

Julie Dachtler

From: Kathy Polkinghorn <kmpolk@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 2:44 PM
To: Clerkoftheboard
Subject: Please distribute my letter to the Yolo County Supervisors

Dear Supervisors Oscar, Lucas, Vixie, Provenza and Angel:

I write to submit to you a copy of a letter I wrote to the Winters Express regarding the Yolo County Animal Shelter. Although I refer to Lisa Gaynes who was quoted in the Express, I do not know her and I am genuinely a member of the public at large.

Kathy Polkinghorn
842 Walnut Lane
Winters, CA 95694

Winters Express
January 21, 2024

Dear Editor,

I write to second statements by Lisa Gaynes, quoted in a front page article last week, about the Yolo County Animal Shelter. In the last forty-five years, my children have grown up, Winters has grown, and thankfully we have new police and fire stations, a new library and new schools. During that time the Yolo County Animal Shelter (outdated in 1980) has deteriorated into a deplorable place out of a Dicken's novel, where unwanted animals are incarcerated under unhealthy conditions with no veterinary care. Sited outside of Woodland next to a jail and surrounded by a chain link fence, adoption hours are by appointment only. Last year the administrator was on leave for most of the year. The plumbing system has failed and so the washing machine and sink cannot be used. Last year a contract with UC Davis for spaying and neutering was not renewed and as a result, 415 animals were adopted out that were not spayed or neutered. Four positions at the shelter are vacant: two animal control officers and two office administrators. The shelter operates on the grace and goodwill of volunteers who recognize the dire conditions and who have transported and paid themselves to have animals receive medical care, or who have brought them to their homes for weekend respite. Meanwhile, Yolo County cities pay to support this service. How could any sane person, any local official, or any County Supervisor, turn away from a situation like this?

Last week I virtually attended a meeting of the Yolo Animal Services Planning Agency. For ten years a group of well-intentioned animal lovers has been meeting to plan and raise support for a new animal shelter but nothing has happened. They have no authority. One person commented, "what would John Q. Public think?" This letter represents what one member of the public thinks: This is a responsibility of county government. The Animal Shelter needs to be investigated and taken over by a competent outside administrative agent, the volunteers interviewed confidentially for their views, and the Board of Supervisors needs to step up and build a new, state of the art shelter. If they do not take immediate steps to correct the situation, this is a matter for the Yolo County Grand Jury.

Kathy Polkinghorn
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