THE PARISH OF CADDO

DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES & MOSQUITO CONTROL

SUBJECT: On March 12‑13 of 2018, members of the Best Friends shelter outreach team did a two-day assessment of shelter operations at CPAS. This document provides the findings and Management Responses.

1. The Caddo Parish Administration and CPAS leadership requested a shelter assessment by Best Friends Animal Society. CPAS leadership has accepted the findings/recommendations. The Best Friends staff agreed to work with CPAS to create an implementation plan and schedule periodic meetings to discuss progress and challenges.

A. Population Management and Housing

Finding – Multiple dogs in single cages, resource guarding, providing plans for each animal. Restructure the dog housing so that dogs are not in kennels while they are being cleaned (bite quarantine). Young puppies are isolated from general population to cut down on diseases. Control of population management from trapping, and animals coming to the shelter by officers and owner surrenders. Properly sanitizing large amount of kennels with large amount of animals. Animal movement once the hold time is up. The odor of bleach, maybe too much being used by kennel workers. Management population for cat trapping by officers in the field.

Recommendations:

● Work with Best Friends to implement a managed admissions program and return-to-owner-in-the-field program, which will include a strategic implementation plan and mentorship throughout the process.
● Train field officers and dispatch staff in community cat nuisance-mitigation techniques.
● Fully vaccinate each animal on intake. Administering core vaccinations to all animals at intake is a critical practice in minimizing infectious disease and preventing widespread outbreaks. Vaccines are the best defense we have against some of the most serious, and sometimes deadly, contagious diseases that are of concern to animal shelters.
○ For cats, this means administration of the FVRCP vaccination, which provides protection against panleukopenia and the two upper respiratory viruses, herpes and calici, at the time of intake.
○ For dogs, this means giving both the DA2PP vaccination, which provides protection against distemper and parvo as well as adenovirus and parainfluenza, as well as an intranasal vaccination containing Bordetella and parainfluenza with or without adenovirus at intake.
● Resolve the PetPoint database issue as quickly as possible, so that each animal currently in the shelter can be accounted for. Let Best Friends know if issues are not resolved and you need assistance.
● Perform daily rounds with representatives from each department, reviewing the records

and status of each animal in the shelter. During assessment, a total of 22 cage cards were missing and two dogs were unaccounted for. With daily rounds, this would have been avoided.

● Discontinue the requirement that a veterinarian sign off on all animals prior to them being made available for adoption.

● Implement a fast-track program for highly adoptable animals on intake.

● Ensure that all adoption cages/kennels are filled at all times. Prevent bottlenecks from occurring and move adoptable animals up front as soon as a cage/kennels becomes open.

● Implement kennel enrichment for both cats and dogs.

● Secure all runs with carabiners.

● Take steps to reduce group housing as often as possible.

● Create a foster-to-adopt program.

● Hold staff accountable for sanitation throughout the building. During the assessment, puppies were housed in large Shoreline cage banks and while the interiors of the cages were sanitized in the morning, the external sections were not, leading to urine and feces dripping down from the cages above into the cages below. In one instance, a dog was diagnosed with parvo and the cage he was housed in prior to euthanasia had not been properly sanitized before housing other animals there.

● Heavy usage of bleach was observed. CPAS should switch to Rescue solution, which would also get rid of the need for using Pine-Sol to mitigate odors. Pine-Sol has been shown to be toxic to certain animals. During the assessment, most animals in the stray hold area were observed sneezing, and the veterinarian believes it was a result of the excessive bleach usage.

● Become familiar with " capacity for care " guidelines.

● Develop a surrender prevention program for citizens who wish to relinquish animals; utilize Adopt-A-Pet .

Additional resources:

● No-Kill Animal Shelters

● Best Friends blog – Call it owner surrender or on-demand dumping of pets, the policy needs to change

● Working Toward Positive Outcomes (CCP)

issues. We are mentoring and coaching the team on ways to inform citizens on the new community cat ordinance.

CPAS has started implementing vaccinations upon intake. We are in the initial stages, but there is a system for the ACOs to give Bordetella when bringing animals in. The Vet Tech is also providing Bordetella for the animals coming through the front door.

