing the right thing” and then praising their efforts – positive reinforcement works for people, too!

Mary and Judy complimented Elizabeth with bringing **high-quality low-cost training** to OCHS through Maddie's Fund educational programs and others. Judy asked how Elizabeth's studies were going. Elizabeth loves her class and is learning a lot. She is currently studying shelter operations after finishing a unit on cat enrichment. Jenny and Pam are also completing several units of online study, and other staff members are being assigned relevant course offerings. Elizabeth stresses that by investing in ourselves we can be better for the animals. She is also attending a weekly Zoom meeting of 180 humane society leaders nationwide. Other leaders share challenges faced by OCHS, whether communications, medical care or sheltering big dogs. She is also studying Humane Education and can't wait to get to a point where OCHS can expand our offerings for young people.

Judy asked Shauna about **upcoming estate sales**. Shauna has scheduled one in Florentine Estates and is working on others in Greentrees and a private home.

The next meeting was set for April 13 at noon. (*Shauna later reserved a meeting room at Banner Bank for the meeting.*) Shauna polled the board, and everyone felt comfortable with meeting in person. She commented that if anyone was not comfortable meeting in person, we would return to Zoom meetings. Shauna inquired about masking at OCHS facilities, and Elizabeth said people are now encouraged to make individual choices. While masks aren't required, we are "mask-friendly" for those who prefer to wear them. This seems to be going well.

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Henry

Secretary