



Carbon County Animal Shelter
Assessment
04/28/2021

This report is driven by information obtained during an onsite visit on April 28, 2021. The objective of the visit was to gather information related to the operation of the Carbon County Animal Shelter, the care of the animals and the relationship between the shelter, volunteers and the community.

The Lehigh County Humane Society team focused the following areas:

- Facility
 - Outside Runs
 - Play yard
 - Building maintenance
 - Storage areas
 - Cleaning procedures
- Staffing
 - Onboarding/training
 - HR
 - Scheduling
- Animals
 - Kennels
 - Veterinary care/transportation
 - Medical management
 - Records
 - Socialization
- Adoptions
 - Application/policies
 - Agreement/contract/waiver
 - Process of approval
 - Records
 - RTO process
 - Spay/Neuter
- Volunteers
 - Application/Onboarding process
 - Waiver of liability
 - Policies
 - Supervision
 - Incident process
 - Restrictions

We did not focus on community development, fundraising or relationships with other community organizations or animal rescue groups.

In general, we found the animals to be in good condition and cared for. The facility is in generally good shape but in need of several repairs and modifications. The facility is understaffed and therefore cannot provide adequate supervision of volunteers or socialization of the animals. The animal shelter has many exposures of liability for the County that should be addressed immediately.

Outside Facility

The parking lot is gravel and presents issues for customers with limited mobility. There is no handicap parking indicated. The outdoor lighting surrounding the building is not operational. There is a large hole in the fence that is being blocked by an animal trap. One window is boarded with plywood. The gravel play yard is not the correct gravel for an animal play yard. There is some type of concrete structure (old water fountain?) in the yard. The outdoor kennels are rusty. There are no roofs on the outdoor kennels. There are several holes in the siding. Some chemicals are not stored correctly.

Recommendations

- Build a handicap accessible parking space and ramp
- Remove old gravel and concrete structure. Level yard and install appropriate gravel or grass
- Repair/replace outdoor lighting fixtures
- Repair/replace broken windows and screens
- Repair/replace outdoor kennels and provide shade
- Repair siding

Indoor Facility

The indoor facility is generally clean. There is no cleaning and maintenance schedule. Smoke detectors do not work or they do not have batteries. There are exposed wires from the ceiling in several areas. Light fixtures do not have covers. There are two places where the ceiling has holes or is falling in from water damage. There is no pest control schedule. The process for maintenance request is either not followed or followed up on. Several other areas would also require repairs. The cleaning chemicals being used are toxic to animals.

Recommendations

- Develop a comprehensive cleaning schedule and daily checklist
- Repair all smoke detectors or install a fire alarm system
- Remove all exposed wiring
- Repair water damage to ceiling
- Contract with a pest control company
- Implement or educate staff on maintenance requests and follow up procedures
- Replace all current cleaning chemicals with approved substances

- Initiate scheduling of all smaller repair work

Staffing

There was one staff person on site. The schedule consists of two full time and two part time employees. We were informed that as of this week only two people were actually on the schedule. There is very little training or continuing education. There are very few volunteers to assist with work required. There is no community advisory board to assist with the management/fundraising.

Recommendations

- Develop a community based advisory board/committee
- Train shelter management
- Develop a volunteer work force to assist with maintenance and grounds issues

Animal Areas

The animals seemed well fed and taken care of medically. There is very little socialization with people or other animals occurring. The outside runs and play yard are not utilized on a regular basis. Utilizing the play yard will help relieve some of the anxiety and poor cage presence we witnessed. Overall, the kennels themselves were in good condition. However, they were not clean, contained old, dried feces and some needed some minor repairs that do not negatively affect animal care. The troughs do not have covers and thus present a health hazard to the animals and visitors. The fans above the kennel are not commercial. There were some exposed bolts on the kennels, which may present a danger to both animals and humans. Some outlets did not have covers in areas where water use is normal. There is no cleaning schedule for the kennels. There were no kennel cards for each animal.

There is no standard “intake” process and stray animals are held for 5 days. Dogs are not vaccinated upon intake and do not receive an exam. All vet services are contracted. There are inadequate medical supplies on site and some of the medical supplies are expired. We did not see a daily animal census count. There is no standard behavior protocol in place. There is no feeding schedule and uneaten food is left in the kennel. Medicine schedule could not be produced

Recommendations

- Use the outdoor play yard and runs on a regular schedule
- Develop a volunteer dog walking program
- Develop and implement a comprehensive daily/weekly cleaning schedule
- Repair drainage troughs
- Replace fans in kennel areas
- Cover exposed bolts
- Cover outlets
- Implement Kennel Cards
- Develop a standardized intake process
- Feeding and medicine schedule must be implemented

Adoptions

There does not seem to be an adoption process in place. The adoption contract is missing several components that inform the adopter of the inherent dangers in adopting an animal. There is no release of liability. Volunteers manage FB and it is not up to date with current animals. Current staff are not advocating for the animals and staff actively encourage visitors not to adopt certain breeds. There is no foster program. We did not see any adoption policies and it seemed that the manager makes most adoption decisions on a “feeling”. No “return to owner” records are being kept.

Recommendations

- Processes and policies for adoptions need to be implemented immediately.
- Policies regarding Social Media need to be put in place
- Spay/ Neuter policy should be implemented and adhered to

Volunteers

A volunteer was witnessed walking a dog upon our arrival. This volunteer was not known by the shelter manager nor was there any paperwork on this person. There is no volunteer orientation/onboarding program. There are no guidelines, policies or supervision as related to volunteers. There is no release of liability signed by volunteers. There is no incident process/paperwork in place.

Recommendations

- Develop and implement a comprehensive volunteer program that includes supervision, policies and procedures and appropriate signed paperwork.

Conclusion

This is a functional animal holding facility. It is not an adoption center, community outreach or medical facility. The animals are being underserved in the current environment and are at risk in certain situations. The shelter manager appears to be overworked and not adequately trained for his position. There are several areas of liability exposure in the volunteer program, the adoption process and the facility itself. Many of the issues that are presented here can be addressed in a relatively quick and inexpensive manner while others will require more time and financial support. I believe that this facility can be a productive animal shelter that serves both the animals and the people of Carbon County if given the necessary resources and support.

It would be my recommendation that the County work with a paid advisor to come with a 30/60/90 day plan to implement the changes that are outlined in this report.