

**Animal Advisory Council  
Monday, April 17, 2023 – 7:00pm**

Bill Atkinson Animal Welfare Center  
884 Winder Highway, Lawrenceville, Georgia  
30046

Present: Dr. Tameka Womack, Lila Hunter, Nahum Nicholas, Erin Martin, and Jeanne Aulbach

Not present: BT Parker and Gail LaBerge

1. Call to Order
2. Welcome/Announcements
3. Approval of Agenda  
{Action: Approved; Motion: Nicolas; Second: Martin; Vote: (5-0) Womack-Yes; Hunter-Yes; Nicholas-Yes; Martin-Yes; Aulbach-Yes}
4. Approval of Minutes: February 27, 2023  
{Action: Approved; Motion: Hunter; Second: Nicholas; Vote: (5-0) Womack-Yes; Hunter-Yes; Nicholas-Yes; Martin-Yes; Aulbach-Yes}
5. Staff Updates
6. Old Business
7. New Business
8. Public Comments
9. Adjournment  
{Action: Approved; Motion: Nicholas; Second: Martin; Vote: (5-0) Womack-Yes; Hunter-Yes; Nicholas-Yes; Martin-Yes; Aulbach-Yes}



# Gwinnett Animal Advisory Council

**April 17, 2023**





# Kennel Operations (January – March)

- 4,898 Visitors
- 753 Adoptions
- 950 New arrivals and intakes
- 8,000 Pounds of pet food distributed
- 472 Returned to Owner
- 299 Reclaimed
- 104 Rescues



# Field Operations (January – March)

- 92.4% Animals saved
- 4,671 Calls for service
- 140 Reclaims in the filed
- 260 Citations issued
- 164 Animal bites
- 1 Positive rabies case



# Euthanasia (January – March)

- 14 Unassisted deaths
  - 4 Kittens, 3 cats, 3 dogs, 1 puppy, 1, reptile, 1 rabbit, 1 mammal
- 23 Rabies vector euthanasia of wildlife animals
- 10 Felines sent for rabies testing
  - 1 Gwinnett AWE and 9 from animal hospitals
- 26 Canines sent for rabies testing
  - 11 Gwinnett AWE, 1 Cobb County and 14 from animal hospitals

# Euthanasia by Species (January – March)

Animal Type	In-House	Outside Vet
Wildlife	22	1
Cat	17	7
Dog	79	3
Kitten	1	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>13</b>

# Dangerous/Vicious Hearing Board (January – March)

Dangerous Dogs	Vicious Dogs
6 Dangerous dog cases	1 Vicious dog case
7 Dogs declared dangerous	1 Dog classified as vicious
3 Hearings	0 Vicious dog hearings

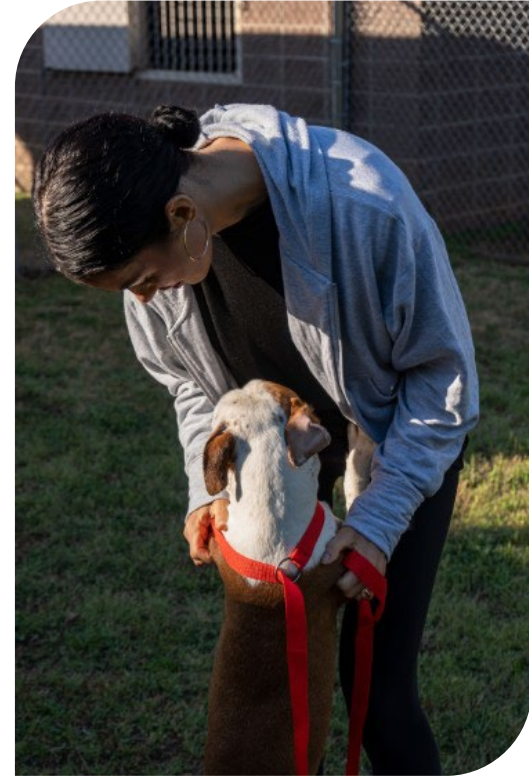
# Community Outreach

- Ismaili Jamatkhana Job Fair
- Society of Humane Friend Vaccination Clinic
- Career From Here Job Fair





# Woodgrain Employee Volunteer Day





# Lovin Elementary Careers on Wheels





# Pet Vaccine Clinic at Best Friend Park – April 15



# Upcoming Outreach

- Adopt a Shelter Pet Day
  - Proclamation: April 18 – 2:00pm – Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center
- Collins Hill High School Job Fair: April 20 – 11:00am to 1:15pm
- Gwinnett County Employee & Family 5K: April 29 – 8:00am to 11:00am – Little Mulberry Park
- PetSmart Pet Adoption Event: July 15 – 10:00am to 2:00pm – Lawrenceville Suwanee Road
- Good Food Festival: September 16 – 10:00am to 1:00pm – Lucky Shoals Park
- Earthwise Pet Adoption Event: October 7 – 11:00am to 2:00pm



