



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Pensacola Humane Society Staff, Volunteers and Fosters Take a Stand against the Board for Mismanagement, Misappropriation of Funds and Violations to Bylaws**

(Pensacola Humane Society Staff, Volunteers and Fosters to be known as the We the Organization)

We the Organization will no longer sit idle in the knowledge of the present financial state of the Pensacola Humane Society nor continue to be governed by those whom have failed at being good stewards to Pensacola Humane Society.

We the Organization request the Executive Committee and Board of Directors of Pensacola Humane Society adhere to the following:

-Board President to tender his resignation from the Board of Directors effective immediately

Due to the following:

1. Misappropriation of donor and grant restricted monies: to include Pay It Forward Fund, Florida Animal Friends Grant, Louie's Love Fund and emergency donor funds from The Talley Group
2. Violation of Bylaws: to include promising the full staff raises publicly without Board approval, offering the Executive Director position to a family friend without Executive Committee knowledge nor vote, reelection without extension vote, and violation of Conflict of Interest (Conflict of Interest board agreement below)
3. Participation in business dealings without full transparency of conflict of interest and not disclosing during Board of Director Meetings, violating not only Conflict of Interest law but Board of Director Bylaws as well. (Bylaws below)
4. Derelict of fiduciary duties: to include the control of the organization's security holdings, the majority of which was funding left through bequests to further our mission and was gifted to be utilized when necessary.
5. Inaction to respond to financial crisis: to include waiting a full 22 days to hold an emergency Board Meeting regarding current finances, dismissing staff with their concerns of not financially meeting payroll and owing \$50,330.13 at present in back owed invoices, allowing our bank account to go into the negative of \$11,243.12 and counting, dismissing concerns from key staff members regarding lack of medical necessary inventory for our animals to include vaccines and life-saving medications. All of which prevents we the organization from fulfilling our mission and honoring our community whom has donated funding.

6. Unprofessional behavior, misogynistic comments, sexual innuendos, and inappropriate comments all to staff, volunteers and Board of Directors publicly and privately.

-To the remaining Board of Directors, we request each individual to recommit to Pensacola Humane Society, be willing to make the following changes to Board Bylaws, Board of Directors Handbook, uphold promises to staff by the Former Executive Director and Board President and to provide true transparency to our community whom has loved and supported this organization for the last 79 years. (a copy of Board Bylaws and Board of Directors Handbook provided below)

1. Uphold promises made by the Former Executive Director to individual staff and then promised by the Board President to the entire staff publicly, no longer expect staff to work overtime without pay or to work in multiple roles without fair compensation, and allow staff to utilize their earned PTO.
2. We the organization strongly feel a forensic accountant audit is required to guarantee any future donors, grant makers and/or supporters of Pensacola Humane Society that their gift is protected and will be utilized appropriately and with any necessary restrictions.
3. We the organization strongly feel Nonprofit Board Education should be administered yearly to all active Board of Directors to again guarantee any future donors, grant makers and/or supporters of Pensacola Humane Society that their gift is protected and will be utilized appropriately and with any necessary restrictions.
4. The Executive Committee will always work with the Executive Director to create a fiscal budget prior to the current fiscal year; at present three months into our fiscal year there is still not an approved budget, which does not lend itself to being fiducially sound.
5. Moving forward we the organization request an active volunteer mentor to always hold a seat within the Board of Directors
6. The Board of Directors will no longer insist on increasing adoption prices of our animals, our current prices are based upon no barrier adoptions (see link for education regarding this), no animal shelter should try to make money off the backs of their animals.
7. Each Board of Directors will volunteer monthly at minimum 8 hours in the shelter working along-side staff members and volunteer mentors, this allows a unique insight into our organization and will familiarize each Board of Directors to our committed and hard-working staff, volunteers and fosters.
8. Each Board of Directors will assist in fundraising towards operating cost by \$5,000 and are responsible for overall fundraising of \$10,000 total per fiscal year through direct fundraising, events, sponsorships or in-kind donation. The existence of a Board of Directors is not only to govern but assist financially to further the organization and our mission.
9. No Board of Directors meetings will ever be held again at the Pensacola Yacht Club at an accrued cost of up to \$475 per meeting, Pensacola Humane Society has two buildings to hold meetings free to the organization. While we the organization have struggled and continued to struggle to meet ends for our animals those that govern us should not be spending funds frivolously that do not support our mission.

We the organization are publicly protesting under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), the Consumer Financial Protection Act (CFPA) and federal Whistleblowers protection laws. However, animals do not understand this and for us to continue to be their voice we will continue to show up each day and work while providing care to the 173 animals Pensacola Humane Society is responsible for, including 123 in foster, 23 in our physical shelter, 13 feral cats within our colonies and 14 chickens at our Resource Center. If we are terminated or no longer permitted to come to work, we the organization have made arrangements with both county shelters and rescue groups to transfer our animals to. We will continue to assist our community with outreach and through our programs to the best of our ability.

We won't abandon our animals or our community as we feel some of our Board have abandoned us.

We the organization are not displeased with ALL the Board of Directors or the Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer whom sit on our Executive Committee, we strongly feel an overwhelming majority of issues have not been made transparent to those Board of Directors and thus they have been left in the dark. We do however feel there has been a lack of involvement as a whole and are hopeful this protest sparks change, transparency and recommitment.

We the organization greatly appreciate those Board of Directors that have contributed many hours to accounting, events, fundraising, professional advice and support. They were not overlooked nor dismissed. We emphatically state those individuals are appreciated and we hold trust in them. We have faith that once they are brought into the light, they too will take a stand.

In past weeks, key staff members have used personal credit cards to continue assisting with programs that are funded with restricted funds such as Louie's Love Fund, to still honor the promises made by Pensacola Humane Society to the gracious donors, family foundations and grant makers. In the last few days, we the organization have had to take calls from community members needing help and having to say "no". We are being forced to say no despite knowing we should have the restricted funds to assist in our accounts. Staff members personally could no longer absorb the burden of the extent of misappropriation of these funds. Two of these calls that greatly angered and saddened us, one was an older community member whose family was assisted last fiscal year, she has been donating \$5 when she can, she is legally blind and on a nominal income, she needed to utilize Louie's Love Fund for \$300 for her beloved dog. The second was a domestic violence victim who had finally gathered the courage to leave her abuser, she fled with her two dogs, through Louie's Love Fund we can privately board her animals so she can seek safety in a shelter and once safe and settled be reunited with her beloved animals. Both had to be informed we did not have the funds to help. This misappropriation of restricted funds should NEVER happen.

We the organization were faced with a choice, watch our soon to be 80-year-old organization dwindle to nothing in the next 6-7 months due to our financial situation or fight for it.

We chose to fight.

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