



Take Me Home Pet Rescue Volunteer Meeting Minutes 7/5/17

The meeting started at 7:00PM at the Adoption Center with around the room introductions.

Attendees: Alex Tombrello, Alice Chang, Laura Fessler, Ashley Hug, Ashley Morrow, Barbara Mikulenska, Barbara Sampson, BC Miller, Becky Hull, Betsy Venden, Betty Bowan, Cathy McNeese, Dana Huffman, Deana Seigler, Deborah Connors, Emily Andersen, Everett McNeese, Irene Dudgeon, Jana Dodson, Jennifer Jackson, Kathy Cook, Kay Stimson, Leigh Webster, Liz Wood, Mandy Dunlap, Mel Bullock, Melanie Rosner, Melissa Keeling, Nicole Wilbur, Renea Tafel, Sandy Landers, Stacy Holton, Tina Peterson, Trish Clark, Vanessa Vandiver, Vickey Schrader

Deborah then started the meeting by saying that Elise has stepped aside from Take Me Home Pet Rescue to focus on family issues and other things. Elise has left TMHPR in our capable hands to continue the mission which is to rescue as many cats and dogs as we have the financial and foster resources to do. Deborah stated our charge and plan is to carry on that mission in Elise's honor, but we can't do it without all the volunteers.

Questions & Answers

Q: Who is on the Board for TMHPR?

A: Elise Bissell was the President but she resigned. The remaining board members met to discuss plans going forward. Deborah Connors is now the President, Dana Huffman is now the Vice President, Deana Seigler remains the Secretary, and Melissa Keeling remains the Treasurer. The remaining Board members invited Becky Hull to join the Board as a Member at Large, and she has accepted the position.

Q: What is TMHPR's budget and are we going to publish our financials?

A: Last year we brought in approximately \$300K and we spent all but \$18K but we received a \$15K grant right at the end of the year. The Board has discussed that we need to increase transparency in the organization, and we will start publishing our financials and minutes soon.

Q: Is Intake closed?

A: It was never closed, and it is still not closed. Going forward intake decisions will be handled by the Foster Coordinator (Deana Seigler) and Operations Manager (Vanessa Vandiver) on a case by case basis.

Together they will review requests and make a decision if we can take the animal in to TMHPR at that time. Criteria will include things such as is there a foster available, do we have the funds, what is the animal's temperament, will we be able to get them adopted easily, what similar animals are already in the system. We will be applying more consistent procedures throughout the organization as we try to run this more like a corporation. We will not claim that "intake is closed" going forward, but there will be many cases (just like in the past under Elise's leadership) that we won't be able to help. The difference will be a consistent process for making those decisions with the same rules applying to everyone. Our medical expenses have been increasing over the past year. Some months our vet bills are as high as \$18K, and they are never under \$10K. That is a lot of money to raise every year. At the end of 2016, we came close to not breaking even due to high medical expenses, but a last minute grant helped us end on a positive note. Going forward we have a protocol to follow and everyone will follow the same rules. If the initial answer is we can't take an animal that can change in a short amount of time if funding is secured and/or a foster is located.

Q: There is a rumor that Elise left because she is going to another non-profit. Is that true?

A: None of us in this room can speak for Elise and her plans going forward. You would need to ask her that question.

Q: There is another rumor that the Board forced her out. Is that true?

A: That is absolutely not the case. She surprised us all when she submitted her resignation to the board via email prior to leaving the country to deal with family issues. She indicated she needed to focus her attention on family and this was very good timing.

Q: People are calling asking what is wrong because this is not like Elise. Rumor is there was fundamental difference in opinion and the Board gave her an ultimatum. Is that true?

A: We did meet with an attorney a few weeks ago to discuss establishing a more formal outreach program. We learned there is liability risk to TMHPR if not done correctly. We were in the process of figuring out if it was possible to get legal separation and insurance in place to protect TMHPR assets when Elise submitted her resignation. The difference in opinion was about the liability risk of forming a separate outreach organization under TMHPR, but the lawyer was very clear there needed to be distinct separation of activities in order to protect TMHPR. The Board did not give her an ultimatum; she chose to resign on her own stating family issues as the reason.

Q: Do we still have an outreach program?

Yes, the Chewy Project is our outreach program with Jana Dodson as the coordinator. This relationship is continuing, and we are now supporting over 90 other organizations in a rotation system.

