



Dear Fellow Animal Lover,

My name is Jeana Anderson, and I recently joined the SCAF Board of Directors. I come to SCAF with sixteen years of experience in nonprofit leadership. As a resident of Hudson, for many years I have enthusiastically supported the vision of building an animal shelter for the county. Last year I decided it was time for me to do more than just cheer from the sidelines; I needed to join the team who has been tirelessly campaigning and fundraising for the past 15 years.

I would like to first announce that Diana Neubarth has retired from the SCAF Board. Everyone who met her has been awed with her energy and passion for helping the animals in our community. As Board Chair, Diana worked 40+ hours a week as a volunteer, tirelessly aligning support for the SCAF's mission projects. She truly modeled commitment to a cause, and we are deeply grateful for her years of leadership.

### **State of the State**

My second objective is to give you a current update regarding the building of an animal shelter for St. Croix County. As you are likely aware, small businesses and nonprofits have been impacted especially hard due to the Covid pandemic. Organizations are trying to imagine what the future holds as more work is performed remotely, and buildings sit empty. As such, the SCAF Board has identified three difficult questions that we must answer as we set a course for the future.

#### **1. Is a conventional animal shelter still needed?**

Through my research, I have learned that animal shelters are developing different operating models, as rescue programs are now able to easily connect with foster and adoptive parents online. Micro-chipping is much more prominent, and lost pets are quickly reunited with the owners via social media posts.

Most surprisingly, I learned that there is actually a shortage of dogs for adoption in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Our states' highly successful spay and neuter programs have significantly reduced the population of unwanted litters. Local humane societies are able to fill their empty kennels and support animal welfare organizations from other states by transporting dogs here for adoption.

The question remains, though, as to what happens to those local dogs and cats that are discarded and considered by most as unadoptable? With very little revenue from adoptions, how would SCAF cover the building operating costs? It is a question that keeps me up at night.

#### **2. Has the cost of building a shelter become prohibitive?**

Covid and the resulting construction backlog has dramatically increased construction costs. Shelter construction, originally estimated to be \$2,000,000, is now projected to be over \$3,000,000.

The demographic wealth and growth reports for St. Croix County do not make this figure unattainable. Regrettably though, the county will not allocate funding from pet licenses and

other fees to help build or maintain a shelter. We must then ask “Is there enough support locally from individual and corporate donors to raise this much capital?”

### 3. How best can SCAF serve local animals?

I have reached out to animal control officers, rescue organizations, nearby Humane Societies, and foster programs to answer this question. While they all have a different opinion on the need for a shelter, all overwhelmingly stated that access to medical care for strays and surrendered animals is a rapidly growing need.

SCAF has offered an emergency medical fund for the past several years, in addition to helping fund spay and neuter services and pet food for pet owners in need of financial help. **We are committed now more than ever to maintain and grow these two programs.**

#### **The Building Fund**

SCAF’s cash balance, including the building fund, is approximately \$200,000. SCAF was incredibly fortunate to receive an estate gift ten years ago that allowed for the purchase of the land in Roberts. If, however, construction does not begin soon, the county will begin to assess property taxes.

In complete transparency with the SCAF community of supporters, **I must tell you that the SCAF Board is forced to consider whether we relinquish the dream of building an animal shelter and support local animals via other means.** It is a heartbreaking consideration, and one we will have to make, unless we are able to rapidly raise \$1,000,000.

This letter is an invitation to anyone to contact me that would like to help us reach this goal. Do you have the capacity to make a major gift, or know someone who could help? Are there people in your network with a passion for animal welfare? Do you have a professional skill set you could bring to the Board? Whatever your idea for support is, please do not hesitate to contact me.

[jeanaa@scafshelter.org](mailto:jeanaa@scafshelter.org) or via the St. Croix Animal Friends Facebook page.

I will end with a promise that SCAF will update you regularly about our progress. What unites us all is a love for animals that extends to those that have been hurt and neglected. Thank you for all that you do to help provide food, shelter, and love to the animals of St. Croix County.

Sincerely,



Jeana Anderson  
Interim Board Chair, St. Croix Animal Friends