



**Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes  
September 17th, 2020 | 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM**

In Attendance:

Sheri Gustafson  
Cary Payton  
Michael Cahill  
Dr. Lorraine O'Connor  
Dr. Martha Smith-Blackmore  
Kara Holmquist  
David Feldman  
Ray West

Due to Covid-19 Social Distancing restrictions, this open meeting was held virtually over the ZOOM platform.

**I. Mass Animal Fund Statute Review**

Kara presented proposed language to amend the current Mass Animal Fund statute to enable using funds to offset costs associated with temporarily housing animals as a result of low-income residents losing housing once state, federal, or local eviction moratoriums end.

The proposed new text be amended in section 2, in item 2511- 0100, by adding the following words:- "provided further, that not less than \$100,000 be expended for the Homeless Animal Care and Adoption fund and allowing up to xxx to offset costs associated with the temporary housing of animals as a result of the low-income residents losing housing once any state, federal, or local eviction moratorium that was put in place due to the outbreak of the 2019 novel Coronavirus or "COVID-19" ends and until 6 months (1 year?) after the last of any state, federal, or local eviction moratorium ends"; and In said section 2, in said item 2511-0100 by striking out the figure "\$4,945,785" and inserting in place thereof the figure "\$5,045,785". (Numbers would be adjusted to reflect current FY)

**II. Funding Considerations**

The Advisory Committee discussed the proposed change and voiced the following: Kara mentioned that specifics of housing assistance would be at the discretion of the MAF. Proposed locations could be boarding facilities and possibly a 2-week time frame.

Ray asked if setting limitations on locations would be too specific and maybe alternatives be considered. Sheri stated that unless the Fund had specific places reimbursements would not be possible since the Fund is limited in who it can reimburse, and they must be contracted by the state. Sheri asked if a grant program might work better? Mike stated that a

grant program may have more limitations due to the approval process needing to go up through EEA channels.

Martha asked if providing temporary housing assistance would prevent relinquishment or just delay it and brought up that if our budget was able to be increased by \$100,000 that would provide two weeks of temporary assistance to less than roughly 178 animals given the cost of kenneling.

David and Ray asked about alternatives to housing support.

Sheri proposed that instead of providing temporary housing assistance, the Fund moves animals that are facing housing issues to be moved to priority or emergency status for spay/neuter/vaccination (S/N/V) services. Martha agreed that S/N/V could make more animals eligible for alternative housing. Kara stated that we wouldn't need to change the legislative language for that and asked if the Fund ever sponsors vaccination clinics. Sheri mentioned that the Fund has in areas of a disease outbreak.

### **III. Scope of Services**

The advisory committee decided against amending the statute and agreed to give emergency S/N/V assistance to animals facing housing issues.

**Next Meeting date is set for**

**Tuesday, November 10th, 2020**

**1:00 PM- 3:00 PM**

**Zoom Platform**