



City of South Bend

Animal Welfare Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes – Thursday, April 9, 2026

Location: Public Meeting Room on the 3rd floor of City Hall, 215 Doctor MLK Jr. Blvd., South Bend, IN 46601

This meeting was live-streamed at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/2026AWCHybrid>

Animal Welfare Commission members present in person: Christina Gerken, Rebecca Kaiser, and Jessica Slisher.

City staff present: Brittini Gendron - SBARC Director, Adam Taylor – Attorney for AWC, Tom Panowicz - Attorney for SBARC.

1. A. Taylor called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and took roll call; a quorum of Commissioners was present.
2. Because the respondent was not yet present, additional time was given before calling the Hearing. A motion was made to move on to the Agenda and unanimously approved.
3. The March 12, 2026 minutes were approved by Motion and unanimous vote.
4. State Legislative Updates were discussed, specifically House Enrolled Act 1165. Notably, this increases penalties for animal abuse and neglect and removes the liability for damages when someone takes a domestic animal from a motor vehicle (hot car scenario, must attempt to call for help before entering vehicle).
5. Officer Nominations and Elections were discussed, noting the Chairperson as Commissioner Gerken, Vice Chair as Commissioner Kaiser, and since Alicia Flores left the Secretary role is open. A motion was made and unanimously approved to table the possibility of presenting a Resolution stating Term Time-Periods until the June AWC meeting (since the full group was not present).
6. SBARC Director Gendron provided the monthly shelter reports to the commissioners with submitted reports: March showed slightly fewer intakes, which is good news (201); 343 cases (still averaging a little more than 10 cases per day); 43 euthanasias; 43 return-to-owners; 82 rescues; and 22 adoptions. SBARC job openings, training, professional development,

Dr. Mariah Covey Christina Gerken Rebecca Kaiser Karl Hopkins Jessica Slisher



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certification grants, continuing education, and other upcoming improvements were discussed. Friends of SBARC partnerships and social events were also discussed.

7. There were no updates or judicial reviews pending for the Counsel Report.
8. The Hearing was then called by A. Taylor on Case 2026-03 for A. Culp aka Patrick, to determine whether the Respondent shall be labeled a Habitual Animal Offender. Though the respondent was not present, SBARC decided to move forward with the hearing. Exhibits were shown, it was noted that SBARC has had a file on this respondent since September 2025, at minimum. Two puppies were brought to SBARC with clear evidence of improper care; the respondent had received 4 total citations for cruelty, neglect, and death of an animal; and a 10-year probation on animal ownership was requested. However, a motion was made to request lifetime probation. Officially, a motion was first made to find the respondent as a Habitual Animal Offender and was unanimously approved, followed by a unanimously approved motion for lifetime probation on animal ownership.

After hearing the evidence from SBARC and Respondent, the Commissioners determined by unanimous vote that Respondent is a habitual animal offender and ordered that Respondent:

- a. Is designated as a habitual animal offender for life, during which time the following restrictions and limitations apply:
 - i) Respondent is prohibited from owning animals for life.
 - ii) Possession of any animals by Respondent, that are not approved, within the City during the applicable period may result in immediate seizure or impoundment by SBARC.
 - iii) Ownership rights in any animals seized or impounded are forfeited by Respondent.
9. Privilege of the Floor was held; there were no additional comments.
10. This meeting was adjourned by motion.

Approved by Secretary:



Date:

