



**Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
May 25, 2025| 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM**

In Attendance:

Sheri Gustafson
Kyle Baron
Michael Cahill
Dr. Martha Smith-Blackmore
Deanna Gualtieri
Kara Holmquist

This open meeting was held virtually over the ZOOM platform. A PowerPoint presentation was shown over ZOOM to all attendees.

I. Fund Totals and Expenditures

Sheri explained the current Fund's revenue totals. The Fund has an unexpended balance of \$421,300 as of May 14, 2025. The revenue intake in CY25 to date was \$313,450. Sheri presented the FY numbers, in FY25, the Fund took in \$333,762. Since its inception in 2012, the Fund has raised \$5,430,500. \$4,650,467 has been from tax donations/ online donations/ grants, \$5,032 from interest, and \$775,000 from line items in the state budget.

II. Budget/ Tax Donations

Sheri presented a spending breakdown from Fund inception to date. To date, the Fund's spending was in the following distributions: \$3,589,325 (71%) for veterinary services, \$127,020 (3%) for ACO training, \$1,287,787 (26%) for administration, \$13,649 (<1%) for marketing, and there is currently a \$412,717 in the Fund after spending.

Sheri presented the Fund's CY25 proposed Jan. 25 budget and allocations. CY25 approved budget of \$508,500 had the following allocations: 60% for veterinary services, 1% for ACO training, 38% for administration, and less than 1% for marketing. The budget planned to utilize \$100,000 in rollover revenue from CY24. Sheri recommended modifying this budget now that tax season numbers have been reported.

Sheri presented the new draft CY25 Budget \$500,000 for review, which contained the following spending allocations. 67% veterinary services, 2% ACO Training, 31% Administration, and <1% on Marketing. Sheri explained that the main difference between the previous budget and the new one is due to lower-than-hoped tax donations.

Sheri mentioned that the Fund would need to continue to be very conservative in its spending for the rest of 2025. She was concerned that the state would be tighter with budget line items than in previous years. While Sheri is hoping a line item is secured, she wants to ensure the Fund retains enough money in the trust to cover administration costs before the next tax season if it is not. To reduce admin costs, the department increased its share

of the program coordinator's salary from 25% to 75%. As a result, admin spending decreased: in 2024, \$179,370 was spent on admin, while for 2025, admin costs are estimated at \$152,000 for salary and fringe benefits for 1.25 employees. Sheri clarified that the increase in admin cost from CY23 to CY24 was mainly due to union restructuring of pay scales. Mike explained that more of the program coordinator position could be moved off the Fund because of the department tasks being covered and expressed his gratitude for department's support of the change.

Sheri commented that the \$330,000 allocation is only a little over \$25,000 a month. She said this will do little to dent the already 1-year-long waitlist, but she is exploring options. The AC unanimously agreed that staying conservative with the budget for the rest of the year is needed. The new proposed budget was approved.

III. FY25 Line Item/ Grants

Sheri mentioned that the FY24 Budget line item was fully spent, with \$8,000 in invoices just waiting to clear the comptroller.

Sheri stated that the last Stanton Foundation Grant for \$75,000 for ACO dogs has been fully spent, with just \$17,000 in invoices waiting to clear. The grant helped a total of 224 dogs in ACO care.

Kara said that they are hoping to get \$125,000 in a line item this year if possible. Sheri commented that the hopeful line item is in the Budget, and if we don't get one, we will be dipping deeper into the surplus this year.

IV. Spay/Neuter Voucher Program

Sheri started the spay/neuter conversation, showing a slide that gave the average voucher cost since the start of the program in 2014. In 2014, the average cost was \$124 per voucher. Voucher costs were adjusted as needed with small increases annually. In 2021-2025, increases went up very quickly to help cover rising veterinary costs for providers. In 2025, the average spent on a voucher is \$328.

a. Animal Eligibility Updates

Kyle stated that there is currently a hold on new owned animal voucher requests. Vouchers are still available for animals in ACO care and for emergency cases.

b. Numbers

Sheri stated that as of 5/16/25, there have been 22,416 vouchers redeemed, equally 3.6 million spent on vouchers. 317 vouchers have been redeemed in 2025, and there are 197 vouchers currently outstanding.

c. Wait List

Kyle mentioned that the current waitlist is over 900 animals and that the Fund is currently issuing vouchers requested back in April/May 2024.

Kyle broke down the waitlist by region and of the 900 animals 15.93% were from Bristol County, 14.93% from Worcester County, 13.33% from Middlesex County, 11.92% from Hampden County, 11.82% from Essex County, 10.52% from Berkshire County, 6.81% from Plymouth County, 5.61% from Suffolk County, 4.61% from Norfolk County, 2.40% from Hampshire County, 1.1% from Barnstable County, .9% from Franklin County, and .10% from Dukes. Kyle showed a bubble map of MA illustrating where the voucher requests are from.

d. Providers

Sheri discussed that we polled providers, and 100% agreed it was time to try to move the voucher program from a free program to a low-cost program. The majority of the providers were against stopping emergency vouchers, and most said that the current reimbursement rates for vouchers were sufficient.

Kyle mentioned that it is a full renewal year for providers, and we are currently issuing extensions prior to the full renewals, which will be due at the end of September.

e. Program Changes

Sheri Discussed with the AC if moving towards being a low-cost program verses a no cost program should be considered. She stated that if the Fund started asking for an admin fee for vouchers, it could offset program cost and prevent future voucher holds. Revenue streams for the Fund are currently just tax donations, grant funding, and budget line items. None of the revenue avenues is steady, and requests, veterinary costs, and program costs are continuing to rise.

Sheri commented that the Fund's online portal donation site has been down for over a year since the state's vendor contract was not renewed and the Fund's small online donation amounts make it low on the MDAR priority list to get back up. If a small voucher fee could be charged, the way the Fund would receive those fees could be developed under a new contract.

