

TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY ANIMAL SHELTER COMMITTEE MEETING



**The Mission of the Town of Yucca Valley is to
provide a government that is responsive to its citizens
to ensure a safe and secure environment
while maintaining the highest quality of life.**

**ANIMAL SHELTER COMMITTEE: 5:30 PM
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025
Yucca Valley Community Center
57090 Twentynine Palms Hwy
Yucca Valley, Ca 92284**

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Animal Shelter Committee

Jim Schooler, Chair

Jeff Drozd, Vice Chair

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TOWN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE:

760-369-7207

**Public Comments: townclerk@yucca-valley.org
www.yucca-valley.org**

AGENDA
MEETING OF THE ANIMAL SHELTER COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025, 5:30 PM

The Town of Yucca Valley complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you require special assistance to attend or participate in this meeting, please call the Town Clerk's Office at (760) 369-7209 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting

The meeting agenda packet is available for public view in the Town Hall lobby and on the Town's website at www.yucca-valley.org prior to the meeting. For more information on an agenda item or the agenda process, please contact the Town Clerk's office at (760) 369-7209 ext. 226.

If you wish to comment on any agenda item or on any subject not on the agenda during public comments, please fill out a request to speak card and give to the Town Clerk/Commission Secretary. Comment time is limited to 3 minutes.

Where appropriate or deemed necessary, action may be taken on any item listed in the agenda.

OPENING CEREMONIES:

Call to Order

Roll Call

Council Members Abel, Denison, Lombardo, Schooler, and Mayor Drozd

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Agenda

1. Agenda Approval

Recommendation:

Approve the meeting agenda as prepared.

Consent Agenda

All items listed on the consent agenda are routine matters or formal documents covering previous Town Council instruction. Items are enacted by one motion and a second without separate discussion unless a member of the Town Council or Town Staff requests dialog on a specific item at the beginning of the meeting. Requests for public comment on the consent agenda items should be filed with the Town Clerk.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes of August 21, 2025
3. Approval of Meeting Minutes for September 16, 2025

Department Reports

4. Animal Shelter Operational Review Status Update

Recommendation:

That the committee receives and files the updated Operational Review Status Report and provides input and direction as desired, and receive an update on development of an operational agreement with local rescue partner(s).

Public Comments

The Animal Shelter Committee takes this time to consider your comments on items of concern which are not on the agenda. When you are called to speak, please state your name and community of residence. Please limit your comments to 3 minutes or less. Inappropriate behavior which disrupts, disturbs, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of the meeting will result in forfeiture of your public comment privileges. The Animal Shelter Committee is prohibited by State law from taking action or discussing items not on the printed agenda.

Announcements

Upcoming Meeting Schedule: The next regular meeting of the Animal Shelter Committee is scheduled for Thursday, December 18, 2025 at 5:30 PM in the Yucca Valley Community Center Yucca Room.

**TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY
ANIMAL SHELTER COMMITTEE
AUGUST 21, 2025**

OPENING CEREMONIES

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Schooler called the meeting to order at 4:30PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Drozd, Schooler

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Council Member Schooler

Council Member Schooler provided background on the committee formation and committee guidelines.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Animal Shelter Operating Committee

Town Manager Yakimow presented the staff report opening dialog for general, housekeeping items for the committee.

Council Member Schooler will chair the committee.

Committee Member Drozd explained the Brown Act provisions and a full report will be made to the full Town Council.

Chair Schooler polled the group in attendance for preferred meeting times. The third Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. would work well. The location will be determined based on available meeting space. The meeting will be held in a less formal, workshop style setting.

The name of the committee was decided as Animal Shelter Committee.

Deputy Town Manager Stueckle introduced attending Animal Shelter staff.

2. Public Outreach

Deputy Town Manager Stueckle introduced attending Animal Shelter staff. Deputy Town Clerk Duda provided an overview of recent social media outreach for available pets and shelter events. Additional media ads have been added into the outreach rotation.

3. Shelter Statistics

Deputy Town Manager Stueckle reviewed recent statistics, including descriptions provided of each of the impound categories. Animal Shelter Staff fielded questions on impounds and feline care.

4. Urgent List and Shelter Capacity

Deputy Town Manager Stueckle provided an update on the process for urgent animals and explained the shelter's capacity and is currently running with approximately 105-110 animals within 59 runs. Committee Member Drozd inquired about rescue group outreach.

