

Letter: LT Humane Society revamping its focus

To the community,

The Lake Tahoe Humane Society board of directors continues to be humbled by the outpouring of compassionate support from volunteers, businesses, agencies, and sponsors as part of our Restart, Rebuild, Restore, and Re-engage plan. Your contributions whether through your time, recommendations, partnerships, and/or monetary contributions, are essential to uniting us as a bonded community to create a safer future for the animals of Lake Tahoe.

Our core focus is to square things up financially, build alliances and partnerships, and restore services to the Lake Tahoe community – through intensive and compliant stewardship.

First 30 days

As a new board, we hit the ground running on April 21 and restarted with a lot of rigor around the process of discovery to determine what we were working with. We have reviewed thousands of files, emails and documents, and spent countless hours assessing priorities. We have initiated background checks, which were never required by previous boards, signed conflict of interest documents, changed account numbers, and implemented safeguards around our financials. We are grateful for the team of incredible professionals at El Dorado Savings, who have shepherded us through this process.

Of high importance, and through robust efforts, we are working to rebuild the reputation and capabilities of the Lake Tahoe Humane Society through numerous compliance activities and achieving recognition as a reputable organization for donors. Of immediate importance, the organization has achieved the 2018 gold seal of transparency through GuideStar, which

demonstrates our commitment to nonprofit transparency. This agency tracks and reports on the compliance of all nonprofits nationally and is a level of certification not previously held by the organization. We continue to pursue and strive for the Better Business Bureau compliance certification and will provide a status on this endeavor shortly. As a new board of directors, we recognize the importance of, and are committed to, building trust, confidence, and transparency with our community.

As we forge ahead on our journey of restorative actions, we launched the Paws for the Cause giving campaign on May 11. Although donations have been minimal, we are optimistic about the future. We invite supporters to contribute no matter the amount. Whether it helps now, or in the future, your contribution is extremely valued and is helping to cover legacy veterinary services delivered to the public.

After examining many financial documents, processes, and expenditures, we identified key indicators for the next logical steps to maintain financial health of the organization. In our evaluation, one of the options we must seriously consider is sale of the property. The board has begun the process to prepare the property for potential sale and are open to speaking with interested parties. This is not a decision we will take lightly but as we look at the financial situation, the sale of the property and liquidation of other assets will allow us to: Pay off existing debts; reduce significant operating expenses; restore a baseline budget that we can allocate to programs; and rebuild services in the community much faster. In reality, the Lake Tahoe Humane Society does not need the building to operate. The foundation for the organization itself is in the volunteerism and programming.

The original purpose of the building's purchase was a long-term goal of opening up a large scale rescue, care, and adoption facility in the city of South Lake Tahoe that would

physically house animals. With the current financial situation, although that is a wonderful goal, it is not a reality at this time. The main goal for us is to keep the organization operating and restore programming. Sometime in the distant future, once the organization is back on solid ground, there may be an opportunity to achieve that dream.

We have been afforded with many re-engagement opportunities. We have hosted two clean-up days at the 884 Emerald Bay Road facility, where we had tremendous support from the city of South Lake Tahoe, South Tahoe Refuse, Clean Tahoe Program, California Conservation Corps, Tracy Sheldon and the countless volunteers who showed to help make this happen. As a result, we are hosting a yard sale on June 2 and invite the community to come and support through purchases and/or donations as we embark on the re-imagination and transformation phases of the organization. We will be accepting cash and credit cards.

The Tahoe Chamber has been incredible in helping to champion us through this transformative process and has offered many resources to help us. Look for more activities in the near future. We were incredibly grateful for the financial contribution from the Junior Soroptimist bake sale! Well done, and what a shining example of incredible leadership from our children in the community. Additionally, other businesses like Fire & Ice, Casey's, Lake Tahoe Golf Course, and Live at Lakeview have partnered with us to offer events where proceeds will help benefit the organization and restore services. If you are a business who would like to partner to help support our restoration efforts, please send an email to info@laketahoehumanesociety.org

We thank Alpine Animal Hospital, Sierra Veterinary Hospital, Round Hill Animal Hospital, Lake Tahoe TV, and all of the businesses that have been impacted in the past and now, for your incredible patience and willingness to work with us as we engineer a plan to properly compensate you as quickly as possible. We want to restore services quickly so that we can

partner together to help promote the health of all animals in Lake Tahoe.

We can't thank our media enough for helping to drive awareness of our efforts. Our incredible gratitude goes out to: the *Tahoe Tribune*, *South Tahoe Now*, *Tahoe Mountain News*, *Lake Tahoe News*, KNTV and KOL0 news crews for your partnership with us. We could not have the reach that we have had without you.

The board will continue to forge ahead with our simplification, consolidation, and financial health efforts to help us optimize our operational efficiencies and restorative practices. We will close on the Restart, Rebuild, Restore, and Re-engage planning efforts and build on what we were able to achieve here in the form of re-imagining and transforming our organization into something that our community will value and benefit from again.

We thank you for your continued support. Please refer to the TransPAWrency document for any questions that you may have. We will update this document with new information as it becomes available.

With incredible gratitude,

Chantale Hansen, vice president operations Lake Tahoe Humane Society