# Upcoming Community Events

- April 25 – Pet Adoption Education Event
  - Rock Springs Park from 11:00am to 2:00pm
- April 28 – Pet Paw-ty
  - Ronald Regan Park from 5:00pm to 8:00pm
- May 6 – Cross-Culture Street Fest
  - Best Friend Park from 5:00pm to 9:00pm
- May 13 – Gwinnett Multicultural Festival
  - Coolray Field from 10:00am to 2:00pm



# Staff Training





# Staff Training

- Bite procedures
- Cat handling
- Chemical capture
- Control pole
- Control pole
- Crematory
- Crematory and euthanasia
- Customer service
- DoCS Guidelines
- Field and kennel training
- Fuel site
- Intake procedures
- Kennel
- Law Department
- Neglect
- Open records
- Rabies and heartworm
- Tourniquet



# Medical Services & Intake

**Brittany Bradford**  
**Manager**





# Foster

- Home visits
- Current foster pets
- Volunteer opportunities



# Kitten Season

- Community Education
  - Removing kittens from their mothers can be detrimental
  - If kittens are alone, their mother is likely close by
- Formula kits
  - Assistance with wet and canned food
  - Help with spaying mom after kittens are weaned



# Return to Community Cat Program

- January: 112
  - 2022 Compare: 52
- February: 103
  - 2022 Compare: 83
- March: 119
  - 2022 Compare: 78





# Return to Community Cat Program

## Post Operations Instructions







# Thank You

[GwinnettAnimalWelfare.com](https://GwinnettAnimalWelfare.com)  
[@GwinnettAnimalWelfare](https://twitter.com/GwinnettAnimalWelfare)



# Empowering the Future of Gwinnett Animal Welfare

**Vernon Sawyer**  
Division Director



# The Great Resignation – more like “The Great Reshuffle”

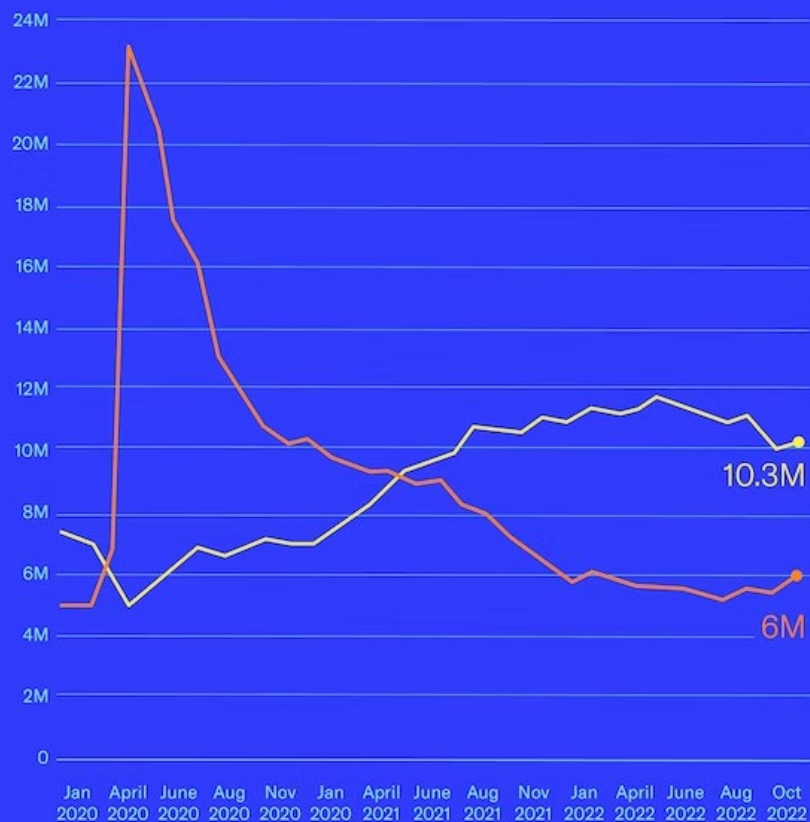
- Although Gwinnett County is recognized as one of the better Animal organizations in the state, we must stay aware of hiring and retention strategies being used by other organizations
- 2.6% National quit rate
- 3.9% Jobs open per population