5. & 6. Animal Shelter Operational Review Status Update and Staffing Discussion

Town Manager Yakimow provided an update on the operational review status and on interim staffing concerns including the Shelter Manager.

Volunteer applications are available today and will be online for interested individuals aged 16 and older.

The attending public voiced concerns about the proposed veterinarian service provider and inquired about feeding and care routines for special care cases.

Committee Member Drozd reiterated the need for additional staffing and volunteers. Chair Schooler agreed with Drozd.

Public Comments

General questions and public comments were received.

Adjournment

Chair Schooler adjourned the meeting at 6:06 PM and announced the next meeting is scheduled for September 18th at 5:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Lesley Copeland, CMC
Town Clerk

**Town of Yucca Valley
Animal Shelter Committee Staff Report**



To: Animal Shelter Committee

From:

Date: November 17, 2025

Meeting Date: November 20, 2025

Subject: Approval of Meeting Minutes for September 16, 2025

Recommendation:

Prior Review:

Discussion:

Alternatives

Fiscal Impact:

Attachments

1. 09-16-25 Animal Shelter Committee Meeting Minutes

**Town of Yucca Valley
Animal Shelter Committee Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2025**

Call to Order

Roll Call

Present: Jeff Drozd, Jim Schooler

Absent:

Pledge of Allegiance

Led by Chair Schooler

Approval of Agenda

1. Agenda Approval

Motion:

Approve the meeting agenda as prepared.

Result: Passed (Yes 2, No 0, Abstained 0)

Mover: Committee Member Jeff Drozd

Second: Chair Jim Schooler

Department Reports

2. Animal Care and Control Staffing Update

Deputy Town Manager Stueckle provided an update on Shelter staffing and the recruitment schedule for the Animal Care and Control Manager.

Public comments were received, including inquiries on staff supervision and a request for additional staffing.

3. Yucca Valley Veterinarian Services Update

Deputy Town Manager Stueckle provided an update on the review of the RFP for veterinarian services at the Shelter.

During public comments, a suggestion was made to have more than one vet to provide services and an inquiry on current vet services.

4. Operational Review Status Update

Deputy Town Manager Stueckle provided an update on the current Shelter

Operational Review.

Chair Schooler inquired about the number of frequent flyers or returners.

Public comments were received, including the suggestion to provide timely information to be shared on intakes, strays and rescue lists and an inquiry on

- Critical to update the community on recent intakes, strays, and rescue lists in a timely manner. Comments were received regarding the current meeting format and would like to see more open dialog. Additional comments were received on general shelter operations and staffing.

Deputy Town Manager Stueckle addressed public questions and comments.

Glen Harris, Morongo Basin Humane Society spoke, noting the understanding how exhausting crisis mode can be and explained the relationship the Joshua Tree Shelter has with the Yucca Valley Shelter.

Public Comments

Public comments were received inquiring about the status of the volunteer program and a foster program. Concern was expressed for the long-term "residents" at the shelter and requested additional budgeting to boost animal services.

Deputy Town Manager Stueckle provided an update on the progress and changes implemented through the shelter review process and explained the budgeting process with the Town Council and San Bernardino County.

Chair Schooler offered one-on-one meetings with anyone that would like additional dialog.

Announcements

The next Animal Shelter Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 16, 2025.

With no further business, Chair Schooler adjourned the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lesley Copeland, CMC
Town Clerk

**Town of Yucca Valley
Animal Shelter Committee Staff Report**



To: Animal Shelter Committee

From: Curtis Yakimow, Town Manager

Date: November 12, 2025

Meeting Date: November 20, 2025

Subject: Animal Shelter Operational Review Status Update

Recommendation:

That the committee receives and files the updated Operational Review Status Report and provides input and direction as desired, and receive an update on development of an operational agreement with local rescue partner(s).

Prior Review:

Discussion:

The Town Council directed Town management to conduct an Operational Review of shelter operations, policies, and practices, and return to the Town Council within 90 days. Focused operational reviews can be helpful to confirm or correct statistics, affirm or clarify operational practices, evaluate procedures for consistency with industry best practices, consider modifications that may improve desired outcomes, and provide communication and transparency to the public.