Martha stated that she felt moving towards low-cost was needed. The rest of the AC agreed. Sheri said that she would talk to contracts to see what it would take to develop a system for taking voucher fees.

Sheri also stated that she would start exploring ways to make the Fund less admin-heavy. She will be working with Kyle to see if the voucher program can be streamlined.

Kyle presented that the Fund is now gathering outcome data for ACO animals helped, and it's potential benefits.

V. Promotions/Events/Marketing

Sheri mentioned that she will be starting work on 2026 tax season donation campaigns soon and asked the AC to send along ideas if they have any.

VI. Animal Control Officer Training

a. 2025 ACO Designations

Sheri stated that from the 2025 ACO designations sent, she was still waiting on designations from roughly 100 municipalities.

b. ACO Core Training

Sheri presented the numbers from the 2024 Core Training. Over 90 ACOs were trained with two contracted trainers and it cost the Fund \$3,625 to facilitate.

Mike asked if we should consider cutting training in 2025 due to the tight budget.

Sheri suggested that we continue training since she felt the benefits outweighed the cost. The AC did not object.

Sheri Reported that the Core training will be held in two sessions in the Fall. One in Western, MA in early September and one in Eastern, MA later in the month. The Western, MA session will be available both in person and virtually.

Sheri will send out a doodle poll to schedule the next AC meeting for sometime the early Fall.

Meeting adjourned.

