

**Oregon Coast Humane Society
Board Meeting Minutes
December 22, 2021
VIA Zoom video call**

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

Shauna **called the meeting to order** at 12:07, and the board went into **Executive Session**, returning to regular session at 12:22.

Minutes - Mary distributed draft minutes before the meeting and received corrections from Elizabeth and Sandy. Judy said another volunteer had asked about timely posting of the minutes on the website. Elizabeth responded that Jasper posts them, and she understood they were up to date. The board is in the process of approving November's minutes and did not meet in October, so the September minutes are the most recent. In the future, Mary will send the final version to Elizabeth to send to Jasper. Elizabeth will also ask Jasper to add note saying there was no October meeting. **Sandy moved to approve the November minutes; Judy seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

Executive Director's report:

As of today we have 98 animals in our care, including 3 strays admitted today.

INTAKE: During November, 6 community animals were seen/scheduled in the clinic, 23 animals were surrendered by owners (1 dog and 22 cats, mainly kittens), 1 adopted animal was returned (but the adopters re-adopted him and gave \$1K donation), 1 animal is in custody (owners in medical care following a car accident), 30 strays were admitted, and 5 small dogs were transferred in from California, flown up by Pet Rescue Pilots.

OUTCOME: 30 animals were adopted in November (12 dogs, 18 cats), 12 clinic animals were seen, and 1 animal was euthanized (Chubby Checker, a cat who arrived in bad shape and was taken to Springfield emergency vet), and 15 animals were returned to owners.

December is off to a great start. We are placing dogs transferred in from California as fast as they arrive, Linus the cat was adopted after 12 years, and Shauna adopted Loki the dog. Congratulations!

EVENT UPDATES:

* The **holiday mailer** has raised \$17k to date, only counting gifts that were mailed in the appeal envelope, not any received through PayPal. Thank you to Mary for writing content and leading the effort. About 800-900 letters went out, and volunteers had a good time putting them together. We plan to do a spring mailing as well. We used the Chamber of Commerce's bulk mail permit for donors of less than \$100. Elizabeth hand-signed about 400 letters with first-class stamps to volunteers and donors of \$100 or more. So far big gifts include a \$5K donation as well as several gifts of \$500 to \$1000. It is great to see the continuing support from our community.

***Mini Pet Mart** is currently running a Toy Drive for shelter pets. Laurie had seen signs there in early November that still called us by our old name. Elizabeth has seen our correct name, and will follow up.

***Nova Health** team came on Saturday, December 17th and delivered toys/gifts for animals along with \$300 in Visa gift cards for animal care. They were acknowledged on Facebook, and Elizabeth will send them a note of thanks.

***EBay** sales to date total \$2,854 (46 items). After fees (EBay fee plus shipping that the customer pays), net is \$1,902. We are currently listing 67 items. Doors for the Ebay room at the Vintage House are being installed, and we have ordered items needed to run this part of the business. We are excited to see this venture grow!

*Elizabeth's **KEZI interview** on Thanksgiving brought in several adopters, including a Eugene couple who adopted Linus the Cat who was in the building for 12 years! The couple also chose his friend Garfunkle who had been in our care 7 years. Two other adopters took home the senior dogs featured, Mr. Wilson and Chaka. Sedona is still waiting for her family. Elizabeth was also pleased to make a good connection with KEZI so she can direct media releases to someone specific.

THRIFT STORE: We have hired our new store manager, Renee Reagan. She is a former volunteer and has been in the thrift businesses for years. She's getting to know the team and already implementing good changes in merchandising and protocol around product handling.

KENNELS UPDATE: The new kennels are installed aside from the doors between inside and outside runs. The doors just arrived, and will be installed in early January. When complete, we plan to invite kennel sponsors to an event and to see their plaques installed. A donor from California is sending a sizable gift through her foundation to cover almost 3 more sponsorships.

VET UPDATE: Elizabeth is currently talking to several veterinarians who are interested in doing relief work here. Dr. Pinnell, who works with Dr. Schaad, comes to the area because her mother lives in Mapleton. She will start doing wellness checks and vaccinations for OCHS once a month or so. Today Elizabeth spoke with a vet who works in Portland to see if she could fit us into her schedule. We would be happy to grant her request to bring her own vet tech. Elizabeth is also speaking with someone at the OSU vet school. We hope to have veterinarians in place for monthly or biweekly clinics during 2022.

