

# **MOUNT ALEXANDER ANIMAL WELFARE INC**

## **REPORT TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, AUGUST 25<sup>TH</sup>, 2018**

### **THE FUTURE**

The Committee is confident that the future of MAAW is assured. The past nine months have shown how a community working together towards a common goal can achieve results beyond expectation.

The arrangement, which was reached with the RSPCA regarding the lease of the Shelter and the option to purchase, has meant that the Mount Alexander community – our community – has the opportunity to provide for the welfare of our animals for the indefinite future. The lease which is for three years at the fixed rental of \$250 per week on the usual commercial terms, has an option to purchase the freehold at the agreed price of \$300,000 and all rent paid during the term of the lease will be taken as part payment if the option is exercised. The option must be exercised by the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and the Committee has assumed that the date will not be extended and the offer to purchase may not be repeated. The total rent for the three-year term is \$39,000 so we will have to provide \$261,000 by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020. The Committee is of the firm opinion that this offer is too good to be missed and that it is essential that the Shelter be acquired and remain in public ownership.

With this in mind, the Committee has opened a special bank account called “The Freehold Fund” and donations specifically designated have been deposited and the balance at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018 was \$24,295.00.

The Committee has had preliminary discussions with the appropriate lending officers of the Bendigo Bank who have indicated that MAAW could borrow approximately \$160,000 on current policy and our current performance. This is not a promise but only an indication and cannot be relied upon.

The Committee is of the opinion that the incoming committee should regard the raising of the necessary funds dedicated to the purchase as a priority in the activities of the next year.

The Committee has plans to extend the activities of MAAW to raise funds for the efficient running of the Shelter. These include catering for functions – for example Christmas parties (there is one firm booking), clearing out and cleaning houses of deceased estates, fashion events and so on.

These plans depend upon a regular and dependable supply of enthusiastic volunteers – no previous experience necessary. The Committee will also encourage volunteers to bring their teenagers and older children to work with them (unaccompanied under 18 year olds will not be accepted) as this will give experience in the important role of community service as well as work experience.

The Committee therefore seeks the practical help and support of members in this most important aspect of MAAW.

## **SHELTER UPDATE**

In the seven months of our operation as MAAW up to 30 June 2018, we have been very busy with 244 cats and dogs being brought in to the shelter as strays or surrendered animals. Of these 67 dogs and 18 cats were reclaimed by their owner and 37 dogs and 78 cats found new homes.

We have kept our euthanasia rate very low with only two dogs being euthanized due to illness and 15 cats due to being either very sick or feral and unable to be rehomed. We make sure all animals are given time to settle and be given as much chance as possible to be rehomed before the decision to euthanize is taken in conjunction with our vets from Castlemaine Vet Clinic.

We are a no kill shelter and we preserve the life of all animals in our care unless they are suffering or too dangerous to rehome.

For the security of our staff and volunteers we have installed a CCTV system.

## **STAFFING AT THE SHELTER**

We are very lucky to have secured the services of Robyn Slattery to manage the MAAW shelter with the assistance of four casual animal attendants, Alesha Brown, Tiffany Naughton, Ebony Carroll and Elke Meyer. Robyn has done an exceptional job and has put in place vital systems and improvements while ensuring our animals are given the highest standard of care.

Robyn has instigated training and development programs for staff and volunteers with the first of these being a very successful dog behaviour assessment training program conducted on 25<sup>th</sup> July.

We opened the shelter with the support of Rosey Skinner and Helen Bourke, both of whom had worked for the RSPCA for many years. Rosey and Helen worked extremely hard to establish the Shelter under MAAW's management. Rosey and Helen each requested lengthy periods of leave without pay. The Committee agreed to their requests and both are now on well-deserved leave.

Currently we have 35 dedicated and trained volunteers who are scheduled for regular shifts at the shelter and we are most grateful for their generous support.

## **GRANT FOR VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT**

MAAW was successful in the Mount Alexander Council's Community Grant Program with \$3,000 being received for our project, 'Volunteer Engagement and Support'. A schedule of events is planned for shelter and opportunity shop volunteers, including dealing with difficult customers, dog and cat enrichment programs, dog training and a big get together with afternoon tea.

## **GRANT FOR MAAW KIND KIDS**

With the help of volunteer, Meg Clancy, MAAW was successful in the Mt Alexander Community Enterprise Small Grants with \$1,000 being awarded for practical lessons for children in basic kindness to animals. This program will be delivered to primary school children, including children with disabilities.

## **CAT DESEXING**

The MAAW Committee voted to support the cat desexing voucher scheme with a donation of \$5,000 to Mount Alexander Shire Council. MAAW, the Council and the three local vet clinics are all making generous contributions to the program.

In addition, a weekend of free cat desexing is being planned for September at the shelter. MAAW Shelter Manager, Robyn Slattery, Yvette Berkeley of Castlemaine Vet Clinic, and Bruce Syme of Healthy Pets are planning to work together to get cats desexed before the kitten season.

## **THE NEW CATTERY**

MAAW has received from Mount Alexander Shire Council planning approval for the new cattery with designs drawn by Paul Hassall of Lifehouse Design. A soil test has been conducted and an engineer has designed a concrete slab for the site. Stephanie Miller and our volunteer builder, David Walters, met with the building surveyor in July and building planning is underway.

The cattery will be 20 metres long and 6 metres deep and will have space for 20 cats in quarantine, 4 in isolation and 25 in adoptions. It will be warm and sunny and will meet the requirements for compliance for our cat housing.