The Town Council accepted the Operational Review and associated recommendations on June 3, 2025 and directed staff to continue or begin the implementation of the various recommended actions. Staff has been working on the recommendations and Town staff will present an update for the Town Council at the November 4 Town Council meeting. Additional information and data review will be included in the review. For this Animal Shelter Committee review, additional updates have been made to the matrix eliminating duplication and other form edits for streamlining and clarity.

Public shelters will often engage in formal operational agreements with various partners to assist in meeting shelter objectives. Examples of such agreements may include a financial structure that will allow for the placement of animals with a rescue group to facilitate and encourage greater live release rates. While the Town has reached out to numerous rescue

groups, participation of such groups has been limited, and operational agreements may assist those efforts.

Finally, animal shelter operations are ongoing and daily activities. A report and subsequent updates given at a single point in time will not be sufficient for long-term policy and practice change. While specific recommendations are presented, meeting the Town Council's established performance factors will be a marathon, not a sprint. Successful implementation will require Town Council commitment, public engagement, professional collaboration, financial commitments, public education, and staff accountability.

Alternatives

None recommended.

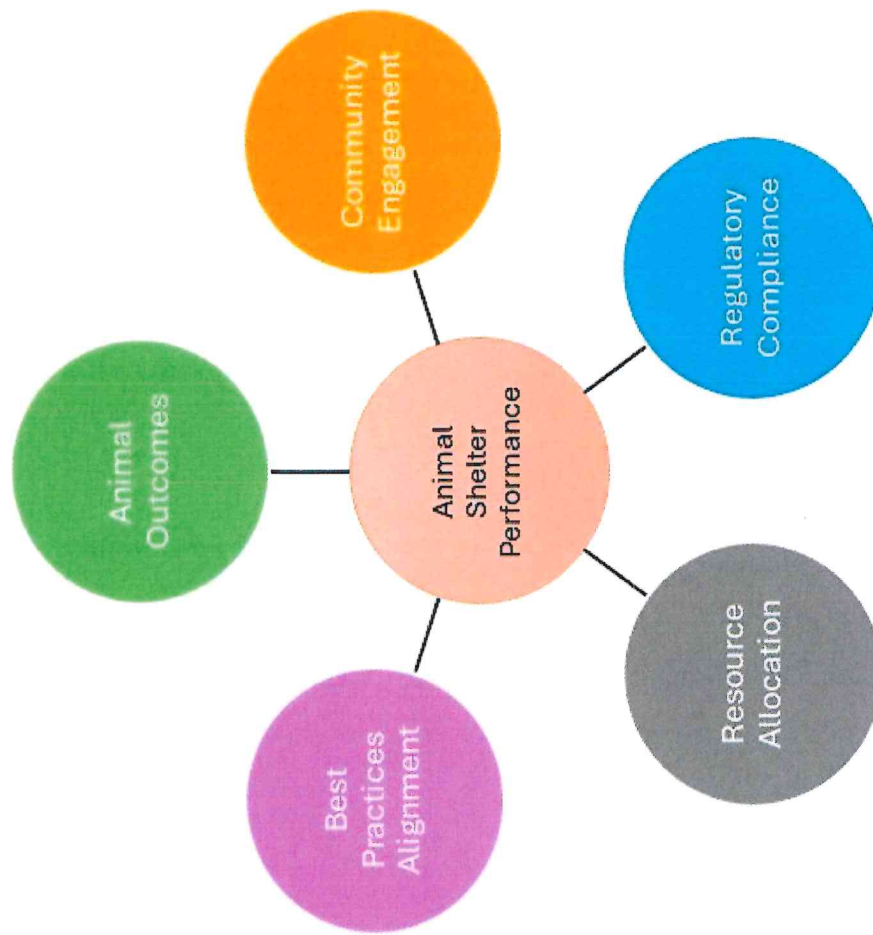
Fiscal Impact:

None with this item.

