

MINUTES, BMHA ANNUAL MEETING, JANUARY 16, 2016

I. Meeting was called to order 12:29 PM.

II. Report on the Barkin' Basement Thrift Store: Dana Rynearson

Dana noted that there have been many changes to the store since she took over. New shelving has been brought in, allowing the shopping space to be less cluttered and more organized. Shoppers can now see items on the shelves without having to dig through things, and the less claustrophobic and cleaner environment means shoppers feel more comfortable in coming in. Moreover, better customer interaction is contributing to the comfort level. As a result, sales have increased dramatically; for example, in the first week of January, the store made enough money to pay the rent on the building.

Dana and John Brinlee have also begun the practice of raffling off high-ticket items. People seem unwilling to pay \$80.00 for a high-end cabinet, but are more than happy to spend \$5.00 to buy 6 raffle tickets to win such an item. A cabinet in the store priced at \$80.00 was raffled for a gross take of \$151.00. A \$25.00 gift certificate for the store was raffled for \$52.00, more than doubling the money associated with the gift certificate in the first place. Raffles will probably continue on high-ticket or valuable items because they seem to do so well.

A concern was voiced over the recent offering of clothing for sale. There are too many other places in town that sell clothing, and therefore competition is high. Moreover, clothes often smell musty if not washed beforehand, and that is not an expense the store needs to take on, not to mention the wear and tear on the Animal Rescue Center's machines, or personal machines. Reduction of clothing inventory was therefore recommended, with a mandate to offer for sale only the best items and donate the rest to another organization that routinely sells clothing.

III. Discussion of New By-Laws Proposed by Susan Boyd

Voicing a concern that the existing by-laws for BMHA were insufficient for an organization like ours, Susan Boyd drafted a new set of by-laws for consideration by the Board. Each member in attendance was provided with a clean copy of the existing by-laws as well as a copy of Susan's draft. The Board carefully considered each document page-by-page. Members noted that much of what Susan proposed is already contained within the existing by-laws. Moreover, the existing by-laws were sent to both the State of Oregon and to the IRS, and were accepted as sufficient. Therefore, the Board unanimously chose to reject the new proposed by-laws and retain the existing by-laws, which were amended in 2013. A detailed discussion of why the Board rejected the proposed new by-laws can be made available upon request.

The Board did note in the discussion that the by-laws in force refer to a web page that is not kept current with respect to the animals available at the shelter. It was therefore proposed that Jerry Gildemeister, who currently maintains the web page, needs to put a disclaimer on the page noting that currently available animals can be viewed on the Facebook page maintained by BMHA for that express purpose.

IV. Proposed Contract Between Union County and BMHA

John Brinlee was recently contacted by Steve McClure, a member of the Union County Commissioners, regarding funding for the shelter. He pledged at least \$100,000.00 to BMHA for the purpose of maintaining shelter operations and paying for services rendered by the Animal Rescue Center to the County. With this in mind, John Brinlee and Leeanna Muse drew up a formal contract to be entered into by BMHA and the County. The contract was carefully considered by the Board. Two amendments were proposed by Eddie Garcia: first, under part 3. TERM: adding the phrase “for cause” after “This contract may be terminated”; and second, under part 10: ARBITRATION: changing “binding” to “non-binding” in sentence 1.

The contract with the two amendments was unanimously approved.

Donna Brownlee proposed that, if the County does not approve this or a similar contract in 30 days, a formal complaint should be made to the Oregon Department of Justice regarding the County’s continued theft of services and failure to abide by state law regarding animal shelters and animal law in general, not to mention their willful ignorance of their own county ordinances regarding licensing of animals and their dissolution of the Animal Control Board. They have ignored the implied contract they have with us and have stalled continuously for the last 4 years regarding a contract. And the Board should not continue to play their games. Eddie Garcia noted that we would probably need to file an injunction in State court rather than contacting the ODJ. It was not clear to several members why that would be the case, but Eddie said the ODJ would likely just throw it back to us, citing “lack of jurisdiction.”

Regardless, the motion to press legal action against the County if a contract is not approved in 30 days passed unanimously.

V. New Members

Eddie Garcia and Katy Tooke were both proposed as new members of the Board. Motion to approve these two new members passed unanimously.

VI. Budget

Based on financial figures from prior years, a budget of \$237,000.00 was proposed. John Brinlee provided supporting documentation to the Board regarding the amount proposed. After careful consideration the budget was approved unanimously.

VII. Committees

A. Grant Committee: The Board proposed that John Rinehart chair the Grant Committee, given his experience in scientific grant-writing. Dr. Rinehart agreed but noted that he would not have time to actually write grants, but would be able to proof them and verify that all materials requested by the granting agency are in order.

It was proposed that members who know people with experience writing grants should contact those people and ask if they would be interested in identifying grants to be applied for and working on a template. The Board proposed that a template document be constructed such that the actual documentation required by granting agencies could more easily be prepared. Leeanna Muse and John Brinlee said they would begin this work.

B. Fundraising Committee: Jan, Donna, and Eddie all volunteered to be on this committee, although it seems clear the committee will be receiving a lot of outside suggestions!

C. Education Committee: Leeanna, Eddie, Sarah agreed to facilitate this committee. The Animal Rescue Center is already doing significant outreach with Eastern Oregon University, that outreach being facilitated by John Brinlee and John Rinehart, who serves as the liaison between the EOU Pre-Vet Club and BMHA.

VIII. Meeting Schedule

Quarterly meetings were proposed, with an Annual Meeting in January, the time and date to be decided at the beginning of the month so as to accommodate people's schedules. Additional meetings at three month intervals (April, August, and October) Leeanna noted that state law only requires an annual meeting, and that if necessary, meetings could be conducted by email, particularly the October meeting when so many on the Board are hunting.

IX. Other Business

Leeanna Muse discussed some additional public awareness initiatives.

Tom Whitten, Sarah Whitten's dad, volunteered to help where he could.

John Rinehart resigned as treasurer, since others have been doing that work, and will serve as co-secretary with Donna Brownlee

Meeting adjourned 1:40 PM.

Minutes prepared by jer/deb