



**Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
June 13, 2019 | 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

In Attendance:

Michael Cahill
Sheri Gustafson
Laura Marwill
Dr. Martha Smith-Blackmore
Kara Holmquist
David Feldman
Ray West

I. STAFF UPDATE

Sheri stated that the Community Outreach Specialist, has given her resignation and her last day will be 6/14/19. The Program Coordinator III (PCIII) position has been posted internally. Sheri recommended that the Fund posts for a second full time employee position, Community Liaison. Sheri stated that having two FTE employees will help by reducing turnover and training hours for the Fund. Michael stated that administering the Fund is at least a two person job and that he was in favor of having two FTE positions. The Committee agreed to move ahead with the second FTE once the PCIII is filled.

II. FUND TOTALS, BUDGET LINE ITEM AND EXPENDITURES

The Fund's Revenue Document was distributed to attendees.

Sheri went over Fund totals. FY19 tax season donations for January-April were reported at \$296,176.85, making this year highest tax season to date. FY19 total intake for donations is \$321,274.46. Current numbers reflect that the FY19 is \$4,685.30. down from where we were at this time in FY18, but 2019 calendar year is \$22,273.19 up from this time in 2018. Currently there is \$407,440.22 unexpended in the Fund. Sheri reported that looking at past tax season donation trends, she is still hoping that the Fund will take in roughly \$25,000 in FY19 and has adjusted the budget accordingly.

An Income and Expenditures Balance sheet was distributed to attendees.

Sheri explained that the balance sheet illustrated all income and expenditures of the Mass Animal Fund since the beginning of the program in 2013. The balance sheet also contained estimated spending for the rest of FY19, and a proposed budget for FY20. The Fund has received a total of \$440,991.88 in revenue and has spent \$438,956.67. The FY19 is reflecting the following allocations: 75% for veterinary services, 3% for ACO training, <1% for marketing, 24% for administration, and -3% for surplus, which is based off of a revenue goal of \$466,000 which included the \$100,000 budget line item and \$366,000 in donations.

Sheri went over the proposed FY20 budget. Based on a projected budget of \$485,000, which includes \$385,000 from donations and \$100,000 from FY20 line item, the following allocations were proposed: 60% for veterinary services, 3% for ACO training, 30% for administration, 4% for marketing and 3% towards surplus. Sheri explained that the increase in

marketing allocation will be utilized to try to raise awareness about the donation option at tax time through new advertising. Laura suggested that with consideration to our current Fund surplus that we move the 3% allocation directly into veterinary services. Kara suggested that we set a goal of spending another \$350,000 on veterinary services by utilizing some of the past surplus in the Fund.

Ray asked the status of the waitlist and if vouchers could be distributed to reduce. Sheri said she will explore reducing the waitlist but that the next couple months of voucher flow is determined by numerous factors including: surgery capacity, priority status, and location.

The Committee agreed to allocate any FY20 surplus, plus potentially a percentage of past surplus towards veterinary services if possible.

III. BUDGET LINE ITEM

Kara mentioned that a \$100,000 line item for the Fund has been proposed in both the House and Senate State Budgets.

IV. SPAY/NEUTER VOUCHER PROGRAM

The Mass Animal Fund Spay/Neuter Voucher and Emergency Fund Total Sheet were distributed to attendees.

Sheri shared that since the Voucher Program's inception; over 10,912 vouchers /assistance have been redeemed.

To date in FY19, \$324,9110. has been spent to spay and neuter 2,136 dogs/ cats across the Commonwealth. Sheri mentioned that since the voucher program added its 4th tier and increased reimbursement rates to veterinarians that we are seeing an increase in dogs being helped through the program.

Sheri reported that as of June 13th, we have 692 animals on the waitlist equaling approximately \$109,529. On average we are sending out 52 vouchers per week. Current unexpired vouchers are roughly 333, equally \$58,275.00. Sheri stated voucher flow has slowed slightly in some areas as we are focusing on provider renewals to make sure we have surgery capacity to keep up with the demand.

Sheri increased voucher days in June to 6 locations, to help reduce voucher redemption time as the close of FY19 approaches.

Sheri stated that all 34 veterinary provider contracts end on June 30, 2019. This is the first year providers are being required to submit bids through the CommBuys system and that we can expect some challenges. Anite and Sheri worked with the financial department to try to streamline the process and as of June 13th, 3 contracts have been returned and 5 new provider applications were received.

David asked for the status of the Municipal Partnership Program. Sheri responded that the roll out has been postponed due to challenges getting municipal veterinary providers through the CommBuys system, but is hoping to still get the program started this summer.

An Animal Eligibility Chart was distributed to attendees. Sheri mentioned that is beginning to receive spay/neuter requests for animals adopted through out of state organizations to low income Massachusetts residents. The Committee reviewed the current eligibility guidelines and suggested that data be collected on how animals were obtained and that the subject be revisited at a later time.

V. EMERGENCY FUND

Sheri suggested that the Fund merges the emergency fund and the general spay/neuter voucher program for accounting purposes. She mentioned that the types of emergency cases that the Fund assists has shifted from large scale hoarding/disease cases to smaller scale requests such as individual medical emergencies, abandonment, and cruelty cases.

Sheri said the Fund should still provide emergency assistance as we have, but that our tracking and budgeting for all veterinary services will get merged. The Committee agreed to combine the allocations as long as individual cases and responses continue to be tracked.

VI. Promotions/Events

Sheri presented a new veterinary provider logo and poster for review. Ray suggested adding a donation line to the flyer. Sheri suggested that marketing funds be spent to provide providers and ACOs marketing material to increase visibility of the fund. The Committee proposed ideas for ACO car decals, staff / volunteer shirts, etc. Sheri will be exploring options to present at the next AC meeting.

Laura suggested that a birthday post be done for the Fund since it will hit its 5 year anniversary in early July.

VII. ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER PROGRAM UPDATES

An ACO Training handout was distributed to all attendees.

Sheri stated that there are already about 50 ACOs signed up for the Fall 2019 Core Competencies Course, and that we hope to get about 100 attendees over the 3 sessions.

Sheri asked the committee to approve a new trainer for the Core, Joshua Kimball. Sheri stated that she attended a course on report writing he recently gave and would recommend him as an additional trainer for the Core. The Committee agreed to add ACO Kimball to the Fund's current training Team consisting of ACO Emanuel Maciel and ACO Kathleen Flynn.

Sheri mentioned that all ACOs have received new created CE compliance letters in March/April 2019. The new letters and database system allow the Fund to quickly create individual CE update letters on demand. Since the letters have been distributed ACO CE compliance has risen from less than 30 % to 41% in just a few months. Sheri hopes to get closer to 70% compliance by the end of 2019.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, October 8th, 2019
10:00 AM- 12:00 PM
Conference Room
251 Causeway Street Suite 500
Boston, MA 02114