We are aggressively continuing the PetPoint Data Base update. We now have a "statement of work" in progress. The PetPoint technicians and CPAS are following the work progression on the "smart sheet". This "smart sheet" allows us to see the progress on training and the cleaning of the database, and implementation of all modules needed for CPAS to operate effectively.

CPAS staff is increasing daily rounds per day, to check the cards per animal. The vet assistant moved the kennel cards from the kennels to the vet room to conduct animal in-checks. The staff will print new cards, even if the card is in the vet room for animal in-checks. A physical count sheet is now printed daily for l00 percent accountability each day. Management has also created a spot check inspection sheet to comply with this effort.

CPAS has discontinued the requirements that a veterinarian must sign off on all requirements for a dog to be placed for adoptions. Management requested temperament training from "Canine Connection" with Mrs. Karen Deeds. This training allowed the staff to have more knowledge on how to effectively temperament test animals. This training allowed staff to have a better understanding of reading an animal's body language without forming a decision based solely on the first encounter with the animal.

CPAS has implemented a fast-track program. This program allows less time in the shelter for animals, eliminating stress, and the cost of feeding and vaccinating. The faster an animal exits the shelter, the better it is for the staff and the animals. As soon as a dog or cat comes in the shelter, we immediately give that animal a path to exit. We are developing more procedures to make this as effective as we possibly can. Discontinuing the requirements for a veterinarian to sign off on adoptable animals has allowed CPAS to keep all adoption rooms at full capacity as much as possible.

We are looking at ways for kennel enrichment, which is the first step to reduce group housing. There is a foster program in place, and we are looking for ways to develop the program into a foster to adoption. Some foster groups decided to keep their animals, and all proper paperwork shows the transition from foster to adoption.

The kennel manager has been instructed to hold the staff accountable for proper sanitation throughout the shelter. A proper solution mix was also provided for staff months ago. This increases disease prevention and control. The veterinarians provide an in depth continuous education course annually to train staff on proper sanitation and disease control.

A surrender prevention program is going to be implemented in the near future. Citizens will be given appointments to surrender their dog to CPAS. There will be a questionnaire for the owners prior to surrendering the animals. A discussion will take place with that owner as to why they are surrendering their animal. It is too easy to turn an animal in to the shelter in Caddo, so we will be communicating with Best Friends on ways to implement this program.

B. Transport

Finding – Implement some transport programs

Recommendations:

● Contact the ASPCA by emailing relocation@aspca.org to get involved as a source
shelter for their relocation program.
● Become familiar with the Best Friends Animal Transport Volunteer Playbook and other
best practice guidelines.

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE:
CPAS has a relationship with local groups that assist in various transports. We have a group
that transports dogs to the northern states, and we have a cat transport that is very active in
moving a large volume of cats on transports. We will continue to contact organizations such as
ASPCA to build our volunteer transport program. Leadership has also met with local groups to
aid in the necessity to help with transports in the future.

C. Customer Service

Finding – The staff is overwhelmingly pleasant, but there are tendencies to negatively impact
the outcome of certain situations. Create a positive tone for staff when dealing with the public.
Staff arguing on a decision in front of citizens.

Recommendations:

● Welcome each person to the facility in a warm and friendly tone, asking how they may
be helped.
● Hold any disagreements or discussions between staff out of public view and only let the
decision-makers discuss the issue.
● Train caregivers and volunteers to answer questions from potential adopters in the
kennel area, and help them with visiting with an animal or the decision-making process
to adopt.
● Have staff and volunteers utilize the GUTS approach: Greet, Use names (theirs and
yours), Thank, Smile. Also, remember to invite them to come back.
● Ensure that staff become familiar with the customer service materials presented on the
Maddie's Fund website.
● Cross-train and rotate staff.
Additional resources:
● Maximize Lifesaving Results: Positive Interactions and Adoption Success Through
Savvy Customer Service – Diane Blankenburg
○ Handout 1
○ Handout 2
○ Handout 3

D. Policies

Finding –Shelter management is working on a series of standard operating procedures. The basic guidelines is complete. With the transition to a high live release rate, different programs have been implemented since the last policy. With the help of Best Friends and other organizations that is actively assisting in this transition, it gives a thorough writing of the SOPs.