DRAFT



Advisory Committee Meeting

5/22/25 *New Chapter?*



AGENDA



I. Fund Totals and Expenditures

a. Review of Balance Sheet/Budget

II. Budget/2025 Tax Donations

III. FY26 line item/ Grants

IV. Spay/Neuter Voucher Program

a. Animal Eligibility Updates

b. Numbers

c. Wait List

d. Providers

e. Program Changes

V. Promotions/Events/Marketing

VI. Animal Control Officers

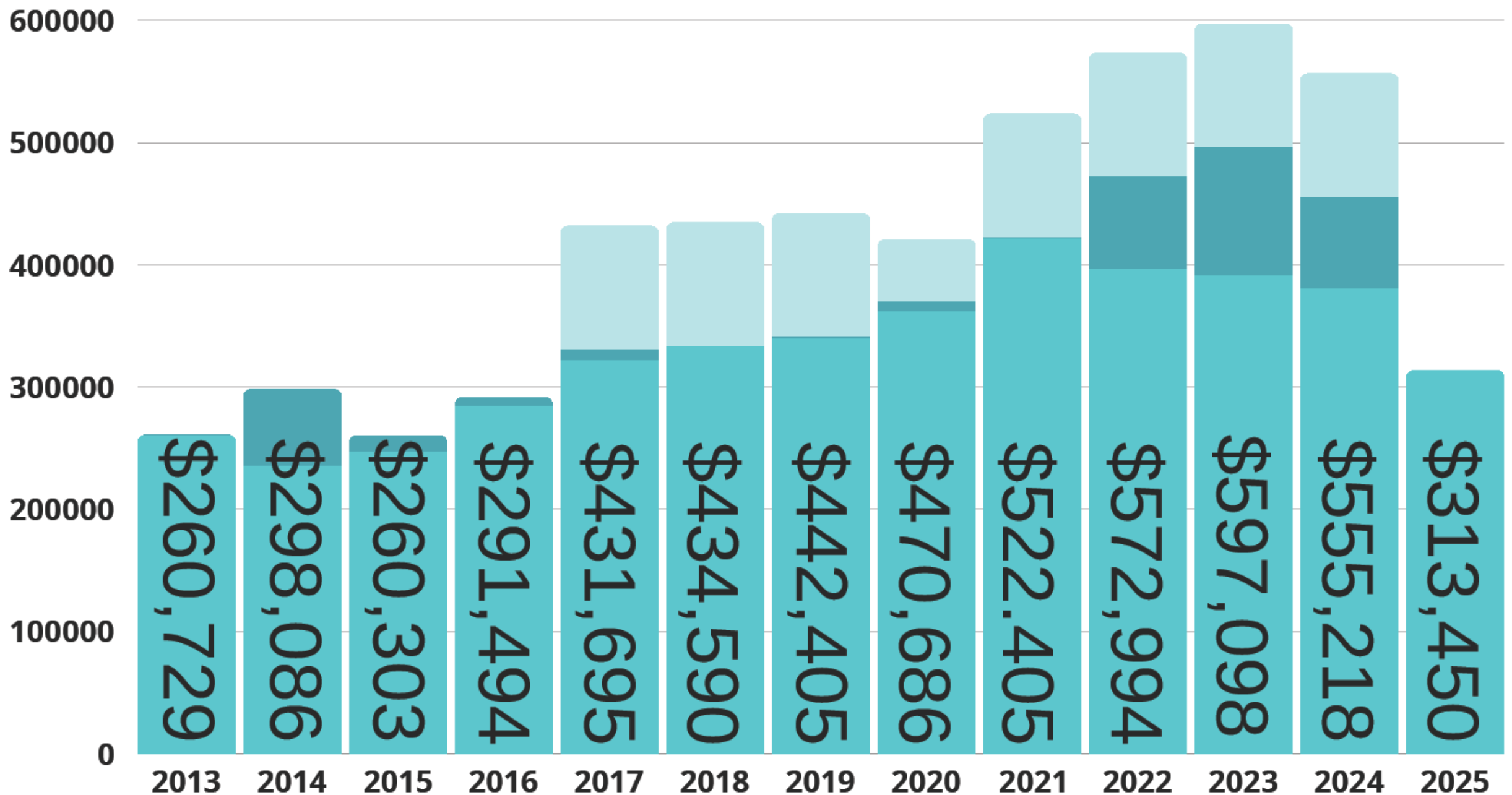
a. 2025 Core Training

b. CE Training

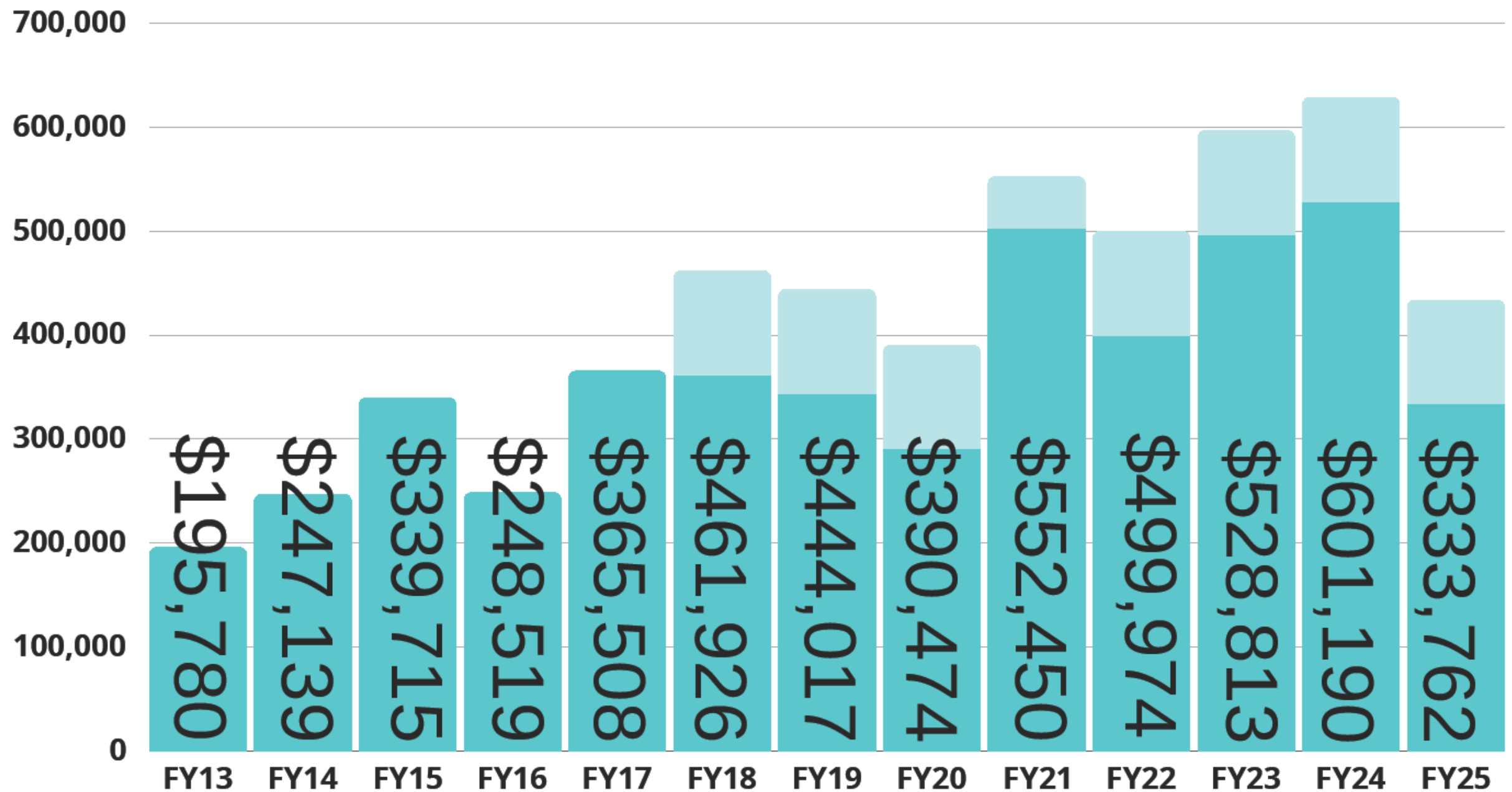
TOTALS AND EXPENDITURES



Unexpended balance as of 5/14/25 \$421,300



FUND TOTALS AND EXPENDITURES



Current Donation Levels

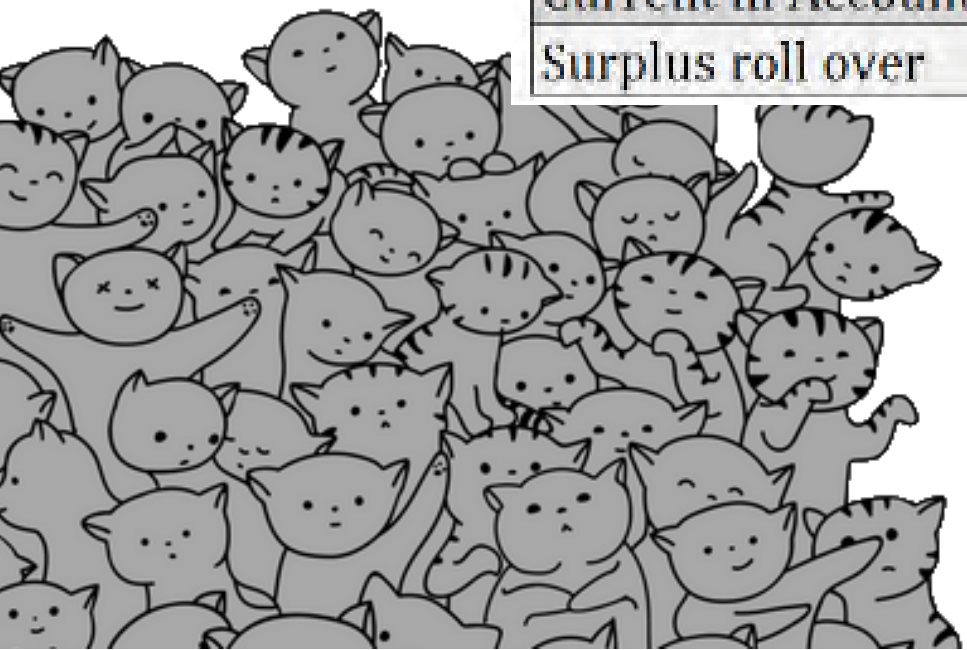


	\$ 5,430,500.18				
year	total donations/grants	interest	line item	tax donations	online/grants
2013	\$ 260,729.55	0		\$ 260,670.55	59
2014	\$ 298,086.38	376.64		\$ 237,086.38	61000
2015	\$ 260,303.06	289.6		\$ 247,689.33	12613.73
2016	\$ 291,494.16	123.15		\$ 284,828.37	6665.79
