



ANIMAL SERVICES

Presentation for BOCC

October 22, 2024



HOW WE GOT HERE

In late May, the County Administrator and the BOCC Chairperson contacted the Sheriff to request he consider managing Hernando County Animal Services.

At that time, the Sheriff assigned several individuals to a work group to research this project and put together a presentation for the BOCC.

Within a few weeks we gathered a plethora of information by visiting animal shelters in Central Florida (managed both by county entities and Sheriff's Offices), read The Association of Shelter Veterinarians' Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters (prepared by UF), and The Best Practice Playbook for Animal Shelters (written by Sara Pizano, DVM,) became certified in the Fear Free Shelter program, toured the Hernando County Animal Services Shelter, met with numerous animal advocates/organizations, and spoke at length with multiple professionals in the field of animal sheltering. In addition, we reviewed both the 2021 and 2024 Operational Consults on the Hernando County Animal Services operation, performed by Maddie's Million Pet Challenge at UF, as well as Standard Operating Procedures and job descriptions from numerous animal shelters in Florida.

The following presentation was prepared to show our vision on how the shelter would be managed, if transitioned to the HCSO.

SHELTERS WE VISITED

Pasco County Animal Services



SHELTERS WE VISITED

Brevard County Sheriff's Office
Animal Services



SHELTERS WE VISITED

Lake County Animal Services



SHELTERS WE VISITED

Sarasota County Sheriff's Office
Animal Services



SHELTERS WE VISITED

Citrus County Animal Services



BUSINESS PLAN

- Goals
- Opportunities for Cost Savings and Revenue Generation
- Opportunities for Improvement
 - Programs/Initiatives
- Budget
- Community Partnerships
- Public Education
- Community Resources

GOALS

Our goals would be to:

- Build a strong and sustainable team of individuals (employees and volunteers) who will care for shelter pets as if they are our own;
- **REDUCE** the intake of animals and **INCREASE** live outcomes;
- Promptly reunite lost and stray pets with their owners;
- Offer adoption services, foster homes, rescue, rehabilitation, animal training, innovative programs, community resources, and public education.



We are dedicated to:

- Meeting the physical and emotional needs of each animal in the shelter;
- Utilizing every resource to prevent **healthy and adoptable animals from euthanasia**;
 - Including the euthanasia of animals for "space;"
- Providing regular compassion fatigue programs for staff and volunteers.

COMMUNITY ANIMAL RESOURCE CENTER

The shelter would provide resources for pet owners in need.

- Targeted Spay/Neuter Programs
- Community Safety Net Programs
- Low-Cost/No-Cost Vaccinations and Medications
- Subsidized Private Veterinary Care

As alternatives to surrendering an animal,
leaving the finite shelter space for
animals with no other options.

COST SAVINGS AND REVENUE GENERATION

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- **Increased Use of Inmate Labor (Prison Inmates + County Inmates)**
 - Less costly and allows shelter employees to focus on the pets
 - Kennel Work
 - Dog Training
 - Dog Grooming
 - Kennel/Shelter Maintenance
- **Volunteers**
 - We understand and value the importance of volunteers and hope to increase volunteer participation at the shelter
 - HCSO currently has over 300 active volunteers
- **Pet Licensing**
 - No third-party vendor/costs
 - Veterinarians
 - Shelter
- **Retail**
 - Heartworm and Flea/Tick Preventative (lower cost)
 - "Merch"
 - Adoption Supplies
 - Pet Food



COST SAVINGS AND REVENUE GENERATION

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- **Grants**
 - HCSO Grants Specialist researching available shelter grants
- **Pet Food**
 - Purchase directly from manufacturer (56% to 74% savings- based on retail pricing)
 - HCAS Current - \$43,000/Annual (approximately)
 - HCSO Proposed - Less than \$8,000/Annual (approximately)
- **Low Cost Vaccination Clinics and Microchipping**
 - On-Site and Off-Site Offerings
 - Various Vaccinations / Microchip
 - OFFICE STAFF WILL REGISTER MICROCHIP UPON ADOPTION
- **Partnerships w/Local Veterinarians and Businesses**
 - Sponsorship of:
 - Vaccination Clinics
 - Spay and Neuter Services
 - Heartworm Treatment
 - Obedience Classes for Pet Parents



PLANNED PROGRAMS

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT



DOGGIE KOLLEGE OF BASIC KNOWLEDGE

Basic obedience and behavior specific training.



