



OCHS Board Retreat Minutes

January 21, 2026 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Best Western Pier Point Inn

1. **Coffee, Welcome and Opening Remarks:** Meeting called to order at 10:15. Present were: Joe Zarate, President; Elizabeth Thompson, Executive Director; Mitzi Hathaway, Vice President; Cynthia Beck, Treasurer; Marchel DeMersseman, Secretary; Susan Williams, Board Member; Krisi Maderos, Board Member; Tim Franklin, Board Member; Jill Macfarland, Prospective Board Member
2. **Retreat Objectives:** Reviewed and approved by the board. President Joe Zarate asked that we modify the order a bit as he was not able to stay for the entire meeting.
 - a. Review and approval of budget changes
 - b. Understand the role of the board in governing, policies vs. procedures
 - c. Understand OCHS projects and programs
 - d. Review of by-laws for updates
 - e. Develop future vision for a strong, cohesive board
3. **Executive Session:** 10:43 - 10:55
4. **Budget changes for staff pay increase:** While we were able to come up with and fund a plan for staff health insurance, it was still too expensive for most of the Shelter staff. Elizabeth requested that we increase pay for select staff members above the typical COLA and bring the annual raise time frame for everyone from April to February (with the exception of Elizabeth and Dr. Tamay). Elizabeth stated that specific staff members have been going above and beyond, for example in ramping up the clinic, and we have other members with significant talent that we do not want to lose to other businesses in town. A motion to approve was made, seconded and approved by the board.

A suggestion was made for a new program to purchase shoes and logo jackets for staff. After a bit of discussion on the matter it was agreed that Marchel would add an item to the March agenda to establish a short term subcommittee to review.
5. **Board Governance:** It is important to maintain separation between board service and volunteer service and interaction with staff. Board interference in day to day operations contributed to the loss of two prior Executive Directors. Issues noted with staff or shelter procedures need to be reported to Elizabeth, not directly from board member to staff. Elizabeth was clear that this is not an issue with our current board and requests to be 'in the loop' with any communications from board members to staff. This is especially true with the Community Outreach Committee where there is a designated community outreach staff member. Further it was noted that Elizabeth does not necessarily need to be involved in every board matter.

- 6. 2025 Year in Review:** The group reviewed last year's retreat notes to determine if action items were completed or need to be addressed. It was noted that confidentiality agreements need to be signed by all board members for this year. It was reported that the financial action items were put in place, including having multiple people in charge of different aspects of the finances.

Elizabeth provided the year in review slide show that is attached to these minutes. Highlights include:

- a. Statistics for all the animals OCHS has served
 - b. Spotlight on the OCHS clinic
 - c. Purchase of the OCHS property
 - d. Future goals
- 7. By-Law Updates, Charter Review:** The board reviewed several documents including the by-laws, confidentiality agreements, board service documents, our mission statement and board nomination agreements. It was agreed that these documents need a more detailed review and updating. Marchel will add action items for these to the March agenda. In the meantime Marchel will begin updates on those changes agreed upon at the retreat, focusing on the by-law modifications. Marchel will also draft a charter template as each committee charter is in a different format. Finally a modification to our service policy was proposed to include a 'right to refuse service'
- 8. Review of OCHS Programs and Projects:** Elizabeth brought documentation and community pamphlets to share with the group. A summary of the programs is attached to these minutes. Projects discussed include:
- a. Converting OCHS donor and volunteer data Salesforce to Bloomerang, This will commence in March.
 - b. Initial planning for the shelter upgrades and expansion. Elizabeth and Susan will be meeting with someone who wishes to assist us with the capital campaign.
 - c. Continued enhancements to the OCHS clinic. Veterinary students are expected to start in April. Donor naming opportunities are being publicized and services are expanding to serve more of the community. A President's Club event is being held at the clinic Friday January 30th.
- 9. Future Vision:** Many ideas were brought forth for discussion, some of which can be implemented relatively quickly and inexpensively. Others can be considered within the future upgrade and expansion project. The list below details some of the suggestions but is not all inclusive.
- a. Identify a volunteer coordinator
 - b. Improve volunteer orientation and onboarding processes, develop set schedules, recruit more youth volunteers
 - c. Identify and mark property boundaries
 - d. Build property barriers
 - e. Improve flow for dog walks (fencing, remove washer, define one-way walk pattern)
 - f. Create a kennel space for long term dog residents
 - g. Create a dedicated area for adoption activities
 - h. Create an indoor quiet space for dog meet and greets
 - i. Identify and market 'turnkey' dogs
 - j. Increase social media presence for adoptable pets; for example put a GoPro camera on a dog's collar for a 'day in the life' profile
 - k. BIG DREAM - free clinic for all pets in need

10. Other Business: The board unanimously voted to extend an offer to Jill Macfarland for an interim board position. Jill accepted and will serve until next term's nomination and voting process. Jill is a feline behavioral specialist.

11. Meeting adjourned: 3:30 p.m.

12. Action Items (to be added to the March regular board meeting)

Assigned	Action	Date	Status
All	Establish short term committee to review apparel possibilities	1/21/2026	new
Marchel	Update documents, submit drafts to board for approval: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Charter templates ● Nominations form ● By-laws 	1/21/2026	new
Marchel	Print confidentiality agreements and bring to the March regular business meeting for all to sign. (Note: it would be cool if this could be made and E-sig process)	1/21/2026	new
Board	Add update to Mission Statement to Strategic Planning committee agenda when it restarts	1/21/2026	new
Elizabeth and Susan	Report results of meeting with capital campaign assistance volunteer at March meeting.	1/21/2026	new

Next Meeting: Open meeting, February 18, 2026 10:30 - 12:30, Siuslaw Library Bromley Room