2017	\$ 331,685.67	225.98	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 322,220.04	9465.63
2018	\$ 334,590.90	399.44	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 334,290.90	300
2019	\$ 342,064.72	469.06	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 340,150.72	1914
2020	\$ 370,686.42	139.68	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 362,536.42	8150
2021	\$ 422,405.32	22.89	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 421,415.32	990
2022	\$ 472,994.17	366.36	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 397,994.17	75,000
2023	\$ 497,098.44	1098.25	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 392,098.44	105,000
2024	\$ 455,218.40	1181.67	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 380,218.40	75,000
2025	\$ 313,110.39	339.88		\$ 313,110.39	
	\$ 4,650,467.58	\$ 5,032.60	\$ 775,000.00	\$ 4,294,309.43	\$ 281,158.15
5,430,500.18	87%	<.0001%	14%		

FUND TOTALS AND EXPENDITURES



Revenue to date \$5,430,500	% of Spent	Expenses to Date \$5,017,782
Veterinary	71%	\$3,589,325.14
ACO Training	3%	\$127,020.87
Administration	26%	\$1,287,787.05
Marketing	<1%	\$13,649.26
Current in Account	7% total intake	\$412,717.86
Surplus roll over	5% total intake	\$267,334.40



**Over 28,000 vouchers
have been distributed.**



Proposed 2025 Budget



\$500,000= \$400,000 from 2025 Donations
 * \$100,000 FY26 Line Item
 \$100,000 from buffer if no Line item in FY26

2025 Proposed Budget	Estimated Revenue \$500,000	Proposed Expenses \$508,500	
Veterinary	60%	\$300,000	Only \$25,000 a month!
ACO Training	1%	\$11,000	
Administration	38%	\$195,000	PC (75/25 split)
Marketing	<1%	\$500	
Surplus	50%	\$100,000	if needed

*Admin increases due to union negotiations and fringe increase For 1.75 staff.



NEW Proposed 2025 Budget

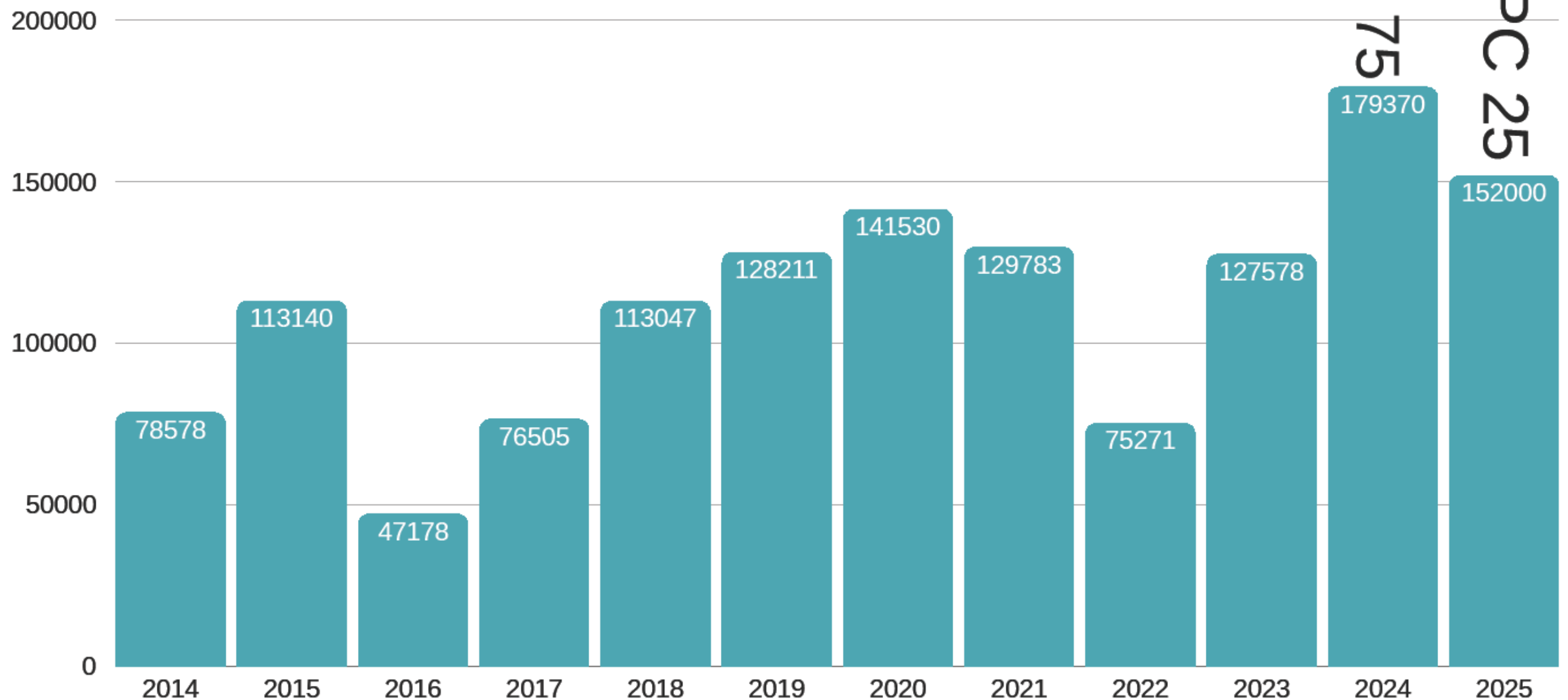
\$500,000= \$330,000 from 2025 Donations
 \$45,000 from past surplus
 * \$125,000 FY26 Line Item
 \$151,000 from past surplus if no Line item in FY26

