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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

BOARD AGENDA MEMO

MEETING DATE: July 22, 2025

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Tine Mathiasen, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Board

SUBJECT: Protecting Animals While Supporting Sobriety (PAWSS) presentation

RECOMMENDATION: Accept the presentation

FUNDING: N/A

BACKGROUND: Protecting Animals While Supporting Sobriety (PAWSS) is a new 501c3, non-profit organization, formed in January 2025. PAWSS' mission is to help individuals struggling with addiction seek treatment without having to abandon their beloved pets. Individuals who are struggling with drug and alcohol abuse often face a barrier to accessing treatment: abandoning their pet while they work to recover from substance abuse. For many low-income or unhoused individuals in our community, these pets are the only family and only source of unconditional love they have.

PAWSS offers a solution to overcome this barrier by providing temporary foster care, veterinary support such as spay and neutering services and general care, ongoing communication, and reunion services. PAWSS also offers pet food supplies and grooming.

According to the Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, completion rates for drug and alcohol treatment programs increase by 38 percent when the clients know their pets are safe. In addition, those with strong support systems, including pets, have been shown to have higher rates of sustained recovery.

In addition to the impact on the clients, PAWSS generates monetary savings. The average cost for a 30-day shelter stay with Nevada County Animal Control is \$703 (excluding medical costs), while pet fostering averages \$300 per animal over that same period. Local agencies bear the costs of supporting untreated addicts through services

such as law enforcement, social services, criminal and justice services, and emergency services. Investing in addiction treatment services helps lower the burden on these community resources while ensuring members of our community stay safe and healthy.

Therefore, staff recommends the Board accept the presentation.

Item Initiated: Mandy Stewart, Senior Management Analyst
Submittal Date: July 7, 2025