

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COLLIER COUNTY DOMESTIC ANIMAL
SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD
Naples, Florida, September 9th, 2025

LET IT BE REMEMBERED that the Collier County Domestic Animal
Services Advisory Board, in and for the County of Collier, having conducted
business herein, met on this date at 6 p.m. for a **MEETING** at Growth
Management Community Development Department Room 609/610 2800 N.
Horseshoe DR. Naples, Florida, with the following members present:

CHAIRMAN: Allen Schantzen
Michele Antonia
Kelly Hyland
Susan Mehas
Meredith McLean
Alexandra Casanova
Sherry Reno (absent)

ALSO PRESENT:

James French, Department Head, GMCD
Alexandra Casanova, Manager, Domestic Animal Services

Any persons in need of the verbatim record of the meeting may request a copy of the audio recording from Domestic Animal Services.

- I. Call to order
- II. Roll Call- Establish a Quorum
A quorum of 4 was confirmed.
- III. Pledge of Allegiance
Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- IV. Approval of agenda

Kelly Hyland- Motion to add public comment in after Board Ordinance Review.
Before Board comments.

Motion to approve by Susan Mehas; Seconded by Kelly Hyland
Motion passed unanimously.

- V. Animal Services Advisory Board Ordinance Review

Meredith Mclean- There is a document to review with recommendations from the County Attorney's office.

Alan Schantzen- As the chair, I would like to take issue that this document didn't show up until this evening.

James French- The Board of County commissioners ordered the County Attorney to work on the makeup of the DAS advisory board ordinance. This information was just sent to me late this afternoon. It will be advertised and taken to the BOCC for review.
Not adoption.

Alan Schantzen- Should we have rushed this workshop to address something that we didn't have. I don't know if I could call these suggested changes or a change that is coming regardless.

James French- This is the summary of the items that will be advertised to by the County Attorney's office. I want to share this with you tonight. This is not a final document, this is an advertisement, a summary of the information. There was some communication in regard to some of the board's comments at the last meeting. A summary of some of the suggestions that I carried forward to the County Attorney's office to consider. The board can still change this, but this is a summary of the information that was provided to us.

Alan Schantzen- When you say the board are you talking about the advisory board or BOCC?

James French- The board having jurisdiction is the Board of County Commissions.

Suggested Ordinance 2025-43- **James French, Department Head, GMCD**

Repeal and replace ordinance. This ordinance reinstates and reestablishes the Domestic Animal Services Advisory Committee. It replaces ordinance 2004-6. Outlines the committee creation, purpose, function, membership procedures and authority. All recommendations go the County Manager or designee.

Section 2- Functions, power and duties.

- A. **Operational review-** Evaluates the intake of animals, fostering, adoption, return to owner, staffing, training and best practices in shelter management.
- B. **Fiscal oversight-** Review the budget on an annual basis. High level of spending and budget allocations that have been granted in the past. Fee schedule, grants for sustainability and accountability.
- C. **Veterinary and medical considerations-** Board will recognize that all medical decisions remain with licensed veterinarians. Provide input only on non-clinical aspects of veterinary operations including budget and resources.
- D. **Volunteer and Behavior programs-** Everything we encourage with our partners. Recommend strategies to recruit, train and retain volunteers.
- E. **Community outreach and branding-** Encourage participation in community events. Provide guidance on branding, marketing materials and messaging.
- F. **Accountability and reporting-** Review quarterly and annual reports. Submit annual report to the Board of County Commissioners, which is a requirement, on how you are functioning as a committee and your take based on information that has been provided to you on how things are really going.

Alan Schantzen- I don't see anything in this where we make recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners regarding the facilities, is that going away?

James French- Its more streamlined and more to the point. Where you get into the overall operations of the facility which will include capital improvements as much as daily maintenance.

