

Special Called Animal Control Board Meeting

27 July 2021 at 6 pm in the County Courtroom

Dr. Bob Acuff called the special called Animal Shelter Board meeting to order.

Dr. Bob Acuff asked for call of roll. Members present was Dr. Bob Acuff, Kelly Collins, Sonja Culler, Mike Simerly and Wes Frazier. Members absent that joined by zoom was Chairman Mike Barnett and Mayor Curt Alexander.

Director Shannon Posada explained she had spoken with finance director Brad Burke to ask the question if the 4% pay increase was included or would be added to the approved budget dollar amount of \$250,000. Brad Burke told director Posada the \$250,000 dollar amount was the total amount approved by the county commission. Director Posada stated she had worked the numbers several different times and unfortunately something has to be cut from the original budget, there is no way around it. Director Posada said the thing she hates the most is to think of losing one to two of the employees may lose their job. Posada stated she has a single mom and an employee that is getting married soon. Director Posada stated she has employees who wants to work and shows up daily for work but unfortunately the animal shelter board has to choose what is going to get cut. Director Posada stated her job is to give the animal shelter board the most accurate information she has available for the board members to make the best decision for ECCAS. Dr. Bob Acuff stated at the July commission meeting the Carter County commission voted to reduced the proposed Animal Shelter budget to a total of \$250,000 from the county. Dr. Bob Acuff also stated the animal shelter budget was the only budget that was not passed. Dr. Bob Acuff explained that Sonja Culler made a motion at the July commission meeting for the shelter to retain the unspent funds for fiscal year 2020-2021. Dr. Bob Acuff stated the vote was a tie of 11 to 11. Dr. Bob Acuff stated those funds are still available due to year end process has not been completed. Dr. Bob Acuff stated he would recommend the board agree to request to the budget committee the shelter retain the unspent funds of approximately \$60,000 to cover shelter costs and not dismiss any current employees. Director Posada showed board members a piece of paper that was passed out by commissioner Gary Bailey to commissioners in a previous meeting. Director Posada noted the \$60,000 amount was included in the paper commissioner Bailey had passed out. Director Posada stated when commissioner Gary Bailey made a motion to fund ECCAS \$250,000, the \$60,000 of the unused funds for FY2021 was never mentioned nor included in the \$250,000 dollar amount. Mayor Curt Alexander spoke up joining the meeting by zoom and asked that since the budget was being decreased by \$70,000 if anyone who voted to defund the shelter by that dollar amount had offered a solution or stated which services wasn't needed. Commissioner Kelly Collins brought discussion of the three budgets the director had presented. Board members discussed the budgets that director had presented in detail. Commissioner Sonja Culler stated she would be

more than happy to go before the budget committee and lobby to keep the \$60,000 unspent funds to keep from losing an employee. Kelly Collins said she is all for bringing this before the budget committee but keep in mind that the budget committee had voted to pass the original animal shelter budget. Kelly Collins reminded everyone that the budget committee had voted to pass the original animal shelter budget and when the budget was presented at the full commission meeting, some of the budget committee members who originally voted for the budget voted against it. Commissioner Kelly Collins wanted these members to be noted as well. Dr. Bob Acuff gave a list of commissioners that voted No to not return the unspent money back to the shelter. Those who voted No was Willie Campbell, Mark Blevins, Nancy Brown, Julie Guinn, Brad Johnson, Mark Tester, Charles VonCannon, Gary Bailey, Daniel McInturff, Aaron Frazier and Robin McKamey. Board members again discussed budget numbers, current employees and how the budget could be affected by decreases of \$70,000. Director Posada explained that anytime an employee is to be dismissed that leaves no choice for intake numbers to be decreased, amount of adoptions decrease, and the estimated dollar amount for deposits will also be decreased. Director Posada stated when the shelter decreases intake numbers, this means more animals will be set out randomly in the county and city. Board members discussed options to keep all employees. Director Posada stated nothing she wants more than to keep the employees and the services the animal shelter provides but due to the dollar amount the county commission voted on for the shelter, she doesn't see that is possible without more funding. Director Posada stated the shelter employees worked the entire year through Covid along with the yearly holidays and never complained once. Director Posada stated now the commission has made a decision to reduce the animal shelter budget and force the Animal Shelter Board to reduce employees and animal control services. Kelly Collins stated this decision of reducing the shelter's budget has made her physically sick. Board members stated this is the only budget that was denied and all other budgets was passed. City councilman said they would support the additional \$20,000 funding for animal control services. All board members agreed this is a service both city and county need. Board members looked closely at the budget and determined without extra funding, no way the current funding amounts could support the animal control services. Mike Barnett stated what the commissioners has done to this animal shelter is going to set this shelter back 30 years and he hopes & prays the community realizes that.

Sonja Culler made a motion to go back before budget and ask for the \$60,000 in unspent funds to keep all employees and continue operations at the shelter. Mike Simerly second the motion. Roll was called. Dr. Bob Acuff, Kelly Collins, Sonja Culler, Mike Simerly, and Wes Frazier all voted yes. Chairman Mike Barnett and Mayor Curt Alexander did not vote due to joining meeting by zoom.

Dr. Bob Acuff opened the floor for discussion to rank the budgets to be voted on. Director Posada stated the 4% raise has been included in the in the budgets all members have. All members agreed to give the employees the 4% raise. Sonja Culler stated the animal shelter employees worked every day during Covid and they deserve the 4% raise. Kelly Collins stated

just like commissioner Nancy Brown had stated in the commission meeting, we need to take care of our employees.

Sonja Culler made a motion to accept option 1 if the budget committee and county commission decides to allow the animal shelter to keep the unused funds. Mike Simerly second the motion. Roll was called. Dr. Bob Acuff, Sonja Culler, Kelly Collins, Mike Simerly and Wes Frazier all voted yes. Chairman Mike Barnett and Mayor Curt Alexander did not vote due to joining meeting by zoom.

Sonja made motion to accept option 2 if the \$60,000 was not returned back to the animal shelter budget, dismissing one full time employee and no animal control services. Roll was called. Dr. Bob Acuff, Kelly Collins, Sonja Culler, Mike Simerly, and Wes Frazier all voted yes. Chairman Mike Barnett and Mayor Curt Alexander did not vote due to joining meeting by zoom.

Kelly Collins stated it is a sad day in Carter County and she is very disappointed in our commissioners.

Discussion of the donations to the shelter was among several members and commissioner Austin Jaynes. There was different understandings that was stated. Director Posada stated she has always been told that the donations was to be used when a specific line item was in need of additional money. Members agreed to find out exactly from Brad Burke how the donations are recorded an restricted.

Mike Simerly made motion to seize animal control beginning 27 July 2021. Motion was second by Wes Frazier. Roll was called. Dr. Bob Acuff, Kelly Collins, Sonja Culler, Mike Simerly and Wes Frazier all voted yes. Chairman Mike Barnett and Mayor Curt Alexander did not vote due to joining meeting by zoom.

Kelly Collins noted there is no Animal Control in the county or city for the month of Aug. 2021. Kelly Collins wanted it noted the Animal Shelter board has been forced to make decisions to cut services that is very unfortunate.

Dr. Bob Acuff suggested to the Animal Shelter Board members to give the shelter Director Posada the authority to stop intake as needed due to cutting budget and employees.

Dr. Bob Acuff made motion to adjourn

Approved
by: _____

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael E. Barnett", is written over a horizontal line.

