

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

**Regular Meeting
SEPTEMBER 10, 2020**

**SUBMITTED AT THE REQUEST OF
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT**



MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 8, 2020

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Leonard Vialpando, PE, Director, Environmental Protection and Growth Management *Leonard Vialpando*

THRU: Bertha W. Henry, County Administrator

SUBJECT: Status of Auditor's Animal Care and Adoption Division Audit Interim Recommendations

The Environmental Protection and Growth Management Department, Animal Care and Adoption Division, and the Public Works Department have reviewed the Office of the County Auditor's Interim Recommendations for the Animal Care and Adoption Division Audit and collectively submits the following regarding the current status of Management's implementation of the County Auditor's interim recommendations

In summary, Management concurs with most of the Auditor's interim recommendations and is in the process of implementing same. Management further notes that some of the Auditor's interim recommendations related to the facility, such as parking spaces, cannot be fully resolved in the short term as intended by the interim recommendations and others, such as shelter design, will require further evaluation.

Attachments

Status (AS = Auditor's Statement)

No	Interim Recommendation	Implemented	Partially Implemented	Not Implemented	Staff Response
<p>AS 1</p>	<p>Current Work Schedules are Inadequate to Maintain Animal Health and Well-being or Support Shelter Operations.</p> <p>Immediately adjust work schedules to, at minimum, 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. to:</p> <p>Reduce the number of hours animals are left unattended.</p> <p>Facilitate the early removal of animal waste to reduce unpleasant odors upon opening.</p> <p>Complete major cleaning processes prior to opening to reduce hazards to volunteers and the public.</p> <p>Allow for early feeding to reduce the amount of animal waste produced during the hours the shelter is open to the public.</p> <p>Open the Shelter to the public on Mondays in alignment with Miami-Dade and Palm Beach Shelters.</p> <p>Implement a 10-hour workday, 4 days a week for kennel operations staff in order to accomplish the workday recommendation in A. above</p>		<p>X</p>		<p>ACAD has completed a review of alternate work schedules (such, as a 10-hour day/4-day work week; a 9-day pay period schedule with increased work hours each day; or split shifts for the 8-hour, 5-day schedule) as recommended to provide more coverage of shelter operations with existing staff.</p> <p>Implementation of an alternate work schedule (i.e., 10-hour day/4-day workweek, a 9-day pay period; or split shifts) requires coordination with applicable Union representatives.</p> <p>Management commits to implementing the best feasible alternative as early as possible that would reduce the number of hours animals are left unattended, allow for early feeding, and complete major cleaning processes including removal of waste prior to opening. County Administration has already approved the 10-hour day/4-day workweek.</p> <p>Regarding lighting during night-time hours, management has addressed this recommendation by installing timers to turn on shelter lights at 6:00 am and off at 10:00 pm. Two corridors are being turned off and on manually by staff while we await the installation of additional timers for these two corridors.</p>

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AS 2	<p>Kennels are not Appropriately Secured or Monitored During the Hours the Shelter is Open Increasing Risks to the Animals, Public, Volunteers and Staff.</p> <p>Evaluate and implement procedures to lock kennels and cages while the shelter is open to the public.</p> <p>Assign staff to each kennel area to:</p> <p>Monitor visitor and volunteer activities; Ensure the public's and animal safety while the shelter is open to the public; Perform spot cleaning of animal cages; and, Provide volunteer and customer service assistance.</p> <p>At least one kennel operations staff should always be in each Kennel section during opening hours.</p>		X		<p>Padlocks have been purchased and installed. ACAD kennels are padlocked and only ACAD staff have keys. This action will also reduce the chances that volunteers will be bitten since they will not be able to access the kennels without a staff person.</p> <p>Kennel staff have been assigned to a kennel section to ensure and maintain sanitation.</p>