Attachments

1. Nov 20 Update

Yucca Valley Animal Shelter Performance Factors



Animal Shelter Review

Factor	#	Recommendation	Description	Priority	Cost	Timeline	Status
Community Engagement	1	Form Town Council Standing Committee	Establish Town Council Standing Committee to implement ongoing communication opportunities with the community.	1	\$	Form Committee in June 2025, meeting approximately quarterly	Complete and ongoing.
Community Engagement	2	Review Town Volunteer Policy and Program	Ensure Town Policy adequately addresses volunteer needs and opportunities for the Yucca Valley Animal Shelter.	1	\$	June /July, 2025	Complete and updated.
Community Engagement	3	Establish Volunteer Positions and recruit for those Volunteer Positions	Ensure priority volunteer positions meet the Shelter's operational needs and that the appropriate staffing and supervision structure exists for those volunteers.	1	\$\$	August/Sept 2025	Recruitment and clearance completed; Implementation pending ACC leadership appointment.
Community Engagement	4	Establish Donor and Donor Recognition Program	Develop outreach for financial and service donors and ensure proper recognition of all donors.	2	\$	Jan 2026	Not started.
Community Engagement	5	Implement Spay-Neuter Vaccination Clinics	Sponsor and coordinate spay-neuter-chip events throughout the year to support public education and responsible animal ownership.	2	\$\$\$	Summer 2025	Included in Best Practices; removed for duplication
Community Engagement	6	San Bernardino County Animal Control Coordination	Encourage San Bernardino County to hold spay neuter vaccination clinics for the unincorporated Morongo Basin Area.	2	\$	June 2025 and ongoing	Complete and ongoing.
Community Engagement	7	Maximize customer feedback on Shelter customer service levels and performance.	Modify customer service form to continually receive customer feedback on Shelter performance.	2	\$	October 2025	Initiated and ongoing.
Community Engagement	8	Review Animal Care and Control Fees for Services	Consider adjusting adoption fees for seniors, veterans, and for animals that have been at the Shelter for 60 or more days.	2	\$\$	Summer/Fall 2025	Complete and ongoing. Multiple events with significant fee reductions or waivers.
Community Engagement	9	Expand use of local media to market adoptable animals	Radio station and newspaper advertisements encouraging adoption of Shelter animals.	1	\$\$\$	May 2025 and ongoing	Complete and ongoing.

Not Started

Initiated and ongoing

Complete and/or ongoing

Animal Shelter Review

Factor	#	Recommendation	Description	Priority	Cost	Timeline	Status
Regulatory Compliance	1	Implement state mandated holding periods	Ensure compliance with mandatory holding periods for known owned and non owned animals.	1	\$	Immediate and ongoing	Complete and implemented.
Regulatory Compliance	2	Make animals available for public adoption pursuant to California law.	Ensure compliance with State laws for defining adoptable animal including Food and AG Code 17005 and Penal Code 599d.	1	\$	Immediate and ongoing	Complete and implemented.
Regulatory Compliance	3	Use all resources available to contact owners of shelter animals with owner identification.	Ensure compliance with state law in all efforts to contact known animal owners.	1	\$	Immediate and ongoing	Complete and implemented.
Regulatory Compliance	4	Local regulation review	Evaluate local regulations for potential modifications that will support Shelter operations and Key Performance Factors.	3	\$	FY 2025-26	Not started. Scheduled for 2Q2026.

Animal Shelter Review

Factor	#	Recommendation	Description	Priority	Cost	Timeline	Status
Resource Allocation	1	Amend FY 2025-26 Budget to address staffing needs identified through the 90 Day Operational Review	Make recommendations to the Town Council for necessary funds to implement programmatic changes.	1	\$\$\$	June - Aug 2025	Complete for FY 2025; ongoing and under development for FY 2026.
Resource Allocation	2	Review staffing levels 6 to 9 months following implementation.	To consider further staffing modifications if necessary.	1	\$\$	Jan thru June 2026	Completed early; additional resources identified and recruitments ongoing.
Resource Allocation	3	Amend FY 2025-26 Budget to address operational needs identified through the Review	Volunteers Program, Foster Program, Spay Neuter Vaccination Clinics, Software Purchase, training and implementation.	1	\$\$\$	June - Aug 2025	Tracking and ongoing; budgetary resources currently adequate. Anticipate modification 2Q2026.
Resource Allocation	4	Amend FY 2025-26 Budget to address local and social media needs	Expand use of local and social media to increase live outcome rates.	1	\$\$	Immediate and ongoing	Completed and ongoing.
Resource Allocation	5	Consider future budget amendments if necessary to implement further operational change	Monitor data and statistics in evaluating modified program implementation and effectiveness.	3	\$\$	Jan thru June 2026	Not started; dependent on future program needs.
Resource Allocation	6	Consider expanding operational hours for public access to the Shelter	Evaluate an expansion of the operating hours for public access to the Shelter based on visitation data, resident surveys, best practices, and fiscal resource requirements.	2	\$\$\$	FY 2026-28	Not started; review scheduled for FY 2026-27.