In response to Elizabeth's report, Mary commented that we have much to celebrate at OCHS – generous donors, many adoptions.

Shauna again thanked Elizabeth and Mary for the holiday mailer, and asked about future plans. Mary responded that we hope to do mailings quarterly, and will shoot for \$25-\$30K in appeal revenue in the coming year. Staff and volunteers enjoyed putting the mailing out. And since the holiday appeal noted that gifts of \$30 or more qualified donors for membership in the year ahead, we won't have to send renewal notices to those members.

Laurie's Report – Laurie is back volunteering at the thrift store. She met Renee and agrees she's a wonderful addition. **Feedback from volunteers** is that they want more and better information. They would like to see more volunteer updates on the website. More kudos for their efforts would also support Laurie's work to encourage volunteers to become voting members. Toward that end, Mary noted that active volunteers received a hand-written note from Elizabeth in the holiday appeal. Laurie is also working to support the new store manager by re-engaging former volunteers.

Judy would like us to place **signage** at the shelter to advertise the thrift store, and Mary would love to see brochures and other shelter information at the store. Laurie agrees, and wants us to come together as one organization. Elizabeth requested ideas for how to incorporate store info at the shelter. Mary suggested a little retail corner at shelter could refer to Thrift Store and help adopters with basic supplies. Laurie said they used to put up pictures of animals at the store, either pre- and post-adoption. Elizabeth will work on updating signage accordingly.

Laurie wonders what we plan to do with the **Vintage House**. Shauna responded that it is a fluid situation and wants Renee to weigh in. Elizabeth said we'd talked about using it for events such as holiday sales, donor events, and volunteer gatherings. The back bedroom will be a locked eBay room, per Shauna.

Laurie asked how the **50%-off Christmas Store sale** had done. Shauna said that tomorrow is the last day. We've moved a lot of merchandise, even gone through almost all the lights. Many thanks to Steve, who checked them.

Laurie added that she is travelling 1/5 until 2/5 and will be absent from January meeting.

President's Report - Shauna reported a very good year at the **Christmas store**, bringing in \$14K with low expenses – ad, tent, batteries. Mary thanked Shauna for her many hours of effort; Shauna noted with thanks the volunteers who stepped up to make it a success. Facebook and CraigsList posts have been very effective outreach. The donations room is already filling up with items for next year's store, and Shauna could use help packing, tagging and prepping items for next year. Shauna also asked the board to consider next year's schedule. Opening on 11/1 is a lot to ask of volunteers. Shauna thinks it might work to open the week before Thanksgiving, but we will decide a little closer to the event.

Shauna reported completing our first **estate sale** since the pandemic - the event, at Greentrees, grossed \$4809.50 – the most ever! Expenses included an ad in the paper, staffing for the gate, and splitting the proceeds with the estate, so we will net around half the proceeds. Shauna asked us to give kudos to key volunteers Barbara Schirmer and Vicky Dresselhaus, who worked many hours to make the sale a success. Shauna also connected with a bank person and a couple of real estate brokers interested to know about our estate sale service – we need to market this! She thinks we could do 6-7 sales a year.

Vice President Report – The internal audit, started in May, is essentially done and Judy asked guidance about who should review it next. Shauna advised her to send it to the board and to Elizabeth. Judy did most of the work to complete the audit, with financial assistance from Bridgett. The DOJ had said we should do an annual audit, and we need to do this again. Mary advised that it would protect all of us to do external audit; she thinks this is an

important part of developing the infrastructure of the organization. An audit is also helpful for donor relations and would speak to us moving beyond difficulties in the past. Mary asked if the next step would be to interview auditing firms. Sandy said yes. Bob Mohler, the prior OCHS treasurer, had not recommended continuing a relationship with the prior auditor. Mary noted that an audit must be independent and it is customary to change firms every few years to ensure an arms-length relationship. **Mary moved that we conduct annual external audits beginning with the 2022 fiscal year; Shauna seconded. Motion passed unanimously.** Judy will print out internal audit packets and mail to us.

