

**Heber Valley Animal Services
301 South Main
Heber City, UT
Animal Services Advisory Board Meeting
Tuesday, April 8, 2025
6:00 PM**

APPROVED MINUTES

Board Members Present: Police Chief Parker Sever, Heber City
Mayor Heidi Franco, Heber City
Assistant County Manager Heber Lefgren, Wasatch County
Council Member JC Simonsen, Midway

Absent: Deputy Chief Branden Russell, Heber City
Sheriff Jared Rigby, Wasatch County
Mayor Phil Rubin, Hideout
Treasurer Bart Smith, Interlaken

Staff Members Present: Justin Hatch, Animal Services
Holly Argueta, Animal Services

Attendees: Carly Givens

Meeting Start Time: 6:02 PM
Presiding: Mayor Heidi Franco

Agenda Item #1: Consent Agenda

**-Minutes from January 2025 Board Meeting
-2025 Advisory Board Meetings**

1. July 8, 2025

2. October 14, 2025

- Mayor Franco asked the board to review their schedules for the upcoming meetings to avoid possible conflicts.

Motion: Chief Parker Sever made a motion to approve the January 2025 Board meeting minutes. **Seconded** by Heber Lefgren.

Yes: Chief Parker Sever, Assistant County Manager Heber Lefgren, Mayor Heidi Franco, Council Member JC Simonsen.

No: None.

Motion Passed: 4-0

Agenda Item #2: Chief Sever/Justin Hatch Updates

-Updates from non-participating entities?

- Chief Sever reached out to all entities. Independence and Charleston denied participation in Animal Services. Chief Sever sent requested statistics to Wallsburg to determine if Animal Services was needed in their area. No response has been given yet.

-Billing of non-participating entities?

-Charleston: Injured Animal

- Chief Sever addressed a situation in which an Animal Services officer was called out to assist a Sheriff's Deputy with catching a dog that was believed to have been hit by a car in Charleston. Once caught, the dog was then transported to a local vet clinic by the Animal Services officer under the direction of the responding Deputy. The vet clinic billed Heber Valley Animal Services for the vet services provided to the dog. Chief Sever asked the board who would be financially responsible in future similar circumstances.
- Heber Lefgren stated that Wasatch County would be responsible for any veterinary costs if the call fell within the County's jurisdiction.

-Animal Services staffing / schedules / shelter / animals

- Chief Sever inquired about the new four 10-hour shift schedules for Animal Services officers. Justin responded that it had been going well.
- Justin Hatch stated that Animal Services had seen an increase in calls to service and animal intakes.
- Creating a TNR (Trap, Neuter, Return) program was discussed. Justin Hatch stated that Wasatch County and Midway City already had a municipal code that allows community cats to be trapped, neutered, and returned back to the area where they were caught. He asked if Heber City could adopt a similar code. Mayor Franco would like to add TNR resources to the upcoming edition of the monthly newsletter to share with the public. Holly Argueta agreed to provide that information to Mayor Franco.

-FY 2025-2026 Budget Review/Amounts for Participating Entities?

- Chief Sever reported that Animal Services was 13% under budget.
- Chief Sever provided a spreadsheet to show the estimated amounts each participating entity would be billed for Animal Services. Mayor Franco scheduled an online board meeting for May 5, 2025 at 6PM to approve the budget.
- Chief Sever stated that they had requested a second PT Shelter Technician for the 2026 budget. He also stated that they planned to purchase a new Animal Services vehicle this year. Heber City will purchase the vehicle outright and then bill the participating entities over the life of the vehicle.
- Chief Sever would talk to the Finance Department about rolling over any remaining budget that hasn't been spent into a restricted cash reserve.

-Standardized Fee Schedule/Codes

- Chief Sever provided a spreadsheet to show the current codes and fine amounts for violations. Midway, Heber City, and Wasatch County had differing amounts in several instances for the same violation fine. Justin Hatch and Holly Argueta provided suggested unified amounts to charge based on data from surrounding counties.
- Council Member JC Simonsen stated that he would still like to see an escalation in fine amounts for different violations, such as Dog at Large and Animal at Large. Chief Sever suggested bumping the offense up to a Class B misdemeanor after a third citation is issued.
- Mayor Franco requested Council Member Simonsen and Heber Lefgren take the suggested amounts back to their entities and gather feedback as soon as possible.
- Chief Sever also mentioned that some municipal codes need to be updated.
- Violation fine and shelter fee changes would be presented to the County and City prosecutors for feedback.
- Chief Sever would prepare a Resolution to change the violation fines, shelter fees, and removal of outdated codes.