Resources:
● Example: Best Friends Policies and Position Statements
● No-Kill Strategies: Community and Shelter Policies that Work – Arlyn Bradshaw, Scott Giacoppo
● How to Start an Animal Rescue or Other Nonprofit Animal Organization (see the section "Define policies and standards")
● Working the System: Understanding Good Policies and How to Get Them in Your Community (Arlyn Bradshaw, Scott Giacoppo)

E. Staff structure

Finding – Staff needs a clearly defined reporting structure. Job responsibilities for each position need to be clearly defined, and staff need to be aware of the responsibilities. Communication from the top down and addressing issues from the bottom up.

Recommendations:
● The organizational chart needs to have a horizontal structure and titles need to be consistent and accurately reflect position responsibilities.
● Roles and responsibilities need to be clearly articulated to each staff member.
● Place one person in charge of all kennel operations, including daily care, intake and adoptions. This will allow that person to specialize in all aspects of shelter operations and not become bogged down with other duties, such as medical or field operations.
● Create consistent and transparent titles for staff and reevaluate current individuals in those roles.

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE:
Management is reviewing organizational and job responsibility restructuring. Letters of expectations were provided to all managers with duty descriptions defined. Roles and responsibilities will be readdressed once the restructuring is complete.

Team building exercises are encouraged executed, when possible, for the department. Titles and positions are currently under review.

 F. Culture

Finding – Staff has too many responsibilities to operate at peak performance on a daily basis. Managing high intakes, will allow department to reduce stress and empower the staff.

Recommendations:
● Communicate the urgency to the local government and have the hiring freeze lifted.
● Job titles need to be updated to more accurately reflect staff duties and have a positive connotation.
● Join the Best Friends Network so you are eligible for the below and can partake in all the other benefits we offer our partners.
● Have each staff member sign up to be part of the Best Friends Digital Community and join the Best Friends Network partners Facebook group so they can connect with others in lateral roles across the industry.
● Have each staff member sign up for ASPCA Pro and the Maddie's Fund " Chew On This " blog.

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE:
Management is reviewing and restructuring the organizational chart. The hiring process will be scrutinized more, analyzing every applicant for particular positions. Team building exercises are implemented in meetings in an effort to reduce stress levels.

Staff receive notes from governmental meetings constantly. We will continue to reach out to Best Friends for position rewrites and position skill set requirements for success.

G. Communication

Finding – Staff desire to be kept informed about highlight city meetings. Each department appears to be soiled into their own responsibilities. Empower inter-departments to work together for one mission.

Recommendations:
● Conduct short daily team meetings to go over the highlights of daily rounds.
● Front-line staff should have regular team meetings in which organizational updates are discussed, and they would be in a position to openly discuss issues without fear of reprimand.

● Weekly organizational updates should be emailed to staff, as well as printed out and posted in key locations.
● There should be full transparency with the staff regarding statistics, departmental happenings, and any shelter-relevant information from the local parish government.

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE:
Management briefs all staff on highlights in department meetings. Front line staff have team meetings, and certain management levels will be reviewed for leadership traits and qualities to empower and motivate team to be more diverse and enhance communication levels. Time management will be reevaluated and will attempt to adapt with the staff we currently have until we hire more personnel.

H. Software

Finding – It is imperative that the issues with PetPoint is resolved. This will drastically improve the shelters ability to track animals for better statistical data. This will give better understanding of trends, and reasons for surrender and demographics.

Resource:
● Shelter Animals Count resources page

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE:
Pethealth Software Solutions has issued a "Statement of Work" for system cleanup and training. The current system has data backed up from 10 years. We are currently using the PetPoint Professional and will continue to use this program. We have process data tracking 'Smart Sheets" that give information detail by detail on the progression of clearing the system. Phase I includes intake setup and entry, outcome setup and entry, vouchers, equipment rental, finance module, lost and found, asilomar and reporting, case module entry, case module follow-up, medical module implementation, and animal management.

Phase II includes Foster, TNR, scheduling intakes and visual calendar, behavior module, PetPoint Transfer Network, Vaccine clinics and public microchip programs. Data cleanup and wireless internet access will make the database accessible to staff, which will create buy in for completing data entry in real time, as activities are completed. All updates and case clean ups are due to be completed in the latter part of June 2018 according to the "Smart Sheets" data tracking progression standard of work.

I. Volunteer and Foster

Finding – Need to recruit and retain more volunteers from the community. Create a more aggressive foster program.