* would leave a buffer of approx. \$220,000
 in the Fund, otherwise \$95,000

2025 Proposed Budget	Proposed Expenses	%	To date \$168,066	Percentage
Budget	\$500,000.00		\$313,450.00	32% needed
Veterinary	\$334,000.00	67%	\$99,890 + \$62,000	52% left
ACO Training	\$10,400.00	2%	\$2,225.00	78% left
Administration	\$154,404.00	31%	\$65,689.00	57% left
Marketing	\$1,300.00	<1%	\$209.00	84% left
Surplus	\$45,104- \$170,100			

*Admin reduction due to PC salary switch from 75% paid by Fund to 25%,
 THANK YOU MDAR!

ADMIN COST IN DOLLARS



Extreme admin variations due to open staff positions,
union restructure of pay scales, and MDAR
assistance

Budget Line Items and Grants

FY25 Budget Line Item secured \$100,000.

Fully encumbered, \$8,000 in invoices waiting to clear.

-Was released to the Fund increments-otherwise would have been fully spent a while ago.



The Stanton Foundation Grants
2022= \$75,000
2023 = \$105,000
2024 = \$75,000

22' \$75,000 for dogs in Commonwealth
(no restrictions)

May 23' \$30,000
Emergency Grant (for E surgeries)

November 23' \$75,000 for dogs in
Commonwealth (no restrictions)

May 24' \$75,000

Designated for canines in
municipal shelters or at 501c3
organizations.

224 dogs helped!

Current: Paid \$63,000

Pending \$17,000

106% utilized just awaiting invoices



The Stanton Foundation Grant
Interim Report 8.1.24

MASSACHUSETTS ANIMAL FUND

Support

In May of 2024, the Massachusetts Animal Fund received a very generous grant in the amount of \$75,000 from The Stanton Foundation to provide canines in shelters free spay/neuter services across the Commonwealth!



Canines Helped

To date, 85 canines in municipal shelters have received FREE spay/neuter assistance through The Stanton Foundation Grant. Of the canines helped so far, 46 are receiving FREE spays and 39 are receiving free neuters. The grant is open to all types of canines and has already helped over 19 different breeds from tiny chihuahua/yorkie mixes to gigantic cane corsos and great pyrenees.



Areas Supported

This grant has already sent vouchers to provide FREE services to canines in 35 municipalities through the collaborative effort between the Fund, 27 veterinary providers and 6 municipal partners.



Program Impact

Since the grant period started, 85 canines housed in municipal shelters received immediate spay/neuter/vaccination vouchers as soon as eligibility was verified, saving their municipality an average of \$320 per animal for their care and allowing Mass Animal Fund to send out additional vouchers matching one for every animal covered by the grant.



Lives Saved

Thanks to The Stanton Foundation support,

12 canines (out of the 85 helped) received vouchers for FREE spay/neuter services after they ended up in a shelter because of a critical animal welfare issue, such as hoarding or abuse. 14 canines received vouchers for FREE spay/neuter services because their family could not keep them due to a housing issue. 1 canine received a FREE spay voucher after their owner passed away. 49 canines who were found as strays and were not claimed received FREE spay/neuter vouchers.

All of the canines spayed/neutered through this grant have been fast tracked towards adoption through their municipalities or through transfers to local shelters/rescues.

Grant Utilized

From May 1, 24' - August 1, 24'

