

All Kind has just completed its first year managing the Abilene Animal Shelter for the City of Abilene. It has been a year of many ups and downs, with much to celebrate and much to grieve. We are so proud of our team, and of how hard they have worked to provide loving, attentive care to our community's animals, and in some cases, to their humans as well. They have worked tirelessly in dedication to our mission to improve animal welfare and have given of themselves beyond what should ever have been asked of them, even and especially on many, many days when they were faced with impossible and heartbreaking situations.

We have compiled all of the shelter data from this past year into a single annual report that we want to present to our community, in the hopes that these numbers will help shed light on just how big of a problem we still face in our community. We would urge you to take all of these numbers into thoughtful and full consideration. They are all connected, and they reflect both the hard work of our team and many rescue partners, as well as the crisis that currently exists within our community that is pet overpopulation and a lack of owner responsibility.

We took in over 6500 animals in 2023, which is the highest number since pre-pandemic. We adopted out 2873 pets, 1315 of which were cats, which is an all-time high for Abilene. Of the 6500 animals, we spayed and neutered 1148 of these dogs and cats BEFORE adopting them out, thanks to the help of several of our local vet partners. We transferred 589 shelter pets to rescue organizations across the country, thanks to the help of our many rescue partners, including our local partner Rescue the Animals. In addition to vaccinating each and every animal upon arrival at our facility, we also vaccinated and microchipped 1211 owned pets in our community through our free and low-cost clinics. Despite all of these efforts and successes, we were still only able to achieve a 73% save rate for the year.

This first year's data serves as a baseline for us, both to gauge the current situation we face here in the community and to measure our progress against moving forward as we do everything we can to improve and turn the tide of this animal overpopulation crisis and control disease within that population.

We have been transparent with the City and with our network partners about our efforts, our data and our reporting. Our methods for gathering and reporting data have been different this year from the City's previous methods. Rather than attempt to use the previous reporting methods, we felt that our current methods help highlight the existing problems that still exist in our community and how far we still have to go.

We have said again and again that the problems we face in the shelter are a reflection of the problems that exist in the community. That until our community becomes one in which spay/neuter and pet vaccination are standard practices, we will always struggle to keep up with an impossible influx of animals and illness at the shelter. Of the 3083 dogs that came into the shelter as strays this year, only 615 dogs were reclaimed by their owners. Although we have seen tremendous success with our Community Cat Program, which has already had a positive impact on the volume of cats coming into our shelter, our cat population continued to struggle with

contagious disease brought in from the community. While we do everything we can to help every animal at the shelter at any given time, our mission is and always has been long-term sustainable change in the community. We want to prevent animals from ending up at the shelter altogether.

There are a lot of things we are excited about this year that we believe can move us in this direction. The first is the opening of the new state-of-the-art Pet Adoption and Resource Center. The PARC will help us dramatically cut down on the spread of disease within the shelter population. It utilizes materials that can be fully sanitized and disinfected and is laid out in separate kennel buildings that will prevent disease outbreak from affecting the entire shelter population. Furthermore, the onsite veterinary clinic will allow us to spay and neuter every healthy animal of age before it leaves the facility.

We are also very excited about the launch of No More Litters, a stand-alone clinic that we have invested in, that will provide low-cost spay/neuter surgeries to the public. We feel like this is a crucial part of the solution and by providing greater access to these services, we can reduce barriers to responsible pet ownership and reduce pet overpopulation altogether.

And lastly, we are excited to begin conversations within our Animal Advisory Board to discuss an ordinance that will reflect Abilene's animal welfare values and goals by emphasizing the key role that spay/neuter plays in public health and safety and controlling the pet population.

We have debated how best to present these staggering figures to the community, and ultimately, what we come back to again and again is our pledge to you of full transparency. Any attempt to shield ourselves or make numbers appear better than they are, ultimately only hurts our community and our animals, and allows the state of things to continue. We have to look at these figures head on and accept the fact that until there is widespread community buy-in to spaying and neutering, vaccinating our pets, and keeping our pets microchipped and safely and securely restrained in our homes and yards, this will continue to be the reality. Change starts here. Join us in our mission to improve animal welfare. Support spay/neuter programs. Support vaccine and microchip programs. Support the PARC. Support, educate and encourage your neighbor. We believe that together we can make a brighter future for our community's homeless pets. Join us.