Recommendations:
● Strengthen the existing volunteer program by assigning a particular staff member to lead this critical program.
● Create a foster program that includes a foster-to-adopt aspect to prevent animals from ever having to come back to the shelter, as they can be rehomed through the foster families.
● Have leadership and staff review and become familiar with the following:
○ Best Friends volunteer resource
○ Additional Best Friends volunteer resources: located here
○ Best Friends foster resource
● Create a contract or code of ethics that volunteers and foster families sign, as a means of holding them accountable if they are not fulfilling expectations. (Best Friends can provide a template.)
● Schedule regular trainings and orientations for both volunteers and foster families.
● Have a list of daily tasks for volunteers to sign up for.
● Utilize the information found in the Maddie's Fund Learning Center regarding foster care programs.
Additional resources:
● Best Friends Volunteer Handbook
● NKLA Fostering FAQs
● Kitten Foster Manual
● Dog Foster Care Manual
● Cat Foster Care Manual
● Pet Fostering

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE:
Management has created a volunteer pamphlet. Every volunteer receives an extensive amount of training from management prior to starting. We are currently working on a foster-to-adopt program.

We are doing more to reach out to the community for more volunteers and fosters to assist CPAS. We will continue to network with Best Friends and other organizations for more creative ideas to bring people in as we move forward.

J. Adoptions

Finding – Have CPAS open for adoptions that are more convenient for the public to adopt such as evenings and weekends. Drop off times makes it easier for an animal to be dropped off than to adopt or look for a lost animal. Cash only requirement is another barrier to increasing adoption numbers.

Recommendations:
● Extend adoption hours into a few evenings a week, with the ultimate goal of being open for adoptions every night of the week.
● All staff should read about and become proficient with open adoption concepts. Recommended resources:
○ Adopters welcome manual
○ Open adoptions
● Review and implement Humane Network's comprehensive 10-step guide to establishing a "culture of adoption."
● Update the adoption process to incorporate open adoption concepts and a conversational style. Recommended resource: Achieving Successful Adoptions Through Conversation, Not Interrogation (Todd Cramer).
● Create posters and signage that show the public what each animal receives at the shelter and the estimated cost per service.
● Conduct reduced-fee adoptions whenever possible. Read about the benefits of reduced-fee adoptions here .
● When transferring animals to a rescue partner, transfer ownership of the animal in the same manner as an adoption.
● Utilize alternative fundraising to move away from adoption revenue as a source of income.
Additional resources:
● Dog Adoption Survey
● Cat Adoption Survey
● Overcoming Adoption Barriers Research: Executive Summary
● Pet Adoption: Barriers and Solutions
● Tips and Tricks to Increase Adoptions (webinar)

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE:
Management has created a volunteer pamphlet. Every volunteer receives an extensive amount of training from management prior to starting. The shelter is no longer cash only, as a credit card reader is now available. We send teams out on offsite adoption events every weekend. We will review the adoption hours on the weekends and the drop off hours. We will eventually have scheduled times for owner surrenders.

We have performed many community outreach programs in the effort to bring the community closer and to focus more on the animals.

K. Enrichment

Finding – While it is obvious that the staff care a great deal about each individual animal, enrichment is not something the staff incorporate into the daily routine.

Recommendations:
● Assure that the five freedoms are being met for each individual animal throughout the animal's stay at the shelter. The five freedoms are:
o Freedom from Hunger and Thirst

By ready access to fresh water and diet to maintain health and vigor.
o Freedom from Discomfort
By providing an appropriate environment, including shelter and a comfortable
resting area.
o Freedom from Pain, Injury or Disease
By prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
o Freedom to Express Normal Behavior
By providing sufficient space, proper facilities and the company of the animal's
own kind.
o Freedom from Fear and Distress
By ensuring conditions and treatment that avoid mental suffering.
● Implement enrichment for dogs and cats. Recommended resources:
o Enrichment for shelter cats
o Do-it-yourself enrichment ideas
o Enrichment for shelter dogs
o Dog enrichment
o Kennel enrichment
o Dogs Playing for Life
o Hiding places for cats
o Enrichment on a Dime (webinar)
● Consider applying for Jackson Galaxy's Cat Pawsitive program to implement a full
enrichment program for cats.

