



Municipality of Anchorage  
**Animal Control Advisory Board**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**January 23, 2025**



1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Pamela Schamber.

**Members Present:**

Pamela Schamber, Matthew Hall, Cathy Foerster, Sandy Potter, Timothy Ebben, Raylene Griffith, Samantha Fierro.

**Members Absent:**

None

**Staff Present:**

Tamiah Liebersbach, Debbie Burks - AHD  
Melissa Summerfield, Eric Jonsen and Joel Jorgensen - ALPS.

2. **Roll Call and Introductions**

**Board Members Self-Introductions:**

**Pamela Schamber – Chair (Board Member since 2018)**

- Retired pediatrician.
- Recruited to the board by another dog musher.
- Owns a kennel of 14 sled dogs and a horse.
- Represents the mushing community's interests in municipal animal welfare discussions.

**Matt Hall – Vice Chair (Board Member since 2023)**

- Sergeant at APD.
- Manages APD's Field Training Officer Program, Driving Program, and Peer Support Coordinator role.
- Animal Control Liaison for APD.
- Leads the Title 17 Committee.

**Cathy Foerster – Board Member since 2017**

- Originally joined the board to be part of the Dog Park Committee.
- Recruited by a friend who led the committee.
- The committee was later dissolved, but she remains an active board member.

**Timothy Ebben – Board Member since 2018**

- Owns a daycare in Eagle River.
- I have served on the board since February 2018.

**Sandy Potter – Board Member since 2021**

- Involved in dog training, instruction, dog shows, and equine advocacy since 1969.
- Asked to join the board to represent the voice of horse owners in Anchorage.
- Owns a horse and goats.

**Sam Fierro – New Board Member (2025)**

- Attended board meetings for several months before officially joining.
- Full-time volunteer with Clear Creek Cat Rescue.
- Joined to strengthen collaboration between rescues and Animal Control.

**Melissa Summerfield – Shelter Manager, Animal Control**

- Been with Animal Control for over two years.

**Eric Jonsen – Enforcement Captain, Animal Control**

- Been with Animal Control for 15 years (anniversary next month).

**Joel Jorgensen – Community Outreach Coordinator, Animal Control**

- Been with Animal Control for two years.
- Leads community outreach efforts and partnerships with rescues.

**Tamiah Liebersbach – AHD Administration Manager**

- Oversees Animal Control contracts and serves as Chief Deputy Animal Control Officer.
- Provides technical support to the board.
- Helps with Title 17 interpretation for Animal Control.
- Oversees AHD Grants & Contracts, including homelessness contracts and community grants.

**Debbie Burks – AHD Administration Support**

- ACAB meeting minutes scribe.
- Handles facility maintenance and IT requests for the shelter.
- Assists with other tasks as needed.

**3. Minutes from December 5, 2024:**

Minutes reviewed, approved.

**4. Requested Presentations:**

None.

**5. Persons to be Heard:**

None.

**6. Standing Reports:**

**Anchorage Animal Care Control (AACC) Monthly Reporting and Public Outreach**

**Melissa Summerfield Reported  
Program Progress:**

- Significant progress in implementing programs, outreach, and adoptions.
- Increased community engagement has strengthened relationships and improved services.

**Intake & Adoption Statistics:**

- 2023 Intakes: 4,145
- 2024 Intakes: 4,320 (increase from previous year).
- Higher intake numbers have been matched by an increase in adoptions and pet claims.
- Improved community outreach has contributed to returning more dogs to their owners.

**Horses Update:**

- The horses were relinquished by the owner and adopted the same day they became municipal property.

**Staffing Update:**

- All open-positions at Animal Control have been filled as of this week.
- Entering the year with a fully staffed team.
- Goal: Maintain full staffing levels to expand roles and enhance services throughout the year.

## **Joel Jorgensen Reported Public Outreach:**

- Significant increase in community support through donations, particularly in the last two years.
- Monthly events increased to an average of 6 to 8 per month.

## **Community Pet Food Pantry Growth**

- Substantial rise in families assisted:  
January 2021: 62 families  
2024: 330 families
- Growth is directly linked to increased public donations.

## **Recent donations include:**

- 3 palettes of dog food from Alaska Mill & Feed.
- 6 bags of pet toys from PetSmart.
- Surplus donations allowed distribution of larger food quantities (e.g., 50 lb. bags instead of gallon-sized bags)

## **Factors Driving Increased Donations**

- Outreach efforts with Petco, PetSmart, Alaska Mill & Feed.
- Stores offer in-house donation bins for easy public contributions.
- Increased visibility through social media (Facebook): More engagement with daily pet posts.
- Donation requests reach a larger audience.