\$25,925 expended

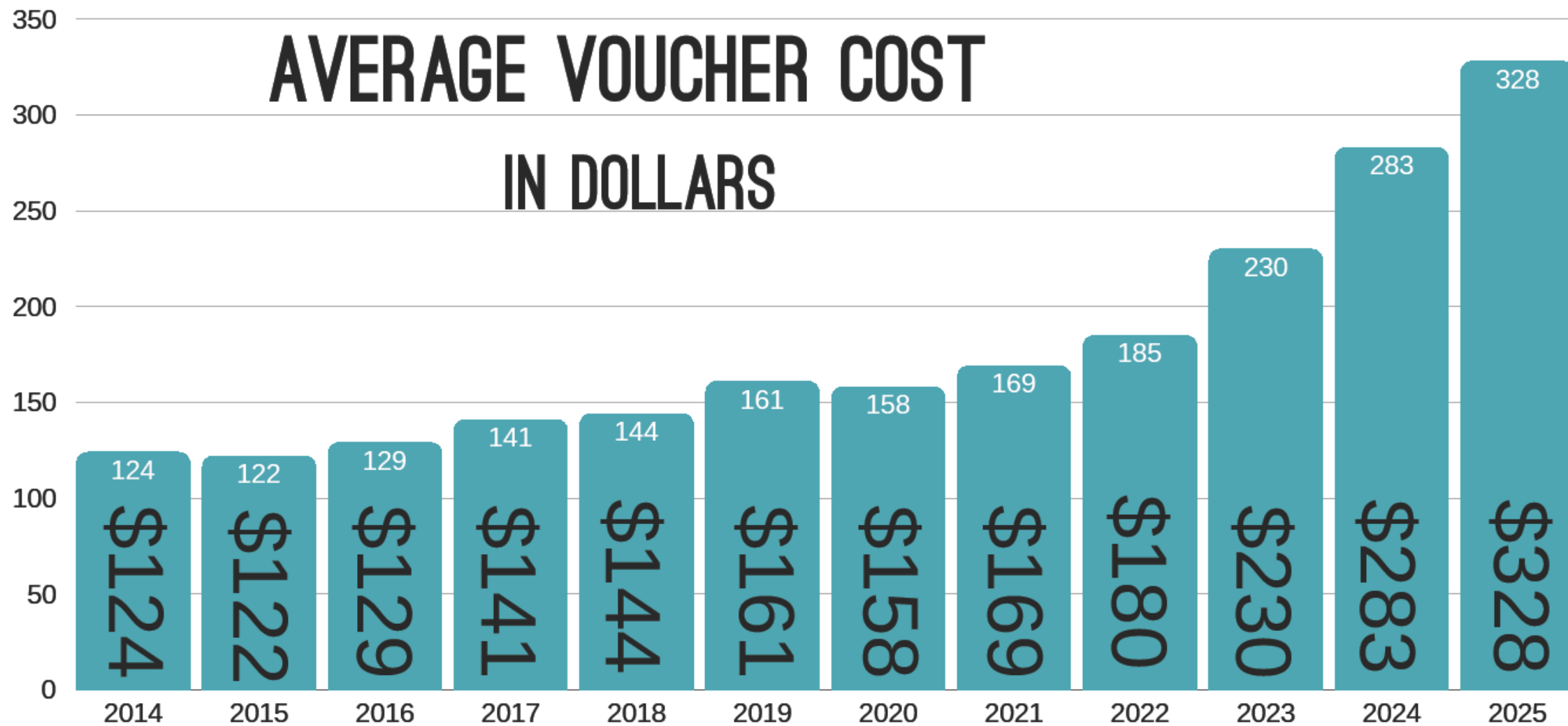
34.6%

85 canines have received vouchers. \$320 average cost of care for redeemed vouchers.

FUND TOTALS AND EXPENDITURES



AVERAGE VOUCHER COST IN DOLLARS



SPAY NEUTER VOUCHER PROGRAM



Quick Notes-

ALL Provider contracts expire in June 2025, it's a full renewal year.

Contract extensions are in progress all due by 7/1/2025

Full Contracts will be due 90 days after.

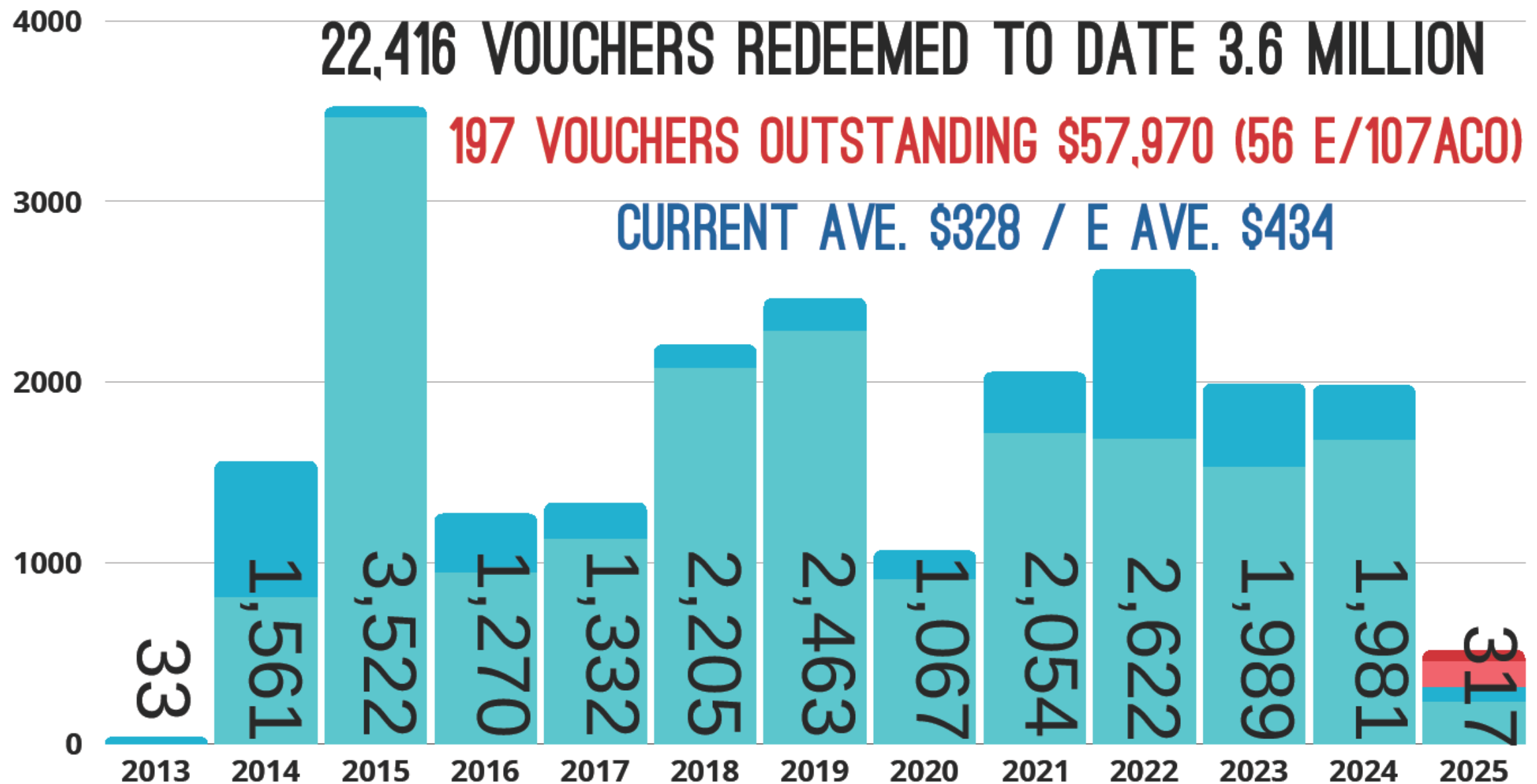
Current Waitlist-

- **900 plus** on waitlist!
est. \$250,000 (surgery + vaccines)
- **HOLD on new owned animal applications.**
- **Requests currently being issued from March/April 2024**
- **Current distribution rate approx. Only ACO animals and Emergency**