SOCIAL STUDIES GROUP ENRICHMENT

Group socialization for smoother family integration.



WAIT-TILL-8 KITTEN FOSTER PROGRAM

Kitten finder foster program to 8 weeks or 2 pounds.



STAYCATION – SLUMBER PARTY PROGRAM

Shelter environment reprieve and bonding time with adopters.



FREELANCE FELINE – BARN CAT PROGRAM

Adoption options for fractious cats dependent on human care.

PLANNED PROGRAMS

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT



VETERANS ADOPT FREE

Veterans and active duty military always adopt FREE.



READING TO RUFUS

Encourages reading, quiet time and human/pet bonding.



"CATURDAY" TNVR DAY

One day set aside for TNVR to reduce feral populations.



HW TREATMENT SPONSORSHIPS

Partnerships with local businesses to sponsor treatments.



COOL DROOL SPLASH POOL

New splash fountain for socialization enrichment.

DONATION DRIVEN

PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- **Extended Shelter Hours**

- Open Monday 11-5
- Open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 12-7
- Open Saturday 11-5

- **Owner Surrender**

- Community Safety Net
 - Reduced Cost Vaccinations
 - Reduced Cost Flea/Tick/Heartworm Preventative
- Private Placement
- Vaccinate (14 days)



PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- **Intake Only Kennels**

- Portable Building
- Temperature Controlled



- **Isolation Kennels**

- Portable Building
- Temperature Controlled



BUDGET

- A separate cost center will be created in the HCSO budget for animal services.
- All revenues and expenditures will be tracked and recorded accordingly.



AVERAGE NUMBER OF PETS PER HOUSEHOLD

Animals kept as companions

	Dogs	Cats
Number of households owning	62M	37M
Average number owned per household	1.46	1.78
Total number in United States	83,739,829–88,853,254	60,217,861– 61,910,686

Courtesy Forbes.com

AVERAGE DAILY SHELTER POPULATION (CATS AND DOGS) COUNTY POPULATION

- **Hernando County Animal Services – 161 (approx.)**
 - **County Population – 218,679**
- Citrus County Animals Services - 154
 - County Population – 162,529
- Brevard County Animals Services – 123
 - County Population – 630,000
- Lake County Animal Services – 150
 - County Population – 438,834
- Pasco County Animal Services – 101
 - County Population – 656,528
- Sarasota County Animal Services – 49
 - County Population – 464,223 (+78,906 Seasonal)

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- **Non-Profit Organizations**
 - Florida (227)
 - Breed Specific
 - Special Needs Specific
- **Foster Homes/Families**
 - Adoption Ambassadors
- **Humane Society of the Nature Coast**
- **Internships**
- **Local Veterinarians**
 - Hernando County (81)



PUBLIC EDUCATION

Increase Public Education

Through Informed Community Engagement

- Responsible Pet Ownership
 - Pre-Adoption Education
 - Animal Licensing
 - Kennel Licensing
 - Importance of Spay/Neuter
 - Florida Statute
 - Hernando County Ordinance
 - Pet Safety Tips
 - Alternatives to Surrendering a Pet



PUBLIC EDUCATION

- Social Media Platforms and Website
 - We will tell our story...
 - What's happening at the shelter
 - Laws and County Ordinances
 - Pets available for adoption (website)
 - Simplified Adoption Application
 - Strays brought to shelter (lost and found)
- Public Events
- Fundraisers
- Donations
- In-Person Classes



AVAILABLE PET POSTS



CONCLUSION

Through our research we have identified several opportunities for improvement.

Our goals are to increase revenue, decrease costs where possible, and ease the burden on taxpayers by reducing the number of animals in the shelter through live outcomes (adoption, return to owner, foster, etc.) AND by eliminating the need for additional shelter staff.

We understand that there is no one 'magic bullet' that will solve all of the current issues; however, addressing multiple factors which require improvement and utilizing resources readily available in both Hernando County and the state of Florida, will prove as an overall success to both the citizens and the animals of Hernando County.

QUESTIONS

