



Lakewood Animal Safety & Welfare Advisory Board

April 15th, 2026 Meeting

Location: East Conference Room

Present: Board Members: Emily Christescu, Nancy Binder, Julia Garleb, Teresa Schleicher, Lise Stevens, Amanda McCready, Councilperson Angelina Hamilton Steiner, ACO Gary Crumley

Not present: Juleen Russell, Phyllis Dykes, Stacey Zigman

**Lakewood Animal Safety and Welfare Advisory Board Meeting
Minutes Wednesday April 15th, 2026**

- I. Welcome and roll call conducted by Board Chair Binder. 6 voting members present.
 - a. A motion is made to invite Guest Journalists from Lakewood High to join the meeting discussion, rather than wait for public comment. Motion seconded; motion passes. A student journalist requests permission to record some audio portions of the meeting; a motion is made to allow that request. Motion seconded; motion passes.
- II. Approval of March Meeting Minutes - Board
 - a. Unanimous verbal vote in favor of motion to waive formal reading of the minutes. Motion passes to approve the minutes.
- III. Lakewood Animal Control Update
 - a. ACO Crumley distributes a spreadsheet with Animal Control/Shelter data. He notes 1 cat (Bubbles) and 1 dog (Patches) at the shelter available for adoption. ACO Crumley explains the new shelter software is up and running. The shelter needs more time to launch the public facing side of the website, which will allow residents to register pets and report missing animals. He explains that the new website has the ability to cross reference registered animals and reported missing animals against any impounded animals. So if a newly impounded animal matches the description, Animal Control will receive a notification.
 - b. Student Journalist Tarik Ibrisagic asks why the shelter doesn't take owner surrendered animals. ACO Crumley explains that most animals in the shelter are strays or lost pets and that is how the shelter has operated since it opened, noting that if the shelter did take surrenders, they would potentially be inundated with animals and not have space for the lost and stray animals that need assistance. ACO Crumley reports that they frequently receive numerous calls asking for assistance with owner surrenders.
- IV. Committees & Initiatives
 - a. Community Events - LCSC Pet Food Drive - Board Member Russell is not in attendance but prepared flyers for the board to distribute. Board Chair Binder asks the Student Journalists about the best method of sharing the event with the student population; the

Journalists report TikTok and Instagram as popular sites for their peers. Board Chair Binder makes a motion to approve the flyer that Board Member Russell created. The motion is seconded; motion passes. ACO Crumley offers to share the flyer on the Animal Control Facebook page and hang a flyer at the shelter.

- i. The Board discusses items they need or that may be helpful leading up the event scheduled for Saturday, May 9th from 10 am to 2 pm at City Center Park:
 1. Email the flyer pdf to the entire board. Board Member McCready offers to take the pdf file and convert it to other formats as needed.
 2. Request that Melissa Garrett create the Facebook event and share it via the city page.
 3. Create and share a sign up sheet for event volunteers to staff the event.
 4. Locate any yard signs and the banners. Board Member McCready mentions a sign connection she has and can report back on cost if needed. Councilperson Hamilton Steiner offers to contact city workers to ask that any signs placed at parks or public spaces not be removed.
 5. Contact Pet Supplies Plus and inquire about a coupon or deal for shoppers that support the food drive that day.
 6. Locate the tent and tables for setup.
 7. Confirm the city will place the barricades across the small lot for us to use that space for collecting donations.
- b. Shelter protocol for animals and questions about holds and adoptions - ACO Crumley explains that Animal Control will hold cats for 72 hours, noting that he was originally told that they are only required to hold them for 24 hours. After 24 hours, they become city property. ACO Crumley believes it is easier to keep dogs and cats for the same hold time. He notes that a Standard Operating Procedure doesn't exist. He explains if a cat is eventually deemed feral after the 72 hour hold, they could be euthanized. ACO Crumley explains that any handling of wildlife follows state law. The shelter will post unidentified animals on their Facebook page, while any active investigations or an already microchipped animal will not get posted. The board considers what the ordinance says is required holding time for cats and ACO Crumley thinks it may mirror state law with only a 24 hour hold. Board Member Christescu suggests that having a Standard Operating Procedure for all shelter duties including hold times would benefit the shelter and public perception. Board Member Stevens asks about feral cats and why they can't be returned to where they came from. ACO Crumley says he's dealt with some residents who are on the other side of the argument that are upset because there's wandering cats on their property.
- c. Board Member Stevens provides suggestions on ways to calm cats and offers to meet with Animal Control Officers to share fear-free certified techniques. ACO Crumley accepts the offer. She notes that the pheromone Feliway spray can help some cats and that it is important to offer a hiding place. Board Member Christescu asks if Board Member Stevens can contact the APL to inquire about the plastic beds and curtains they have in their cat room. Councilperson Hamilton Steiner asks if they have volunteers that work with the cats. ACO Crumley explains they have people that sign up to volunteer and a couple will come in but it's not always regular.
- d. Regarding euthanasia, Animal Control Officers remind residents of ways to coexist with wildlife and of deterrents. ACO Crumley recently had a resident with a nuisance

groundhog and Animal Control suggests Pinesol as a deterrent for that creature. If rabies vector wildlife comes to Animal Control, he has to euthanize them per state law. ACO Crumley asks if there are TNR referrals that Animal Control can share with concerned residents, so as to not overwhelm CCLAS. Animal Control has traps residents can borrow for a \$50 deposit and he shows them how to set it. Board Member Stevens offers to get TNR training materials from the APL and bring it to the next meeting, she also offers to connect Animal Control with the TNR coordinator at the APL. Board Member Christescu mentions the upcoming CCLAS TNR training and will let the board know when it's scheduled, noting that CCLAS has TNR materials from Alley Cat Allies. Board Member Christescu believes it is reasonable to discuss the wildlife and cat euthanasia policy and why the city could steer away from euthanizing wildlife as a service. She notes that residents could still contact Exterminators as needed and reducing euthanasia activity would be beneficial to the well being of ACOs. Councilperson Hamilton Steiner suggests education to share with residents that will help deter wildlife and people's imprint in nature. ACO Crumley explains that he does receive wildlife, such as raccoons that likely had distemper and should be euthanized. Councilperson Hamilton Steiner suggests asking the city why the policy exists and also allowing protection for Animal Control, while putting an appeal out to residents to attempt to coexist. ACO Crumley mentions the shelter name is occasionally confusing to residents and a misconception of what he perceives the shelter does. Board Member Christescu mentions the City of Cleveland uses the name "Animal Care and Control". Board Member McCready asks if we participate in rabies satchels/bait that the ODNR uses, explaining that it vaccinates rabies vector animals for rabies. She offers to obtain more information about that topic. Board Member Garleb believes this could help with public outreach if there are residents that are afraid of wildlife having rabies.

V. Communications

- a. Social Media Posts/Articles - Board Member McCready began creating social media posts. She offers to send them to the group and Chair Binder will put their approval on the next agenda. Board Member Schleicher mentions planning a calendar of ideas and will share the list of ideas she created. Board Member Binder suggests having a subcommittee for communications and/or wildlife.

Motion is made to adjourn; motion passes. Meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.

APPROVED BY

