

I agree with Dan Minkus, the purpose of the board is not to manage the day to day activities of the organization, but rather to monitor the results of its day to day managers. As a board, we have responsibilities for 3 major areas:

1. Defining the mission of the organization
2. Planning the budget and other financial aspects of the organization; and
3. Selection and overseeing the organization's staff.

Mission – we are responsible to periodically review and refine the mission statement and develop related strategies to accomplish the organization's goals. The MHS mission is simple:

“To end companion animal homelessness, to provide the highest quality service and compassion to the animals entrusted to our care, and to take a leadership role in promoting humane values for the benefit of all animals.”

Overseeing the organization's staff – The board has the ultimate responsibility and accountability for ensuring that the MHS staff and management are ably performing their functions.

As a member of this board, I, like you, have received and relied upon the information provided to us by MHS staff and management as being representative of other animal welfare / humane societies. Only recently, have I become aware of how truly inferior our organization's performance has been and that we are not making adequate progress in fulfilling our mission

**THE ANIMAL STATISTICS TELL IT ALL. MHS IS EUTHANIZING 7 OUT OF 10 ANIMALS
THAT ENTER AN MHS FACILITY – OVER 72%!**

As a Board, we have heard our management tell us that MHS is different – we are serving the animals of Detroit and our problems are more severe – the animals are coming to us in worse condition....but then there is Lady – the dog severely burned who under any Asilomar Accord standard would have been deemed untreatable, but since it made a nice story to use for fund raising during the holiday season,we chose to spend a little more and save her life. For Lady, we lived by our mission statement.

We have all read the emails and listened as one of our board members has expressed her concerns, only to have her comments dismissed as “she is emotional”. Well, I assert that she is satisfying her role as a board member in overseeing the performance of this organization's management team in fulfilling the organization's mission. My personal concern is that our organizational reputation as the largest humane society in Michigan and our personal reputation as members of the board is about to incur significant damage as the “no-kill” movement in Michigan is growing and MHS is not supporting this initiative.

Other humane societies in American have set lofty goals and are progressing to accomplishing their goal of 100% no kill – they are not only focusing on treatable animals – rather they are addressing the entire population – for example:

Denver Dumb Friends – 2010 annual report presents 73.9% of pets saved – 24,442 were received

New York City - 67% live release rate in 2008.

San Francisco – 88% live release rate

MHS – less than 30% live release rate for 2010

As the Board of MHS – you have a responsibility to own the problem and I assert the problem is in the ability of the MHS management team to achieve the mission of the organization.

The facility operations in Detroit, Westland and Rochester Hills is where our immediate attention is required –

Euthanasia is happening there – on your watch, using standards that will result in operational performance within budgets established. Did the Board know that the budget was so tight that the staff couldn't expend the resources to save that one animal that might be capable of being saved? How can the CEO be financially rewarded when so many animal lives are being sacrificed for the achievement of a budget?

Our volunteer corps and Foster homes are not sufficient to meet the needs of the animal community in our service area. In fact, according to a news release to the Detroit News in the past several months, our volunteer hours declined in 2010 by almost 5% while the number of volunteers increased by almost that same number. How can that be? Only through dramatic increase in foster homes and volunteers can the mission of MHS be achieved. Where are those plans to do so? The 2011 goal for an increase in the number of available foster homes by 10 is ridiculous!

Fund Development – management asked the Board to commit \$682,000 to support a state-wide mail effort for donations as SE Michigan resources are depleted. Is that truly possible?

Stewardship is lacking – thank you notes are not routinely being sent on a timely manner and other forms of stewardship are non-existent.

Strategy execution is not focused – we have not developed a collaborative approach to the veterinarian community, other shelters or the business community.

And yet, MHS is on the brink of embarking on a substantial investment in a new facility in Detroit, that to this day, the Board has no idea whether it is financially feasible. My greatest fear is that when the “real story” of MHS performance becomes public, **and it will**, the ability to raise the funds necessary to build a new Detroit facility will be virtually impossible.

Time is of the essence. MHS needs new leadership. Its current performance cannot and must not continue unabated. The journey to redirect the organization will not be easy or a quick fix – but it must begin NOW.

Thank you and my best wishes to you in the years ahead.