Animal Shelter Review

Factor	#	Recommendation	Description	Priority	Cost	Timeline	Status
Best Practices Alignment	1	Review, purchase and initiate new field and shelter software	Implement modern data systems for shelter management and public information.	1	\$\$	June through Dec 2025	Initial review underway; final determination will be managed by ACC leadership.
Best Practices Alignment	2	Ensure daily online information for all animals at the Yucca Valley Animal Shelter	Implement modern data systems that provide information on public adoptable, lost, and non public adoptable animals that is updated daily.	1	\$	Jan 2026	Completed and ongoing; addressing breaks in update with staffing assignments and structure.
Best Practices Alignment	3	Establish and implement Foster Program that function as an extension of the Shelter.	Implement foster programs that function as an extension of shelter services where animals may even be adopted directly from fosters.	1	\$\$	Jan 2026	Not started. Program assigned to ACC leadership.
Best Practices Alignment	4	Establish and implement Volunteer Program.	Ensure priority volunteer positions meet the Shelter's operational needs and that the appropriate staffing and supervision structure exists for those volunteers.	1	\$	August—September 2025	<i>Included in Community Engagement; removed for duplication</i>
Best Practices Alignment	5	Provide professional training opportunities for Shelter staff	Ensure necessary certifications and professional animal shelter and control training for staff.	1	\$	Ongoing	Ongoing and continuing. Anticipate significant training requirements with current staffing structure.
Best Practices Alignment	6	Implement Spay Neuter Vaccination Clinics	Sponsor and coordinate spay neuter chip events throughout the year to support public education and responsible animal ownership.	2	\$\$\$	Ongoing	Completed and ongoing. Currently executed on a quarterly basis.

Animal Shelter Review

Factor	#	Recommendation	Description	Priority	Cost	Timeline	Status
Animal Outcomes	1	Maximize Animal Adoption Rates	Use all available tools including adoption fees, foster programs, community education, and special adoption events to maximize adoption rates.	1	\$\$	June 2025 and ongoing	Adoption rates increased significantly. Increasing live release rates a primary shelter goal.
Animal Outcomes	2	Minimize Animal Euthanasia Rates	Use all available tools to transition animals from the shelter to forever homes through adoption, return to owner, transfer to rescue and other shelters, and through education and outreach to the community.	1	\$\$\$	June 2025 and ongoing	Euthanasia rates down significantly. Factors driving downward rate include both increased adoption rates as well as operational decisions. Current euthanasia rate not sustainable.
Animal Outcomes	3	Maximize Rescue Group Outreach, Coordination and Adoption.	Ensure ongoing outreach to add animal rescue organizations to the Town's approved list, and distribute data daily on available rescue group animals	1	\$\$	June 2025 and ongoing	Implemented and ongoing. Over 600 rescue groups contacted regularly. Rescue group participation minimal. May consider rescue group partnerships.
Animal Outcomes	4	Maximize Spay-Neuter Clinics for Town Residents	Sponsor and coordinate spay-neuter clinic events throughout the year to support public education and responsible animal ownership	1	\$\$\$	Summer 2025	Included in Best Practices; removed for duplication.
Animal Outcomes	5	Encourage and Coordinate County Animal Control Spay-Neuter Clinics in the Unincorporated County Area	Encourage San Bernardino County to hold spay-neuter vaccination clinics for the unincorporated Morongo Basin Area.	1	\$	Summer 2025	Included in Community Engagement; removed for duplication.
Animal Outcomes	6	Maximize Return to owner efforts where possible.	Through compliance with state law and maximizing use of shelter population data, use social media to maximize availability of lost and owned pets to be returned to their owners. Coordination with other social media resources	1	\$	June through December 2025.	Completed and ongoing.
Animal Outcomes	7	Public Education	Evaluate best practices for public education programs and initiatives to highlight responsible pet ownership, pitfalls of illegal breeding, importance of spay/neuter programs and similar campaigns.	1	\$\$	Oct - Dec 2025	Initiated and ongoing. Full program assigned to ACC leadership.
Animal Outcomes	8						