

ANNUAL REPORT OF FIXING TO HELP, CNY SPAY/NEUTER INCENTIVE PROGRAM, INC.



Delivered at the Annual Meeting on February 3, 2020

History

Planning for the creation of Fixing to Help began in July 2018, supported by the results of a month-long informal survey conducted with neighbors registered at St. Lucy's Food Pantry on Gifford Street in Syracuse, NY.

Incorporation followed on December 17, 2018. In January 2020, an application to NYS was filed to amend the mission statement to allow future growth in services. It reads:

Fixing to Help, CNY Spay/Neuter Incentive Program, Inc. is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes in accordance with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

More specifically, Fixing to Help, CNY Spay/Neuter Incentive Program, Inc. is dedicated to promoting health and wellness of pets and preventing cruelty to animals by

- (1) advocating for wellness services for pets, with an emphasis on those pets of low-income owners;*
- (2) facilitating access to wellness services, including but not limited to spaying and neutering; and*
- (3) providing education on pet health and wellness with an emphasis on the importance of spaying and neutering to promote wellness and avoid animal cruelty.*

Goal:

To secure IRS 501(c)(3) tax exempt status, an effort currently in progress.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors has grown from three to five volunteer members.

Goal:

To add two to four new directors, with special focus on those with expertise in finance, development, social services, technology, and/or media.

Financial Status

We have chosen not to engage in fundraising activities until our IRS 501(c)(3) has been secured. To date, expenses have been covered by two major donors in the form of direct payments to providers.

Goals:

- (1) To open appropriate financial accounts once IRS nonprofit status has been granted.
- (2) To initiate development activities.
- (3) To seek grants.
- (4) To consider options whereby clients can voluntarily contribute to the payment for the spay/neuter package.

Mission

In the 14 ½ months of existence, Fixing to Help has enjoyed a close and productive working relationship with our surgical provider, Spay and Neuter Syracuse (SANS). As a result, we have paid for the full surgery packages for 320 cats and dogs belonging to low-income pet owners. The first year's total was 212 surgeries; another 108 have been performed in the first two months of our second year.

Sponsorship for each pet's surgery package included a pre-operative exam, a spay or neuter, rabies vaccine, distemper vaccine, nail trim, ear cleaning, and flea treatment. In addition and in accordance with our belief in providing each pet with appropriate pain management, we paid for each pet's additional take-home pain medication.

Goals:

- (1) To at least double the number of surgeries provided during our second year to 400 and to decrease the time families must wait for openings for surgery.
- (2) To foster more wellness options for low-income pet owners.

Scope of Service

With the need for affordable spay/neuter options remaining high, it was inevitable that as word of Fixing to Help spread, so too would the geographical area served by our nonprofit. We did not anticipate the nearly exponential rate at which this would happen.

To date, we have approved surgery for 676 pets. After approval, however, owners must schedule their own appointments and wait their turn for an opening in the same manner that any other caller to the clinic must do. Approximately 50% of approved pet owners actually follow through with making appointments.

During the first 20 days of January 2020, 73 pets were approved by phone for financial assistance for surgeries. Of that number, 57% came from seven counties outside of Onondaga County. The majority of those pets came from Madison and Oswego Counties, but requests came from as far as Chemung, Otsego, and Wayne Counties.

In order to be sure our new organization lays a strong foundation and can sustain growth, we decided to focus only on pets of low-income residents of Onondaga County.

Goal:

To revisit, in six months, the possibility of extending the boundaries of our service area.

Programming

To fulfill our mission of advocating for pet wellness services, it is imperative that we increase access to low-cost vaccination clinics and basic wellness examinations. In all mission-related areas, we will rely on a corps of dedicated volunteers committed to pet wellness.

Goal:

- (1) To collaborate with other organizations in planning and promoting affordable vaccination and wellness clinics for low-income pet owners.
- (2) To develop an active volunteer program.

Community Outreach and Networking

We have concentrated on a few major strategies aimed at reaching the pet owners most in need of financial assistance:

- attendance at community events sponsored by organizations providing human services to residents of low-income neighborhoods.
- collaboration with other nonprofits providing services to people and/or animals.
- use of social media.

A partial list of our collaborations would include, but not be limited to, Huntington Family Center, La Liga, Vera House, Hutchings Psychiatric Center, Syracuse Dog Control, Syracuse Police Department, Onondaga County Probation Department, Kia Foundation, Spay and Neuter Syracuse, Veterinary Medical Center of CNY, and Animal Alliance of Greater Syracuse.

Goal:

To expand and deepen our collaborations with community entities, be they our clients, community members, businesses, government entities, medical providers, nonprofits, or human services agencies.

Other

Growth, as eagerly anticipated as it may be, places demands on an organization's internal workings. Nuts and bolts issues also must be addressed in the coming year.

Goals:

- (1) Establish a more efficient means of maintaining client records.
- (2) Fine-tune the donation vehicle currently under consideration.
- (3) Identify an efficient donor management system.
- (4) Identify a meeting place appropriate for a growing board.

We are deeply grateful for all the support we have received from our friends and followers.

