

Animal Care Advisory Committee
June 12, 2026

A regular meeting of the Animal Care Advisory Committee of the City of Waxahachie, Texas was held in the Hatchet Conference Room at the Charles Beatty Municipal Services Building, 408 S. Rogers, Waxahachie, Texas on June 12, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.

Members Present: Dustin Deel, Chair, Director of Administrative Services
 Kenzie Redington, Vice Chair
 Dr. Peyton Deraleau, Veterinarian
 Brian Burks
 Jennifer Favia Connor
 Jackie Montejano
 Tiki Smith
 Bryan Thomas

Members Absent: Cherie K. Batsel

1. Call to Order

Chair Dustin Deel called the meeting to order and introduced new Committee members, Dr. Peyton Deraleau, Jackie Montejano, and Bryan Thomas.

2. Public Comments

Shelia Hood, 3841 Blackchamp Rd., Midlothian, Texas, urged better communication among city and county decision-makers to build trust and collaboration for a regional shelter, emphasizing the importance of designated liaisons and an “air traffic controller” to coordinate efforts.

Karen Gilroy, 440 Anderson Ranch Rd., Waxahachie, Texas, reported a stray dog problem near her home and asked what options exist when the sheriff no longer picks up stray animals.

3. Consider approval of minutes of the Animal Care Advisory Committee meeting of February 20, 2026

Action:

Brian Burks moved to approve the minutes of the Animal Care Advisory Committee meeting of February 20, 2026 as presented. Motion was seconded by Tiki Smith and carried unanimously (8-0).

4. Animal Services Staff Report

Vice Chair Kenzie Redington, Director of Animal Services, presented the Item.

Goal Updates

- Fill Vacant Veterinarian Position on the Animal Care Advisory Committee – Complete
 - a. Dr. Peyton Deraleau was appointed by City Council to fill the vacant veterinarian position on the Animal Care Advisory Committee.

- Establish New Veterinary Services – Partially Complete
 - a. Dr. Panait, DVM, has agreed to serve as the City's Veterinarian of Record.
 - b. Special pricing for spay and neuter services has been secured.
 - c. The City is awaiting completion and execution of the service contract.
- Establish New Medical and Food Supply Vendors–Complete
 - a. Although the facility did not qualify for the Science Diet program, special pricing for Diamond dog and cat food was secured through Pet Supplies Plus, including complimentary sample bags to accompany each adoption.
- PetFinder/Adopt-a-Pet–Complete
 - a. The Animal Services Division transitioned to Adopt-a-Pet due to ongoing issues with PetFinder.
 - b. Adoptable animals are now displayed through the City's new website, improving accessibility for potential adopters.

Three public microchip scanning stations have been installed at Matthews Park, Getzendaner Park, and the Animal Shelter to assist community members in identifying and returning found animals to their owners outside of regular operating hours. Vice Chair Redington stated that she anticipates the stations will improve field return-to-owner rates, allowing more animals to be reunited with their owners without entering the shelter and reducing the length of shelter stays when intake can be avoided.

The new adoption trailer has been completed and is equipped with 16 kennels, including six with removable dividers to accommodate varying animal sizes and needs. The trailer also features a generator to provide electricity and HVAC capabilities, as well as a water tank and sink to support animal care during transport and off-site events. Vice Chair Redington noted that Animal Control Officer vehicles were previously limited to transporting two animals at a time. The addition of the trailer will significantly increase transport capacity, enhance community visibility, and expand opportunities for adoptions and outreach events.

The City's new website launched on May 28th and now provides online submission options for microchip licensing, lost and found pet reports, and volunteer applications. During the first few days following the launch, 32 online forms were received, including 12 volunteer applications.

Vice Chair Redington reported that volunteer Darlene Miller has been contacting new applicants and developing a spreadsheet to track volunteer interests and availability. This information will be used to coordinate support for events, animal transport, photography sessions, and other volunteer activities.

Staff presented first-quarter 2026 intake statistics, noting a substantial increase in shelter intake compared to the same period in 2025. March 2026 recorded 81 animal intakes, compared to 18 during March 2025, indicating that the shelter is serving a greater portion of the community's actual animal care needs.

Chair Deel reported that the previous year's total intake of approximately 250 animals was significantly below the estimated annual community need of 1,200 animals. Based on current intake trends, the shelter is projected to receive nearly 1,000 animals during 2026.

Despite the increased intake volume, the shelter's live release rate for February and March remained comparable to the previous year, demonstrating continued success in achieving positive outcomes for animals in care.

Vice Chair Redington also provided a breakdown of intake categories, distinguishing between direct shelter admissions—including stray animals, owner surrenders, and quarantine cases—and animals receiving clinic services or wildlife assistance. This distinction was presented to provide a clearer understanding of actual shelter occupancy and kennel space requirements.

Chair Deel presented the results of a regional animal shelter feasibility study evaluating facility needs based on projected 2040 population growth. The study examined several partnership scenarios, including a Waxahachie-only facility, a partnership with Midlothian, a partnership with Ellis County, and a regional model incorporating additional municipalities such as Ennis and Maypearl. Projected facility capacities ranged from 98 to 370 kennels, with estimated construction costs ranging from approximately \$30 million to \$45 million.

Chair Deel explained that larger regional partnerships could provide economies of scale and reduce the financial burden on individual entities. Under the full regional model, Waxahachie's estimated share of project costs could be substantially lower than the cost of constructing and operating a standalone facility.

Potential funding sources discussed included a voter-approved bond election, certificates of obligation, and the City's 4B fund. Staff noted that statutory restrictions, competing capital priorities, and long-term funding commitments will require further evaluation.

Councilman Patrick Souter reported that Ellis County has received a \$15 million donation for animal services-related purposes but does not intend to operate a shelter directly. Any regional project would require an interlocal agreement establishing governance, operational responsibilities, and cost-sharing arrangements among participating entities.

The Committee discussed a governance structure that would provide each partner entity with representation in decision-making while allowing the City of Waxahachie to operate the facility. Non-participating municipalities could potentially utilize shelter services through contractual agreements at a higher per-animal rate.

Chair Deel emphasized the importance of establishing an equitable cost-allocation methodology, such as one based on animal intake volume, to ensure that participating jurisdictions share expenses fairly.

Next steps include forming a committee of local government representatives to assess regional interest, identifying a highly visible and accessible site for a future facility, and working toward securing architectural services to meet potential grant requirements.

Vice Chair Redington reported continued expansion of community partnerships to support off-site adoption events. New partnerships have been established, including the completion of the first adoption through the PetSmart partnership. Pet Supplies Plus continues to host one to two adoption events each month, and staff are seeking additional opportunities as volunteer capacity increases.

Vice Chair Redington highlighted the new adoption trailer and the use of QR codes on marketing materials as tools to improve public awareness, engagement, and adoption opportunities.

Vice Chair Redington also shared several adoption success stories to demonstrate the impact of shelter programs on both animals and adopting families.

5. Set next meeting date and time of the Waxahachie Animal Care Advisory Committee

The next meeting is set for September 11, 2026 at 12:00 p.m.

6. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jami Bonner
Assistant City Secretary