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AS 3	<p>The Shelter is not Adequately Staffed to Maintain the Health and Well-being of Animals Resulting in Over Reliance on Volunteers to Provide Minimum Standards of Care.</p> <p>Augment current kennel operations staff by seven FTE in order to meet minimum standards of care and facilitate kennel operations in the absence of volunteers.</p> <p>Hire one or more veterinarians in order to reduce the number of shelter animals per veterinarian.</p> <p>Hire one or more certified animal behaviorists or trainers or establish contractual relationships with third parties providing these services through a competitive procurement process.</p>		X		<p>ACAD kennel staff practices are consistent with the National Animal Control Association and the Humane Society of the United States recommendations of a minimum standard of care of 15 minutes of care time per day for feeding and cleaning each animal housed in the shelter (9 minutes for cleaning and 6 minutes for feeding).</p> <p>It is also noted that the Auditor's memo incorrectly states <i>"there is an overreliance on volunteers to meet minimum standards of care"</i> (page 7). While volunteers help with some of the cleaning in the shelter cat areas and with small dogs when available, ACAD staff, without the use of volunteers, is responsible for and meets the standards of care.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, Management will review and analyze the Auditor's recommendation to add ACAD kennel and other staff as appropriate and include any additional staffing requests as part of the budget process which would be presented to the Board for consideration with other budgetary requests.</p> <p>Five new staff (a veterinarian, three veterinary technicians and an office manager) are currently aiding with shelter operations. These staff were recently hired for the Pet Care Wellness Clinic which has been unable to open due to the current pandemic.</p>

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AS 4	<p>Enrichment Activities in the Shelter are Inadequate to Maintain Animal Health and Well-being.</p> <p>Immediately develop and implement a formal enrichment program to maintain the health and well-being of animals.</p> <p>Staffing recommendations in Finding #3 contemplate the use of additional kennel operations staff for enrichment.</p>		X		<p>Effective March 1, 2020, Enrichment Coordinator implemented a tracking system to track daily playgroups.</p> <p>Playgroup notes are recorded and scanned. Photos of the whiteboards to document daily walks are now taken by ACAD Supervisors and staff.</p> <p>The Shelter purchased diffusers and other enrichment toys.</p> <p>Enrichment Coordinator will be required to take animal behavior training courses.</p> <p>Management is currently reviewing the Auditor's recommendation to add ACAD kennel staff to support an enrichment program as part of the budget process, which would be presented to the Board for consideration with other budgetary requests.</p> <p>ACAD management brought back the "Dogs Playing for Life" program from July 23rd to July 26th to train new kennel staff in conducting playgroups.</p> <p>In an effort to document proper procedures, Management has recently developed the following Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playgroups • Pet Enrichment • Dog Walking • Animal Handling • Animal Handling Handbook

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AS 5	<p>Sanitation Systems Within the Shelter are Inadequate</p> <p>Repair and/or enhance the SMT system so that it works as intended.</p> <p>Document disease transmission control procedures for kennel operations and ensure periodic training is conducted for all shelter staff and volunteers to ensure:</p> <p>Adequate hand sanitization.</p> <p>Appropriate use of protective garments</p> <p>Adequate sanitization of equipment.</p>		X		<p>The SMT system has been repaired. A new water pump that regulates the system has been installed. A preventative maintenance scheduled has been developed to service the system on a quarterly basis with the SMT technician.</p> <p>Management has retrained all kennel staff on proper disinfecting protocols, including proper usage of protective garments and sanitation equipment.</p> <p>Management will also conduct periodic and consistent mandatory training in this regard for all ACAD staff and volunteers.</p> <p>It is estimated that approximately \$20,000 per year (double the current budget) is necessary to fully stock the PPE required for current staff.</p> <p>In an effort to document proper procedures, Management has recently developed the following Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disinfecting and Cleaning • Bathing and Grooming • Cleaning Pet Carriers and Traps • Scoop Disinfection

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AS 6	<p>Animal Handling Training is Inadequate to Ensure the Safety of Employees and Volunteers.</p> <p>Implement formal animal handling training during the onboarding of employees and volunteers. Refresher training should be conducted at least annually or when animal handling standards or procedures are updated.</p>		<p>X</p>		<p>New staff are provided educational materials and then are shadowed by senior kennel staff to gain skill in animal handling.</p> <p>In an effort to document proper procedures, Management has recently developed the following Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and completed a new training manual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Handling SOPs • Animal Handling Handbook