MAAW has made an application to the State government's Animal Welfare Victoria grants program for a large grant of \$50,000 to help us pay for the cattery.

It is anticipated that the cost of the cattery will come to around \$150,000.

## **DONATIONS**

MAAW's work has been made possible by generous donations from the individuals, from community organisations and local businesses.

The Committee wishes to acknowledge:

**The S R Stoneman Foundation** for a donation of \$15,000 to be used for the building of the cattery.

**Rotary Castlemaine** for their donation of \$8,000 for our VW Caddy van

**The Alan Gray Trust Fund** for two donations for feline vet care totaling \$10,000

**The Freemasons Southern Lodge** for a donation of \$2,000 for the cattery

**All Stone Quarries, the Commonwealth Bank and Bendigo Bank** have given generous donations.

Many individual supporters have given donations ranging from \$500 to \$5,000. MAAW has benefitted from a huge quantity of quality goods donated for sale at our Op Shop. Our community has been incredibly generous.

MAAW has benefitted from generous discounts for Web design, graphics and printing from **Green Graphics**.

**Peter Spurling and Associates** generously donated time and expertise to review the Treasurer's end of financial year statement and to provide an independent audit report.

## **MOUNT ALEXANDER SHIRE COUNCIL**

The Councillors and the staff of the Mount Alexander Shire Council have been supportive and very helpful throughout our first year of operation and in particular we wish to thank the Mayor, Bronwen Machin, CEO, Darren Fuzzard, and, Jeffrey Amy, Coordinator Community Safety and Amenity.

## **THE OPPORTUNITY SHOP**

After the decision was made to lease the shelter from the RSPCA, MAAW needed an opportunity shop to finance our shelter operations. Elke Meyer found an ideal location for an op shop at 105 Barker Street. The building needed maintenance, a clean and a good paint to turn it into an Op Shop, but the potential and size was exactly what we needed to set up shop. As well as being situated in an ideal location, the building came with a very generous landlord, Steve Barty, who along with a band of volunteers, assisted MAAW in getting the shop set up and ready for business. Before we even opened we were given an amazing amount of quality donations, and nine days after picking up the keys MAAW opened the doors to the public on Wednesday November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

From day one, the op shop in Barker Street has enjoyed an overwhelming level of success from our very generous community and donors who come from all over the state to donate to our cause. During the month of May, Elke took a well-earned break from the shop and in the process, decided to resign from her role as op shop manager but to remain as a MAAW board member.

Tania Butterworth took over the role of Op Shop Manager and has since moved the Op Shop to a much bigger premises at 12 Johnstone Street Castlemaine. Donations continue to pour in and now we need to expand again to ensure our display space, sorting area and storage adequately support the business operations and provide a safe work place environment for our team of 35 volunteers. We have expressed interest in utilising the entire shop in Johnstone Street which is currently a shared space but will soon to be available for rent.

If successful, the Committee intends to sub-let the large basement area, which has a separate entrance, and is currently undertaking a feasibility study to provide a small cafe in

the front of the shop. The remainder of the shop will be used for the display of furniture and collectables as well as providing more room for sorting and storage, offices and a meeting room.

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

During the year Malinda Melbourne and Tina Fratta left the organization after making a valuable contribution during the early stages. Tania Butterworth joined the Committee as Treasurer and was voted in as President when Stephanie Miller stepped down as President and took up the role of Treasurer.

It is, in the opinion of the Committee, important that the new members of the Committee understand that the positions they will undertake involve considerable commitment of time and effort and, although rewarding in itself, the workload is very substantial and demanding.

The Committee submits this report to the meeting for consideration and, if approved, adoption.

Your questions and comments are welcome.

Tania Butterworth, President

Elke Meyer, Vice President

Brian Heydon, Secretary

Stephanie Miller, Treasurer

Rosemary Skinner, Committee Member (on leave)

Beverley Hardenberg, Committee Member

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

### **External Audit**

Peter Spurling and Associates audited the Mount Alexander Animal Welfare Inc financial report which comprises the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2018 and the statement of Profit and Loss for the year ended 30 June 2018. The auditor has given the opinion that the financial report presents fairly the financial position of Mount Alexander Animal Welfare Inc as at 30 June 2018 and that its financial performance for the year ended complies with Australian Accounting Standards.

A full copy of the audit will be made available on the MAAW web page. We wish to acknowledge the generosity of Peter Spurling and Associates for donating their time and expertise.

### **Internal Processes**

At the Opportunity Shop, where it is difficult to itemise income flows, President, Tania Butterworth, instigated improved systems to record cash flows, in particular a cash register which records all transactions.

CCTV systems have been installed at both the Opportunity Shop and at the Shelter to discourage theft.

Xero software was implemented by the Treasurer to accept bank feeds and to enable accurate banking reconciliations and reliable reports.

### **Operating Results**

Net Profit for Mt Alexander Animal Welfare for 2017-2018 was \$176,657.48. Of this \$61,393 was income from donations. The Opportunity Shop generated income of \$96,403 and the Shelter, including income from the Council contract to operate the pound, generated income of \$131,912.

The biggest expense was wages and superannuation, totaling \$57,268. Veterinary costs and rents were the next highest costs.

MAAW President, Tania Butterworth, worked with a dedicated group of volunteers to clear the home of a deceased estate and from that earned \$24,295. These funds were deposited into the MAAW Freehold Fund.

### **Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Statements**

Copies of the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss report are available and will also be posted to our Web page.

The Committee submits this report to the meeting for your consideration and, if approved, adoption.

Stephanie Miller  
Treasurer  
25 August 2018