## **Adoption Promotions and Successes**

- Donation-supported promotions, such as:
- Free large bags of dog food with adoptions in December. Additional pet supplies were given to new adopters.
- 11,000 lbs. of food distributed in two months to support adoptions and community needs.
- Assisted in fostering puppies rescued from a homeless camp.
- Held an adoption event at Alaska Mill & Feed.
- Successfully adopted 10 puppies before Christmas.

## **Goals for 2025**

- Targeting 20% growth in adoptions and community engagement.
- April and May are peak months, with events maxing out at 12 per month.
- Aim to add 2-3 more community events per month.
- Balancing animal intake with adoption rates to prevent overcrowding.

## **Next Steps & Action Items:**

- Plan and implement strategies to increase adoption events.
- Continue leveraging social media for targeted donation requests.
- Strengthen relationships with local pet stores for sustained donations.
- Monitor adoption trends to ensure balance with increasing intake.

## **7. Committee Reports:**

### **Sgt. Matthew Hall Reported –**

#### **Title 17 Revision Project**

**The committee has narrowed its focus to four key areas:**

- Definitions: Reviewing and refining terminology in Title 17 and cruelty-related provisions in Title V.
- Space Requirements: Establishing clear guidelines on the minimum space needed for animals, including how long they can be confined in vehicles.
- Prosecution & Enforcement: Exploring technology improvements for Animal Control and potential legal adjustments with the prosecutor's office to strengthen enforcement.
- Overlap Considerations: Recognizing that definitions may naturally overlap with other areas, requiring flexibility in discussions.

#### **Next Steps**

- The next meeting will focus on definitions, gathering input from the committee to develop proposed changes.
- If enough progress is made, draft definitions may be presented at the next board meeting for review and potential voting.
- Subsequent discussions will move into space requirements, enforcement, and prosecution.
- The committee is taking a step-by-step approach rather than tackling everything at once, ensuring thorough discussions and thoughtful revisions.

## **8. AHD Staff Reports:**

### **Tamiah Liebersbach - Reported:**

#### **Board Openings**

- Two open seats on the board, particularly lacking representation from the veterinary community (vet or vet tech). Tamiah is available to provide application guidance.

#### **Assembly Resolution Updates**

- Incident Review: Legal department working with internal audit on an incident review of the vehicle fire involving animal control and APD.
- Title 17 Review: Committee assessing and updating animal cruelty laws.
- Facility & Staffing Needs: Evaluating current staffing and space requirements for

animal care.

- Community Needs Assessment: Preparing an RFP to assess the true needs for expanded services and facility improvements.

### **Community Engagement & Transparency**

- Planned surveys for animal welfare organizations and residents to gather input on experiences and needs related to animal control.
- Board members encouraged to participate in engagement efforts.

### **Facility Improvements & Expansion**

- Blueprints for the animal control facility are in progress, in coordination with the Maintenance & Operations department.
- Key facility improvements identified: incinerator replacement, floor resurfacing, ventilation in surgery areas, commercial washers/dryers, roof replacement, and kennel sheltering.
- Exploring expansion options on-site instead of building a new facility.
- Facility upgrades may be included in a 2026 municipal bond proposal.

### **Animal Control Contract & RFP Process**

- The current contract expires in 2025; a competitive RFP process will be initiated.
- Board members can participate in reviewing and evaluating proposals.
- Potential changes to contract requirements based on community feedback.

### **Pet Sheltering & Homeless Services Integration**

- Evaluating ways to better integrate pet care into homeless shelters.
- Identifying models where animal control manages pet sheltering to provide professional care, veterinary support, and pet-related resources.
- Advocating for animal control staff to oversee shelter pet management to improve efficiency and support for unhoused individuals with pets.

#### **9. Old Business:**

None.

#### **10. New Business:**

None.

#### **11. Persons to be Heard on Meeting Topics:**

None.

#### **12. Informational Items:**

- a. The next Title 17 Review Committee meeting will be held Thursday, February 13, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at Anchorage Animal Care and Control.
- b. The next Animal Control Advisory Board meeting will be held Thursday, February

27, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Anchorage Animal Care and Control.

13. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 6:33 p.m.