Judy asked to discuss **adoption prices** – vary from \$200 to \$450. She expressed concern that we are beyond the budgets of some people. Elizabeth responded that in the recent case of a Yorkie puppy’s \$450 adoption fee, this compares with \$3,000 advertised for similar dogs in Oregon and Washington. In addition, the adopter will need to cover regular grooming and vet care for the puppy’s entire life. Elizabeth commented that she spoke individually with staff members before setting the fee before making the decision. In this case we had 30 adoption applications and could have charged much more. In general, adoption fees are based on the age and condition of the animal, with higher fees for highly-desirable animals helping offset the costs of older or medically-needy shelter pets. The small dogs from California are priced \$150-\$250, and we placed them all within a week. Judy understands these points, and want us to make it as affordable as we can so as not to exclude a good adopter. Elizabeth commented that a reasonable adoption fee also indicates that an adopter can afford to care for the animal without turning to OCHS for a lifetime of support. Mary suggested that we look into a relationship with Pets for the Elderly Foundation, which subsidizes senior adoptions, and thinks there may also be funding for subsidizing adoptions by veterans. Laurie thought this would make a good topic for a newspaper article so that people understand our fees. Laurie departed the meeting. Elizabeth said we do offer discounts for vets and “senior to senior” adoptions. Mary noted a history in Oregon of “bundlers” who sell low-cost or free animals to research labs; setting a reasonable adoption fee helps insure the future good care of the animal.

Treasurer Report – Sandy had distributed **financial reports** before the meeting. Mary had asked why the “undeposited funds” line was so high in the statement of financial position. Sandy followed up with Bridgett, who responded that this is an artifact of the way she was entering separate monies from the Thrift Store, shelter and Vintage House. Sandy will pursue an additional explanation, but confirmed that our income is indeed being deposited in a timely manner. Sandy also confirmed that \$500K was transferred last July from operational savings to our reserve account, so that we don’t keep more than a year’s expenses in our operating account. Mary asked if the investment account is in the money market; Sandy said it is, but returns are modest. Sandy will discuss alternatives with our account person when they meet in January.

Sandy also reported that we will receive \$1,176.67 from the **Lorane Chernoff Fund** this week, and Elizabeth believes it has already come in. This is separate from the designated funds that support us through Western Lane Community Foundation.

Sandy updated the board on our proposed **property expansion**. Surveyor Gene Wobbe of Wobbe & Associates walked the property with Elizabeth and Sandy today, and can work

with the very basic map we provided. He expects to have progress to report by the end of January. This will be a sizable expansion, not just room for a good dog-walking trail, but space for portable meeting rooms and storage of administrative paperwork.

Sandy noted that we'd received \$564.02 in **donation jar proceeds**, and Judy was quick to point out that someone was giving OCHS their "two cents worth."

Mary would still like to track **budget** v actuals. Sandy is reviewing this year's budget, and sees ways to improve the format for the coming year. For instance, we need to add a line for training. She also asked Bridgett for a new Chart of Accounts – if we don't use any of the budgeted money on a line, it hasn't been showing up in the reports. Mary expressed the view that adoption of a budget is the most consequential decision that a board makes each year. It informs staff decisions and limits straying from core efforts. Approving the budget as a whole also limits the need for the board to approve single line item expenses. Sandy asked if we saw any line items we should add. Mary reminded the board that we need at least a provisional budget by 1/15 in order to complete our grant request to Western Lane Community Foundation. Elizabeth is a key player in budget development because it is the blueprint for her vision for the organization in the coming year. Sandy and Elizabeth will meet in the coming days to provide a draft budget for the board's consideration.

Secretary's report – As already discussed, Mary has focused on the **holiday appeal** and is pleased with the response. She sees much growth ahead in securing donated income. She was unable to complete a companion e-mail blast for the holiday appeal, but Elizabeth will do it instead. Also as previously discussed, Mary was pleased to partner with Elizabeth in **speaking to a donor** who plans to leave OCHS a gift from his trust that he estimates will be worth about \$500k.

Mary described again the need for technical support to get us up and running in Salesforce, so we avoid stalls and gain useful management information. **Mary moved and Shauna seconded that we devote up to \$3,000 for a one-year service contract to support our move into Salesforce.** Sandy inquired about whether the source of funds matters to this motion. Mary responded that the motion only authorizes the expenditure, but doesn't limit it to any specific source. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Hearing no call for a second Executive Session, Shauna moved to schedule our **next meeting, which will be held at noon on 1/19/2022 via Zoom.**

Shauna noted that Pfizer has received approval for a pill that treats COVID, and wished one and all a very merry Christmas.

Meeting adjourned at 1:38.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Henry
Board Secretary

