**Animal Companions**

**November 8, 2021**

Meeting officially began at 5:35pm MDT

Present: Dawn Duncan, Carol Ezell, Denise Middleset, Bart Polin, Nancy Sharp, Candis Stern

Guest: Terra V. Winter - Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico (CFSNM)

Minutes by Judy Bosland

Dawn opened the meeting with a welcome and stated the purpose/mission of Animal Companions. The October minutes were approved with no changes.

Topics:

1. Dawn’s presentation to the New Mexico Board of Veterinary Medicine (NMBVM) went well. It was stated during the meeting that the #1 need in the state is emergency veterinary care.
   1. Dawn is hopeful that Animal Companions (AC) could provide a template for the rest of state.
   2. Mary Beth Perrone, member of the NMBVM and a Las Cruces resident, asked that we consider supporting an emergency hospital that focuses on supporting new veterinarians who have been trained in emergency veterinary care and need a residency.
   3. Questions were raised regarding funding for recruiting, equipment purchases, salaries, etc.
   4. Should AC decide to include this third option, our website would need to be updated with information regarding this option.
2. Terra Winter, Executive Director of CFNSM, was introduced.
   1. Terra provided a brief history of CFSNM which serves ten counties in southern New Mexico (excludes Eddy and Lea). One of their goals is to increase the number of nonprofits in southern NM. Her efforts include capacity building and project fiscal monitoring.
   2. AC could benefit from their “Project Incubator” in which a nonprofit stays under the wings of CFSNM for up to 24 months before spinning off as a stand-alone nonprofit. Of importance, once a nonprofit “invests” with CFSNM, the money always stays with the original purpose.
   3. For AC to participate in CFSNM’s “incubator” program, a deposit of $1,500 is required (this will always remain in our account), we must write a narrative, and form an Advisory Board.
   4. Tonight’s participants will not make a decision on joining CSFNM because there are not enough attendees tonight and we haven’t decided which of our three options (local consortium, for profit, emergency training hospital) to support.
3. Discussion of our options –
   1. Dawn has continued to reach out to our local veterinarians who have not responded to our requests for comment – Schumacher VC, Arroyo VC and Animal Hospital of LC. Because of how busy these offices are and how difficult it has been to involve them at this stage, it is highly unlikely that our idea of a local consortium will be successful at this time.
   2. When asked about the ruling against hiring employees while we’re under CFSNM, Terra clarified that any staff hired by AC would technically be under CSFNM’s 5013C status and subject to all the rules and regulations that govern such employees. It would be allowed to hire CONTRACT employees.
   3. If AC chooses the emergency training hospital option and the staff want to become for profit, what is AC’s option as a nonprofit? Terra listed several areas in which a nonprofit can continue to support a for-profit: depreciated equipment, scholarships, college loan payoffs, continuing education, outreach, assistance for low-income families, etc.
   4. Paying salaries is not permitted but paying a contract employee with a 30 day reimbursement and review of work completed is permitted.
   5. Use of “fees for service” monies raised has to be decided at the beginning, and will be affected by status as a for-profit or nonprofit.
   6. After the 24 months with CFSNM, AC can decide to stay as a supportive nonprofit or disband. Terra said any remaining funds would support any reasonable need in the “animal services” realm.
   7. We will attempt to provide CFSNM with the documents for their consideration of our application at their January 21, 2022 meeting.
4. Next steps –
   1. It is critical that AC decide soon whether we support a for-profit business (ex: Blue Pearl) or do something home grown. Dawn and Carol will reach out to Blue Pearl, and Dawn will discuss the possibility of a “residency program” hospital with Mary Beth.
   2. We need to establish an Advisory Board.
   3. Communicate with all interested persons!
5. El Paso Veterinarians have an active advisory group. Would they want to participate in this endeavor? Do Las Cruces veterinarians communicate/participate with the El Paso veterinarians?

Meeting was adjourned at 6:30pm.