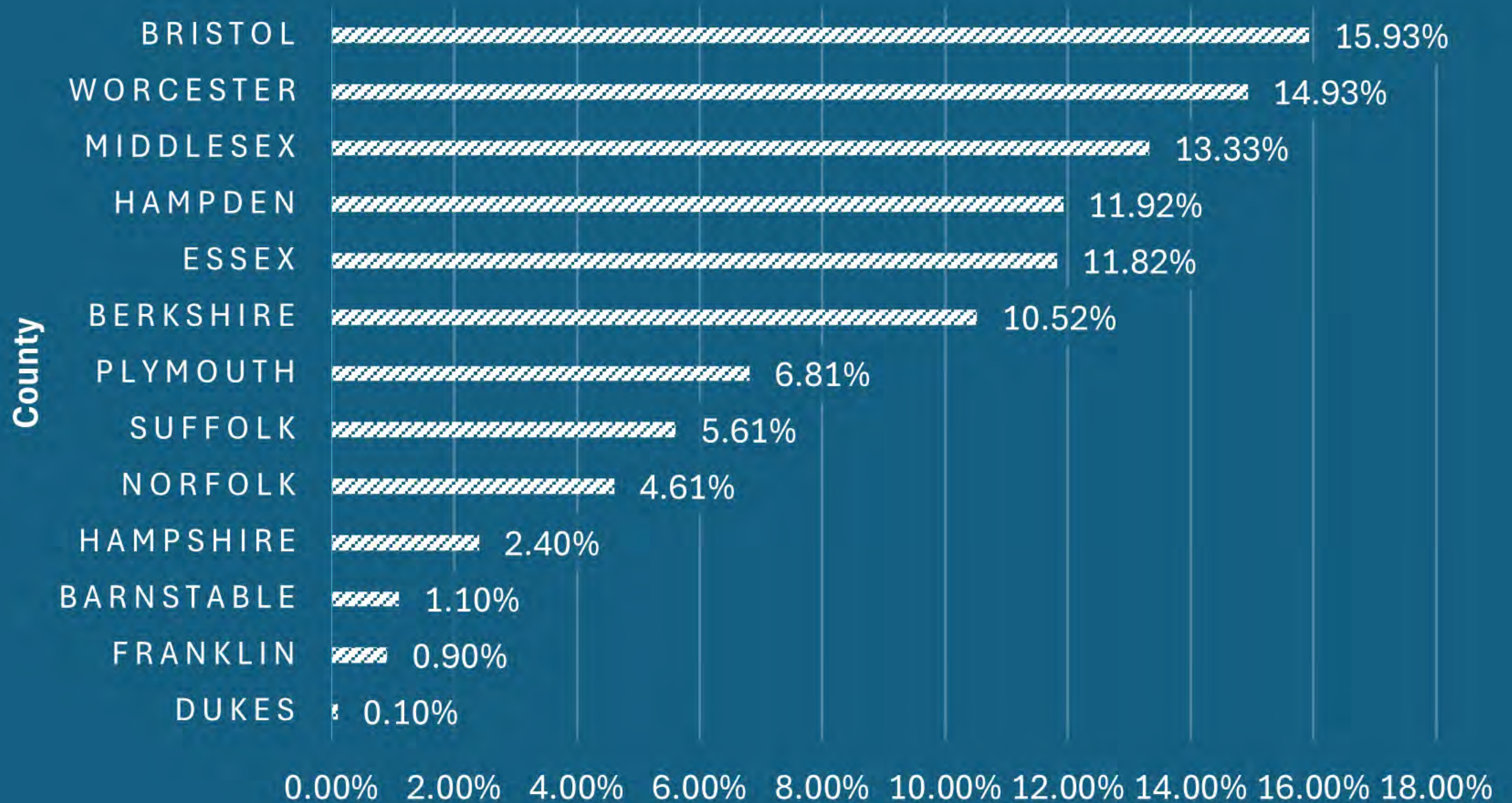
SPAY NEUTER VOUCHER PROGRAM



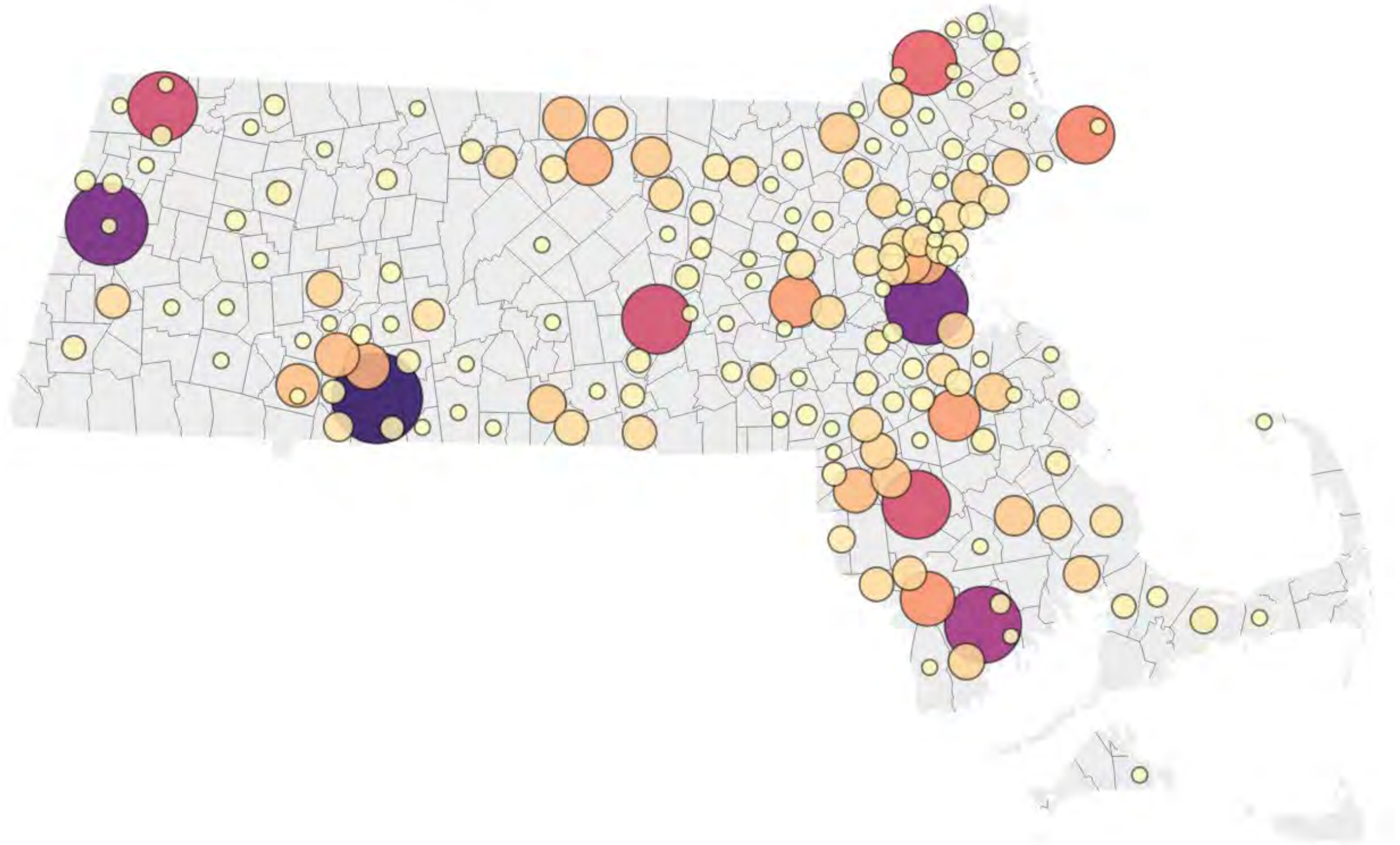
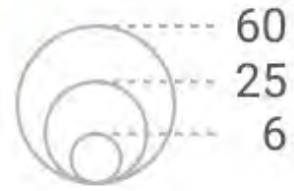
***AS OF 5/16/25**



REQUEST DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTY



Voucher Requests by Municipality



SPAY NEUTER VOUCHER PROGRAM



Moving forward.

Providers Poll:

- 100% agreed that it may be time to move to low-cost instead of free**
- Majority against removal of emergency vouchers**
- Most said current reimbursement amounts okay for now, exception vaccine increase?**

SPAY NEUTER VOUCHER PROGRAM



Internal thoughts:

Find additional revenue stream

- Charge admin or processing fee on owned animal vouchers (easiest to start)

- $\$50$ / cat and $\$100$ / dog = 750 animals a year

- (\$54,250 in revenue) to offset \$246,000 cost.

- Find a way to increase donations, or surcharge possibilities.

SPAY NEUTER VOUCHER PROGRAM



Reduce Cost

Reduce Admin load for program.

- Automate application process.**
- Require use of online forms**

**Owners type in info that must be approved
by ACO**

**-Revamp online ACO portals for quicker
processing**

Other Project Updates

- **Animal Outcome Tracking**



2024 ANIMAL CONTROL CORE COMPETENCIES TRAINING WRAP UP

COST TO RUN= \$3,625
TRAINERS: ACO FLYNN & ACO MACIEL



MA Animal Laws, Emergency Preparation, Animal Behavior and Safe Capture, Wildlife, Communications and Officer Safety, Reports and Recordkeeping

FREE training is required for all municipal animal control officers in Massachusetts who did not previously complete the Core Competencies Training.

IN-PERSON & VIRTUAL

Session I:
Palmer Police Station
9/23 & 9/24

In-person= 20
virtual = 24
New ACOs =16
Refresh= 9
All passed (that
completed testing)

IN-PERSON ONLY

Session II :
ARL Dedham
10/8 & 10/9

In-person= 20
virtual = 24
New ACOs =22
Refresh= 11
Non passing= 2

In-person=48

Core sessions are in-person, but online access will be made available for Session I. Any ACO who previously completed the Core training was welcome to retake the course as a refresher for CE credit.

2025 ACO Designations and Training

- **For December 2025 ACO designation we utilized the same format as 2024. Supervisors emailed by 12/31/24, due back 2/1/25. Still trying to get about 100 back.**

**From reported about 50 ACOs
need to be trained in 2025.
trying to confirm 2 sessions**

I: Northampton Sept. 8th & 9th

II: Eastern Sept. 16th & 18th

[illegible]



Next Meeting....

33. Voluntary Fund Contributions

f. Homeless Animal Prevention and Care.....

\$10.00

Visit **Line 33F**
the warm and fuzzy
tax line!



www.mass.gov/AnimalFund