

Minutes

Multnomah County Animal Services Community Advisory Committee

November 19, 2024

6:30-8:30 PM

Attendees:

Name	Present (Y/N)	Name	Present (Y/N)	Name	Present (Y/N)
Gray Bouchat	Y	April Milan	Y	Tara MH Martin	Y
Leah Brookner	Y	Natalie Mesa-Smith	Y	Laura Lambruschi	Y
Sharon Methvin	Y	Denise Holmes	Y	Kelly Peterson	Y
Nancy Marie Yuill	Y	Margaret Clement	Y	Andrew Beckman	Y
Erin Grahek (Staff)	N	Taylor Steenbock (Staff)	Y	Jessica Tucker (Staff)	Y

Guests:

Bud Garrison (Staff)

- I. Welcome and Soft Start
 - A. Eat dinner
 - B. Set up county emails
 - C. Finalize stipend documents

6:30PM Taylor welcomed the members to the meeting. Directed members to grab meeting materials, station for setting up county emails, and to see her for stipend paperwork.

- II. CAC Values breakout group session
 - A. County Staff Menti Board recap
 - B. Small group discussions: what do you think the values that guide the CAC should be?
 - C. Large group sharing

6:50PM New members introduction - Natalie. Staff introduction - Jessica. Taylor presented today's agenda, went over the outline for CAC workplan - what are we doing and why? She explained the general purpose of CAC's, and what we plan on discussing over the next 4 meetings. Taylor asked if there is anything else members would like to add to this workplan? Suggestion to create a way for members to connect and communicate outside of meetings. First step - set up county emails.

III. Shelter Tour Debrief - Any thoughts on shelter tours. Impressions?

7:00PM Member - Has been there multiple times, but this day was particularly busy. Seeing how we are trying to use the limited space, ex. only one space to isolate sick animals, saw the desperate need for more space, impressed by volunteers coming in to take laundry home.

Offered for members to write a letter to the board in support of a new shelter - Taylor can give tools to do this for anyone who is interested. Additional suggestion to write a group letter to submit as testimony when the new shelter is on the agenda. Could set a virtual meeting - 30 min, not a CAC meeting - to put this together.

Bud briefly went over some of the work that's been put into shelter design.

Member - Erin did a wonderful job presenting to commissioners the need for a new shelter.

Member - Didn't realize all the things that are done within the department - public doesn't have the knowledge of all the things MCAS does - need to get this information out to the public.

Member - OMG - Doing so much with so little. Reinforced that the public isn't aware of all that MCAS does (and doesn't do). Ex. People don't understand why they are paying for a license and what that goes toward.

Member - Equity and barrier to access to services with the current location of the shelter. The location is dangerous and not easy to get to. Also a barrier for volunteers and staff.
Member - Its 2024 and this is what we have? What is going on in our government that has kept MCAS where it is now? Why are we just now having this conversation? What are the barriers to moving forward?

Taylor briefly explains funding via property tax that is capped at 3% tax vs. 6-8% increase in costs. She also explained the challenges of human needs and animal needs.

IV. CAC Mission Feedback -

Taylor shared the the current mission statement

HOME WORK: Send mission statement to members and provide feedback to Taylor

V. CAC Goals breakout group session

A. SMARTIE goals

B. Small group discussions: what do you think the goals of the CAC should be?

C. Large group sharing

7:15PM Taylor showed the values discussion board from staff during the pre-cac values meeting with examples of values. Asked members:

Do we want to discuss values as a committee or values you expect from the county?

Initial thoughts were for both but also suggested that some of these are already expected of the committee, but maybe not for the county as a whole.

What are the Mission, Vision, Values of MCAS?

15 minute break out groups to discuss values

7:40PM Large group discussion:

CAC: open mind, curious, respect, empathy, non-judgment, supportive and equitable contribution, team work, respectful, patient, goal focused

County: Transparency, responsiveness, solution focused

Both: Action oriented, transparent communication, curiosity, respect, balancing the needs of both people and animals - companionship

Taylor asked the group: on balancing the needs of humans and animals, do we think this is out of balance? How so?

Member (Sharon) - people come into the shelter and are disrespected, not even given eye contact, large underserved population that we serve, people come in asking for help and they are not respected or provided with services (just handed a piece of paper). Suggested that there is an authority issue and language barrier. Pets being adopted to unsafe people/situations where they don't have the resources to provide proper care.

Member -MCAS may not be providing enough services, but also consider other factors like staffing, compassion fatigue,budget etc.

Member - suggested also a communication breakdown - someone wants help, but we can't help, so how do we have that conversation?

Taylor noted that finding this balance is an easy thing to say but not so easy to do and that everyone may have different perspectives on what this balance looks like. Difference between equality and equity - not about everyone having the same resources, but maybe about targeted resources that that person's specific need.. We should apply this to the animals too.

She also noted that if capacity allowed, it would be great to get feedback directly from these people who have had a bad experience, and didn't receive the resources that they needed.

Member - The county should be trying to connect the public to resources as much as possible.

Member - Not a lot of resources available in general so pointing people in the right direction is more difficult than you would think. Where are the resources? How do we express this lack of resources?

FIST TO FIVE CONSENSUS -Going back to the values we came up with, how comfortable are we sending this entire list to Erin?

Majority disagree - condense, a lot of similarities, need a smaller list "less is more", we should focus on just this group and maybe limit to 3-5 values (current list is 10).

Final Values agreed on by CAC Members:

1. Equity - balance of human and animals, cultural respect
2. Goal Focused
3. Transparency
4. Curiosity
5. Empathy
6. Respect

8:00PM MCAS CAC Goals

Original Goals

1. Strengthen Social Engagement
2. Build Social Capital
3. Establish Trust and Accountability
4. Build community resilience

These are some of the potential goals discussed by staff prior to the CAC formation. Break out into small groups to discuss recommendations for up to 4 goals for the 2025-2027 MCAS CAC. Do we want to keep these goals, change them?

8:20PM Group Discussion

Group 1:

1. Remove barriers to community engagement / Awareness
2. Build inclusive community impact - actual action vs. idea - having an impact - easier to have measurement with impact vs. resilience
3. Increase up to date resource information

Group 2:

1. By the end of 2025 the CAC will suggest 3 new strategies to improve spay and n rate for pets being adopted resulting in 85-100% spay/n rate at time of adoption
2. Make recommendations to Increase return to owner rate (services
3. Increase community engagement 100% (town halls for under represented communities)
4. Strengthen equity in practices - targeted outreach, pet relocation

Group 3:

1. Improve reputation/public perception of the shelter & provide education on services & legal restriction of the shelter so that the shelter better matches people to services
2. Engage with community and community partners, especially with a lens of equity and diversity through strategies such as being physically present within different communities and community events.
3. Strengthen the non-profit arm so that funding is more robust.

Taylor suggested that we revisit these goals in Meeting 6 when we discuss the CAC workplan.

8:30PM Meeting Adjourned.