-Other Discussion or Action Items

-Community Concerns/PIO for Animal Services

- Chief Sever stated that the shelter's refusal to take in Owner Surrendered animals had been a community concern. He mentioned that while the shelter did have the capacity to house more animals, it did not have the staffing required to care for more animals.
- Chief Sever proposed that the shelter might be able to take in Owner Surrenders if done under a managed intake approach. He suggested that an appointment to take an animal be scheduled with the owner for 2-4 weeks out to prevent the shelter from becoming overwhelmed. While the owner waited for space to open up at the shelter, they would be given training and rehoming resources to continue to help them rehome the animal during that wait period. The owners would also be required to pay a fee at the time of surrender to assist with the cost of vaccinations, spaying/neutering of the animal, and food/housing costs.
- Justin Hatch added that Owner Surrenders would have to meet certain criteria before the shelter could accept the animal. The owner would be required to provide information about the animal's history: Had it ever bitten a person or attacked another animal? Did it have any major health issues? Is it aggressive?
- Mayor Franco asked that the shelter establish criteria the animal needs to meet and set of Standard Operating Procedures for Owner Surrendered Animals to be presented at the July board meeting.
- Holly Argueta stated that she would like to start a program for Wasatch County community members who need to re-home their animals. This program would allow the shelter to create a courtesy listing for the animal across several pet adoption sites while it remained under the owner's care instead of living at the shelter. She said that any potential adopters would need to contact the owner of

the animal directly and work out the adoption details. Mayor Franco approved the trial of this program throughout the summer months.

- Chief Parker and Mayor Franco stated that Owner Surrender services would only be available to participating entities.

Agenda Item #3: Scoping Committee Updates

-Findings:

- Heber Lefgren presented a PowerPoint that highlighted the shelter's needs. He stated that the most cost-efficient way to update the facility was by renovating the current 3,000 square foot building and adding 3,000 square feet onto it. The additional 3,000 square feet would include a quarantine space for dogs and cats, an isolation space for dogs and cats, surgery and exam space, employee area (breakroom/conference room), and specialty animal adoption area.
- The anticipated cost for the project was \$3.7 million. Heber Lefgren listed a few options to help fund the project, including a General Obligation Bond, Paws for Life Endowment, Impact Fees, and a Revenue Bond.
 - Chief Sever mentioned a County code that allowed the County to pay for Animal Services through property taxes. Mayor Franco asked Heber Lefgren to look into the code.
 - Chief Sever stated that he had spoken to Paws for Life and would have them present at the July board meeting.
 - Heber Lefgren said he was looking into the 2025 Public Safety Impact Fees for Wasatch County as well.

Agenda Item #4: Participating Jurisdiction Updates – Issues, Codes, Needs, Budget, etc.

-Hideout

-Interlaken

-Midway

-Heber City

- Chief Sever referred to an email he received from a citizen regarding a video that had been posted on Facebook that showed a man possibly abusing his dog. Chief Sever stated that the incident was investigated by Animal Services, then passed on to the County and City attorneys. Both attorneys submitted a Letter of Declination to prosecute. There was nothing further.
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-County

Agenda Item #5: Miscellaneous Items – Call for Next Meeting Agenda Items

-Budget

- Heber Lefgren stated that the Board needed to vote on the budget.
- Mayor Franco requested that an email be sent next week to board members about the budget meeting on May 5, 2025 at 6PM.

Agenda Item #6: Adjournment

Motion: Heber Lefgren made a motion to end the meeting. **Seconded** by Chief Parker Sever.
Yes: Chief Parker Sever, Mayor Heidi Franco, Council Member JC Simonsen, Assistant County Manager Heber Lefgren

No: None.

Motion Passed: 4-0

The meeting concluded at 7:52 PM.

I, Holly Argueta, Animal Service Technician of Heber City, hereby certify that the foregoing minutes represent an accurate and complete record of the meeting held on April 8, 2025. This document constitutes the official minutes of the Animal Services Board meeting.

Holly Argueta

April 14, 2025

Holly Argueta, Shelter Technician

APPROVED