

Katherine Douglas

Public Comment Health + Human Services

LATE
DIST

From: Maggie Silverstein <silverstein.maggie@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 13, 2025 3:37 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: Agenda item on the SBCAS

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Please accept and distribute the attached letter as public comment at the 4/16 meeting of the County Board of Supervisors.
Thank you.

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April 13, 2025

To the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors:

I am writing in support of the Santa Barbara County Animal Shelter. I urge you to provide the funds necessary for the Shelter to continue and improve its current operations.

I volunteer at the Shelter two mornings a week, walking about six dogs each week.

You don't have to be a dog lover like me to see what an important service the Animal Shelter provides to the community. I'm sure we agree that keeping stray dogs off the streets and ensuring that they eventually find good homes is essential.

I would like to share with you how much I admire the Santa Barbara Shelter. The obvious dedication and knowledge of each staff member is impressive and important. **What I appreciate beyond that is their ability to attract and manage volunteers for best results, primarily in the programs for daily dog walking, day outings, foster care, and general help around the shelter,**

These well-run and effective programs maximize your budget dollar. Every dog who goes on a walk is one step closer to leaving the Shelter for a good home. Every dog in foster care is learning behavior and getting public exposure that will help it find a home. Every volunteer who spends two hours washing dog dishes frees up staff time for more professional attention to the animals and operations.

I can attest to the quality of supervision the staff somehow finds the time and patience to provide volunteers. Training, explanations, and general support are totally available and immeasurably helpful. Not every organization has **this ability to maximize the benefits that good volunteer management and utilization bring to an under-funded organization.**

Despite all this excellent staff management and effective volunteer help, the Santa Barbara shelter needs more support from the County: funds to **hire additional staff and increase staff salaries for best retention**; capital funds to improve facilities for the animals, especially to **provide larger pens for bigger dogs**. In a really ideal world, there would be money to hire trainers so that the dogs can remain adoptable, despite the negative behavior that living in a kennel instills in many long-stay dogs.

I also urge you to fund the Project PetSafe program to encourage licensing, vaccinating, and spay/neutering of Santa Barbara's dogs. **This more than pays for itself and brings in revenue for the Shelter!**

Thanks you for your attention. I ask and urge you to support your Animal Shelter to the fullest extent possible.

Sincerely,

Maggie Silverstein
1250 Northridge Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
silverstein.maggie@gmail.com
(203)218-4759

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