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AS 7	<p>Parking at the Shelter is Inadequate to Support Shelter Operations and Facilitate Easy Access to the Public.</p> <p>Increase the number of parking spaces at the shelter in order to facilitate access by the public, volunteers, and staff. In the interim, management should consider using the boat ramp parking lot currently under construction adjacent to the shelter for overflow public parking.</p>			X	<p>Management has identified up to 50 spaces of alternate parking for Shelter visitors on the adjacent Boater's Park lot that is in the process of construction on the west side of the shelter. Once completed, availability of these additional parking spaces will be coordinated with Parks and Recreation Division staff.</p> <p>It is noted that the current number of parking spaces provided at the Shelter does conform to Zoning Code mandates and the project's set of stakeholder program requirements, which included stakeholder-identified counts of required parking spaces for staff, volunteers, service vehicles, and patrons. In addition, while it may appear that there is ample space for the provision of additional on-site parking, the Shelter's site is nearly fully developed with a substantial amount of land area designated for on-site rainwater retention and fenced dog play and exercise areas. The conversion of the water retention areas to parking would require an expensive re-engineering of the site's drainage system or, perhaps, the provision of a parking deck to accommodate larger numbers of vehicles.</p>

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AS 8	<p>Animal Shelter has Design Flaws that Require Remediation and was not Designed to Support the County's Goal of "No-Kill"</p> <p>Implement all recommendations in the consultant reports to address issues with the HVAC System.</p> <p>Review current shelter design and develop a plan for enhancements that would support the County's "No-kill" goal.</p>		X		<p>A comprehensive study of the underlying issues with the HVAC system has been completed and redesigns prepared.</p> <p>As of July 30, 2020, new enthalpy wheels have been installed and filter media upgrades have been completed. There should be a noticeable improvement in air quality as these upgrades help increase the overall effectiveness and energy efficiency of the system.</p> <p>The next phase is the installation of stacks (these look much like a "smoke" stack) on the roof to stop cross-contamination of the continuous supply of fresh air drawn into the building. This action will improve odor control as well as assist in keeping a proper balance, temperature and relative humidity in the animal occupied areas.</p> <p>This work will be closely followed by the installation of two, new air conditioning units on the roof to completely separate cat holding areas from human occupied areas. This work will reduce cross-contamination and objectionable odors found in the Lobby, Multipurpose Room and the administrative offices, increase fresh air for improved animal health and improve temperature and humidity control in all these areas.</p>

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AS 9	<p>Behavior Assessments are Not Performed Consistently.</p> <p>We recommend management enhance behavioral health practices and protocols to align with national standards.</p> <p>Ensure all dogs receive a behavior evaluation as required by policy and ensure behavior evaluations are performed periodically for animals in the shelter over 30 days.</p>		X		<p>ACAD has worked on simplifying and standardizing behavioral notes modeled after Hillsborough County Animal Care. ACAD has also developed templates in the Shelter’s electronic “Chameleon” system for field officer and admission staff to facilitate the intake of an animal and note behaviors where possible.</p> <p>Additionally, in an effort to document proper procedures, Management is finalizing Shelter SOPs to better align the shelter with national standards and other public intake shelters. The Shelter’s animal capacity, staffing, and seasonal influx of pets are variables that will be factored in the development and implementation of Behavior Assessment SOPs.</p> <p>As a point of clarification, it should be noted that ACAD’s current intake policies and SOPs <i>do not</i> require a behavior classification during animal admissions.</p> <p>ACAD’s current SOPs describe the process and documentation required on the animal’s behavior for an “Owner Surrender” situation, when behavior information is able to be provided by the Owner of the pet. However, the same procedure is not feasible when a stray animal is initially brought to the shelter as there is no one to provide behavioral history in these cases.</p>