Section 3- Appointment and Composition

- A. **Appointment and Composition-** 5 Member board. 1 Finance and accounting, 1 Animal welfare rescue representative, 1 community outreach representative, 1 volunteer program or non-for-profit management representative, 1 Citizen at large.
- B. **Restrictions-** With the exception of Patty Baker Humane society, Individuals from rescue groups or animal agencies would not be eligible. To avoid conflict.

Kelly Hyland- The way it is written that anyone who benefits from DAS would not be able to be on the board so why is Patty Baker Humane society allowed.

James French- Patty Baker Humane society does not receive services from Collier County they are a rescue partner to the county. In the event they become a vendor that would change.

Kelly Hyland- What would be the reason that individuals from other rescue groups or animal agencies are not eligible.

James French- Because they receive benefits such as spay and neuter services.

Kelly Hyland- What if they don't

James French- Then they would be eligible.

Section 4- Terms of office

- A. Three members will serve a term of four years.
- B. Two members will serve a term of three years
- C. Thereafter each appointment will be for a term of four years

Alan Schantzen- Would we be electing and voting for additional members or are they going to be appointed.

James French- Appointments are made and serve at the pleasure of the Board of County Commissioners.

Susan Mehas- Why are there term limits now, 4 years and out.

James French- To offset two-three which is in line with our other committees. If it is a comment of the board, we will provide your comments to the BOCC.

Section 5- Attendance requirements, Removal from office.

Any member of the committee may be removed from office with or without cause by a majority vote of the Board of County Commissioners.

James French- Attendance is governed by ordinance 2011-55 which is consistent with all of the other committees.

Section 6-Officers, quorum, rules of procedure

Chairman, Vice chairman and secretary will serve 1-year terms and will be elected by the committee.

The presence of 3 or more members shall constitute a quorum. 3 affirmative votes needed.

Section 7- Reimbursement of expenses

Members of the committee shall serve without compensation but can be reimbursed for pre-approved expenses related to engagement of certification courses or attend a course on animal welfare.

Susan Mehas- If there is another document that is going to filter out of this can we see it before it goes to the commission.

James French- Ms. McLean will send that to you. This is scheduled for “advertisement” only in two weeks with the Board of County Commissioners.

Susan Mehas- I still think Meredith should have the ability to keep an eye on the veterinarian. Making sure everything is ok. She should have some oversight.

James French- That’s an administrative decision with the County Managers office and is not the role of this committee.

Alan Schantzen- It says the committee may advise only on non-clinical matters.

James French- We have hired a licensed professional veterinarian that is regulated only by the State of Florida. Not by the DAS director, Growth Management Community Development Head or the County Manager. State law says that position shall do their job without interference.

Susan Mehas- Can you tell us who it is

James French- Dr. Erica Unz. She worked for UF, ASPCA and Miami Dade. We have had her as a contractor, and she serves now as the Chief Veterinarian for Collier County.

Alan Schantz- This came from the County Attorney’s office. Has the County Manager had a chance to preview this?

James French- This was forwarded to us from the County Manager originally from the County Attorney’s office. The document has been completed and filed with clerk for advertisement. This will go before the board in two weeks.

Michelle Antonia- Under Function power and duties, it says we can advise on non-clinical matters, what would be an example of a resource.

James French- It could be a piece of equipment or more staff.

VI. Public comment
No Public comment.

VII. Advisory Board Member comments

Susan Mehas- Where are we on the social media for the cats. I thought we hired someone for the cats.

Meredith McLean- There is a cat page that is run by volunteers, it is not run by DAS staff. A staff member has been tasked with creating a schedule of posts to make sure we are balancing out cat and dog posts, events we are hosting and educational information.

Alan Schantzen- In reference to timely information being sent to the board, I would really like to see a draft agenda at least a day before our meeting. When I have questions about the agenda please respond to my emails.

VIII. Next Meeting
Wednesday October 15th, 2025

IX. Adjourn

There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was concluded at 7:30 p.m.

Collier County Domestic Animal Services

Allen Schantzen- Chair

These minutes were approved by the Committee/ Chairman on _____,
(check one) as presented _____, or as amended _____.

DRAFT