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE:
Management has created playgroups for dogs with similar sizes and similar behaviors. Most
dogs come into the shelter emaciated and injured, and we can only give palliative care at CPAS.
We try to reach out to rescue groups to assist with animals that we cannot care for at CPAS. We
now have cat dens that were provided by Best Friends, and they work tremendously.

CPAS is creating more ideas for enrichment programs, and will continue to seek ideas and
methods from other organizations that have enrichment programs currently in place.

L. Reduced-fee and free spay/neuter

Finding – Having informational brochures for the shelter staff and animal control officers to
give to the public on spay/neuter and TNR is essential.

Recommendations:
● Utilize the resources about spay/neuter provided on AnimalSheltering.org .
● To create CPAS spay/neuter brochures, ask permission to borrow content from other
agencies, such as this example .
● Utilize Network Partners: Fix at Four Tool Kit for engaging the community on the
importance of spay/neuter.
● Collaborate with Robinson's Rescue to include their services on materials.
Additional resources:
● NKLA Spay/Neuter FAQs

● Spay/Neuter CCP Flyer
● Spay or Neuter Your Pet

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE:
Management has created a TNR brochure that explains the community-cat-diversion program and TNR. The brochure is very informative and the ACOs inform the citizens in the community and provide handouts.

CPAS has also completed their first 10 TNR operations. We are reaching out to Robinson's Rescue so that we can support the same efforts for reduced spay/neuter efforts for the community.

M. Community programs and relations

Finding – This is an area that all of the shelter staff are enthusiastic about and with which they are fully onboard. The shelter recently conducted one of their first low-cost rabies vaccination clinics. They were able to provide 400 free rabies shots and a handful of low-cost microchips. Recently, the parish arranged to have billboards promoting spay/neuter placed into the most at-risk neighborhoods. Although the shelter does not currently engage in trap-neuter-return programs, there are organizations in the community that have vibrant community cat programs underway. We strongly recommend that CPAS become actively involved with these programs and develop a good working relationship with those involved.

Unfortunately, CPAS has received some very negative media attention in the past, but now has the opportunity to shift from being the "pound" to being a fun, adoption-centric destination in the community. By making some simple adjustments that will subtly influence the public, CPAS can be seen as the true humane-minded, compassion-driven agency that it is.

Recommendations:

● Host regular meetings with animal control staff to discuss outreach strategies, events, promotions and messaging.
● Provide animal control officers with branded materials to hand out to the public.
● Encourage animal control officers to attend neighborhood meetings, visit dog parks without giving citations, get to know the owners of local animal businesses (e.g., groomers, pet supply stores) and be present at community events.
● Utilize HSUS' Pets For Life model for increasing direct community services.
● Encourage staff and volunteers to strategically place educational and informational materials throughout the community.
● Create and maintain pages on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (which can be done very easily by volunteers).
● Research online neighborhood groups to join, such as Nextdoor.com, and other county groups.
● Identify animal-friendly reporters in the region and call upon them to feature CPAS in articles of interest.
● Be transparent with the public by posting statistics online and using them as a call to

action to increase community involvement.
● Utilize animals in your care to promote the shelter, using their stories to show who CPAS is as an organization.
● Reference " Understanding and Developing Your Brand ."
● Revisit and revise the shelter's mission statement to reflect the current vision and philosophies, and post it clearly for all to see.
● Create a vision statement for staff and the public to provide a clear path on where CPAS is going.
Additional resources:
● Community Outreach and Engagement (CCP)
● Helping Pets by Supporting People: A Comprehensive Approach to Community Welfare
● Judgment-Free Zones: Building Relationships in Underserved Communities to Keep Dogs in Homes (Maureen Keenan, Kelsey Westbrook)
● Media Relations for Animal Organizations
● Local Media Tips
● Social Media Information and Tips

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE:
Management will continue to reach out to the community for more support in the effort to augment community relations at CPAS. It is going to take a community to fix the community problem and CPAS has teamed with multiple groups to help make this effort successful. CPAS works with groups such as PEP (Pet Education Project), Louisiana Humane Society, CAP (Community Cat Assistance Program), Robinson's Rescue, and many others.

CPAS also works closely to push programs and efforts to get the community involved via social media, and also utilizes the Parish's public information officer to disseminate information to citizens. We will continue to create more ideas for community outreach programs and community engagement.

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