## National Job Openings vs Number of Unemployed Workers

October 2022



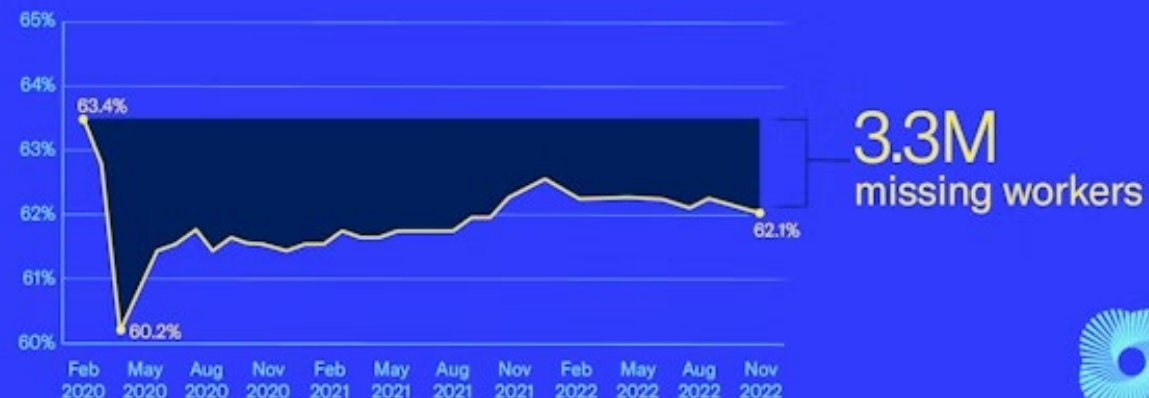
— Job openings — Unemployed workers



Source: U.S. Chamber of Commerce Analysis, BLS Data

## Labor Force Participation

There would be 3.3 million more workers today if labor force participation was the same as in February 2020



## Operating Budgets, Georgia Metro Counties

County	Operating Budget	Population	Spend Per Capita
DeKalb County, GA	\$ 6,676,124	755,287	\$8.84
Gwinnett County, GA	\$ 4,855,055	907,135	\$5.35
Cobb County, GA	\$3,673, 591	748,150	\$4.91
Fulton County, GA	\$ 4,766,518.40	1,064,000	\$4.48
Metro County Average			\$6.31



# Sustaining through Difficult Times

- Staff Challenges:
  - Retention and recruitment
  - Staff morale
  - Work culture
  - Societal shifts
- Shelter Challenges:
  - Increase in owner surrender
  - Overcrowding
  - The health and population
  - Compassion fatigue



# Staff Recruitment and Retention

- Focus on hiring individuals with the inherent desire to be animal caregivers
- Create a culture where staff can be inspired
- Include staff in hiring interviews whenever possible
- Define goals and purpose for each area of the shelter
- Create personalized training tracks for each employee
- Open door policy for staff

# Staff Culture and Morale

- Teamwork and Collaboration
  - Discourage cliques and antagonistic staff
  - Maintain cohesive teams
  - Improvement through unity of peers to prevent silos
- Purpose and Goals
  - Why are we here?
  - Team participation
  - Stay connected
- Employee feedback and pivot for change
  - Seek out and encourage employee feedback
  - Affect change based on feedback when possible
- Empathy and perspective to staff situations
  - Respect and professionalism
  - Transparency and encouragement



# Center Challenges

- Increased surrenders
  - Appointment based intake system for owner surrenders and non-emergency intakes
  - Slowly introduce to community when shelter is at capacity
- Adoption challenges
  - More visibility in the community and at events
  - Offsite adoption events, walks in parks, etc.
  - Work with parks and senior services
- Additional stress on animals and staff due to overcrowding
  - Direct affect on animals
  - Communicable diseases which quickly spread through the shelter
    - Parvo
    - Pneumonia
    - URI
    - FeLV
    - FCV
- Direct affect on staff
  - Callouts
  - Compassion fatigue
  - On the job injuries



# Importance of Volunteers

- Revitalize volunteer programs
  - Dog walking
  - Play groups
  - Enrichment of animals
  - Bathing dogs
  - Offsite adoptions
  - Foster ambassadors
  - Cleaning adoption kennels



# Importance of Volunteers

- Volunteer training programs
  - Animal behavioral training
  - Pets for Life
  - Advance play group training





# Thinking Outside the Box

- Recruiting foster volunteers:
  - Convert community members
  - Contact local civic groups, assisted-living facilities, etc. to start a bottle baby program
  - Create both short-term and long-term foster opportunities
- Provide connectivity for foster volunteers to us and each other:
  - Gather photos and videos from foster caregivers to promote the animals for adoption
  - Create a closed communications group for foster caregivers to connect with foster ambassadors and Foster Coordinator
  - Offer regular, ongoing training sessions
- Additional funding opportunities:
  - ASPCA
  - HSUS
  - PET Smart



# Thinking Outside the Box

- Create Lost and found page on website
  - Finder's can create posts of found animals
  - Resource for finders such as social media platforms
  - Prevents animals from being brought to shelter
  - Opportunity for owner reclaim
- Create stray foster program
  - Encourage finders to temporarily hold strays
- Partner with Health and Human Services
  - Creative solutions to help people to keep their pets
- Community approach to animal welfare
- Work with community partners



- “The dog catcher of yesteryear can no longer work for the animal welfare world today. Animal welfare professionals are human and experience a level of emotions that many individuals might not ever understand. Such emotions as anger, frustration, and sadness are frequently hidden by animal welfare professionals. As a result, these hidden feelings can take a toll on the health and well-being of individuals in this field. The physical and mental demands on animal welfare professionals are ones that should be recognized by more than just those that do this line of work.” – Rob Leinberger