



El Paso Animal Services

MAYOR

Renard U. Johnson

Animal Shelter Advisory Committee Minutes

February 19, 2026

Special Meeting

CITY COUNCIL

District 1

Alejandra Chávez

District 2

Dr. Josh Acevedo

District 3

Deanna M. Rocha

District 4

Cynthia Boyar Trejo

District 5

Ivan Niño

District 6

Art Fierro

District 7

Lily Limón

District 8

Chris Canales

CITY MANAGER

Dionne Mack

Call to Order- Establish Quorum

A meeting of the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee was held virtually via Microsoft Teams. The meeting was called to order by Chair Chris Canales at 5:06 PM.

Board Members	Present	Absent
Laura Sánchez	X	
Silvia Serna	X	
Sandra DiFrancesco		X
Celinda Crews	X	
Vacant		
Barbara Candelaria	X	
Mary Bardouche	X	
Elvira Stephanie Frias	X	
Raquel Ellis	X	
Tess Passero	X	
Megan Sesker	X	
Chris Canales	X	

Animal Services staff present: Maria Arciniega

Other City staff present: City Manager Dionne Mack, Deputy City Manager Richard Bristol, Assistant City Attorney Mona Heydarian, Erica Salamanca

Michael Wachsmann- Interim Director
El Paso Animal Services | 5001 Fred Wilson | El Paso Texas 79906
915.212.7297 | EPAS@elpasotexas.gov





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1. Regular Agenda

- **Discussion and action to change the date, time, and location of the monthly ASAC meetings for the current fiscal year -City Attorney's Office, Mona Heydarian**

The following members of ASAC commented:

- Barbara Candelaria
- Raquel Ellis
- Mary Bardouche
- Tess Passero
- Silvia Serna
- Laura Sanchez
- Celinda Crews
- Chris Canales

The following staff member commented:

- Mona Heydarian
- Richard Bristol
- Maria Arciniega

Tess Passero moved that the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee select City Hall as the regular meeting place; Stephanie Frias seconded; all members present voted by voice vote; Barbara Candelaria opposed. Motion carried by voice vote.

Mary Bardouche moved that the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee meet on a monthly basis; Celinda Crews seconded; all members voted in favor; none opposed; and motion passed unanimously.

Tess Passero moved that the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee continue to meet the second Wednesday of each month; Celinda Crews seconded; all members voted in favor; none opposed; and motion passed unanimously.

Tess Passero moved that the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee set the start time for its regular meetings at 6:15 p.m.; Celinda Crews seconded; all members voted in favor; none opposed; and motion passed unanimously.

Michael Wachsmann- Interim Director
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2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- The Animal Shelter Advisory Committee may retire into Executive Session pursuant to the Uniform Bylaws under the El Paso City Code Title 2 and the Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, Subchapter D, for the item listed below. The Animal Shelter Advisory Committee will return to open session to take any final action and may also, at any time during the meeting, bring forward any of the following items for public discussion, as appropriate.

Section 551.074 PERSONNEL MATTERS

EX1. Presentations and discussion, as time permits, on Animal Services Director Position (551.074)

City Attorney's Office, Mona Heydarian, (915) 212-1116

Silvia Serna moved: Laura Sanchez seconded; and unanimously carried that the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee retire into EXECUTIVE SESSION at 5:08 p.m. pursuant to Section 551.074 PERSONNEL MATTERS to discuss the following items:

Section 551.074 PERSONNEL MATTERS

EX1. Presentations and discussion, as time permits, on Animal Services Director Position (551.074)

Tess Passero moved that the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee RECONVENE from EXECUTIVE SESSION at 7:06 p.m.; Silvia Serna seconded; all members voted in favor; none opposed; and motion passed unanimously.

NO ACTION was taken on EX1 item.

3. Call to the Public

The following members of the public commented

- Carla Gallardo

The following members of the public submitted statements to be entered into the record

- Carla Gallardo

Michael Wachsmann- Interim Director
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4. Adjournment

Silvia Serna moved to adjourn; Laura Sanchez seconded, all members voted in favor; none opposed; and motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 PM.

Prepared by Maria Arciniega; edited by Chris Canales

Approved by ASAC Chair:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Canales", written over a horizontal line.

Chris Canales

Michael Wachsmann- Interim Director
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DELIVERING EXCEPTIONAL SERVICES

Arciniega, Maria L.

From: Carla Gallardo <gallardocm28@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2026 7:41 PM
To: City Clerk; Animal Shelter Advisory Committee
Cc: District #7
Subject: [External] - FORMAL PUBLIC COMMENT - ASAC Meeting Feb 19 - Carla Gallardo

You don't often get email from gallardocm28@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of El Paso. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. If suspicious, use **Phish Alert** or forward to SpamReport@elpasotexas.gov.

The Message Body

To the City Clerk and the Animal Services Advisory Committee,

My name is Carla Gallardo, a resident of District 7 (299 Kings Point Dr.). I am submitting this written statement to be included in the official minutes of the February 19, 2026, Special Meeting.

During the meeting, I waited over two hours to speak and was disconnected twice due to technical issues on the city's line. While I was eventually able to provide a brief verbal comment, I am submitting my full intended statement below to ensure my message regarding the leadership of Animal Services is captured accurately and in its entirety:

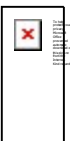
"The future of El Paso Animal Services depends on full transparency and integrity. We must uphold the standards championed by Rick LoBello. The community deserves a department that is fundamentally honest. We demand:

- **Radical Accountability:** An end to information gatekeeping; all shelter data must be open to the public.
- **A Culture of Partnership:** The city must treat residents as essential allies, not adversaries.
- **Education over Enforcement:** We must eliminate the abuse of power and shift toward a system that guides responsible citizens with dignity. Our priority must be protecting the human-animal bond by providing proactive support so families are not torn apart.

Our animals cannot wait, and our community will not settle for anything less than excellence."

Please confirm receipt of this email and verify that it will be included in the official record for this meeting.

Thank you,





Carla Marie Gallardo
Certified Veterinary Assistant

915-319-3826 | Gallardcm28@gmail.com

www.rover.com/sit/carlag37197