



## **Utica Animal Services**

Recently, Anita's Stevens Swan Humane Society (A-SSHS) was forced to make a tough decision and terminate our long-standing services with the City of Utica.

Since December 2022, the A-SSHS Board of Directors made every attempt to re-negotiate fair terms. Unfortunately, previous City leadership was unwilling to pay their fair share for their legally mandated services to care for stray and lost animals.

Each year, the shelter takes in over 1,000 animals from the City of Utica alone. In 2022, the care for the City's animals resulted in a staggering loss of about \$900,000 for the shelter.

Our core mission is, and has always been, the humane care of animals in need. As big as our hearts are for animals, the tremendous losses from the terms of this contract are just not sustainable. No organization can survive an annual loss of nearly a million dollars on a single contract.

The enormous losses from the City contract were not a one-time occurrence. The shelter was brought to the brink of bankruptcy in 2021 due to the consistent devastating losses from this contract. The generosity of long-term donors and the hard work of a revitalized Board and our tireless staff have put us on a course for long-term success, but the contract was an existential threat, and the pattern of massive losses had to end. To continue accepting losses of this magnitude would violate our duty to the animals we care for and the generous local donors who fund our critical mission.

We, of course, are ready and willing to resume contracted services with the City, but only under fair and sustainable terms.

For questions on this important decision, please reach out directly to Anita Vitullo, A-SSHS Interim Director, at (315) 794-5371.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support for our shelter and animals.

Sincerely,

*Anita Vitullo*

Anita's Stevens Swan Humane Society, Interim Executive Director  
Board of Directors, Anita's Steven Swan Humane Society

3/13/2024