



## HERMANUS ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY

KENNELS: 4 Steenbras Street Industria Tel: 028 312 1281

SHOP: 14 Mitchell Street, Hermanus Tel: 028 312 1800

Fund Raising No: 08 800134000 4

NPO Nr: 002950 NPO

### Chairperson's Report 2024/2025

The saying "*never a dull moment*" could not be more true for HAWS.

We began this committee year on the 22nd of July with 11 members. As you can see from the seats around the table today, there has been a significant turnover. Over the past year, we said goodbye to several committee members — Hugh Hopkins (Treasurer), Sheetal Gordhan, Jean Byrnes, Maxine Zietsman, and Guy Reghard — all of whom stepped down for personal or health reasons. Fortunately, we were able to co-opt wonderful new committee members who stepped up to fill key roles in Treasury, Secretary duties, and Cat Matters.

Before I move on to the numbers and the day-to-day realities, I want to pause to express my deepest gratitude to our volunteers. Rain or shine, day after day, you show up with compassion, energy, and love for the animals in our care. Words alone cannot capture how much this means. Quite simply: *we are, because you care*. Thank you.

### Clinic

This year, our clinic faced some of its toughest challenges yet. Twice, we found ourselves without a full-time veterinarian for two months at a time. This had a significant impact on the organisation financially and on the care and treatment of our own animals. Recruiting vets has become increasingly difficult in South Africa, with many leaving for overseas opportunities and salaries driven up by high demand. And sadly, few choose to work in welfare.

That is why we are delighted to welcome **Dr. Vicky**, who joined us on the 1st of August. Her arrival has already made a tangible difference in both the clinic and the team, and we look forward to building on this positive momentum.

This past year the clinic achieved the following:

- **1,434 vaccinations**, of which **620 were done for free**
- **758 sterilisations**, of which **497 were done for free**
- Between **500 and 600 consultations every month**

The HAWS Clinic mandate is to provide *affordable* medical treatment, not free treatment. We believe that pet ownership comes with responsibility — including the responsibility to provide medical care. Yet we understand that many families simply cannot afford this, which is why our Needy Pets Fund exists. Through it, HAWS carries the cost of treatments

where necessary. This however is not a “fund” with a lot of money in it, it is merely an internal account to which such costs are charged and it gets paid for by HAWS.

The clinic continues to operate at a monthly loss of around **R100,000**. We therefore have to encourage pet owners to contribute something towards their pets’ care, even if through manageable monthly payment arrangements.

The Overstrand By-Laws clearly requires that *all cats and dogs over six months* must be sterilised. Unfortunately, limited manpower prevents full enforcement of this by-law, leaving HAWS to step in and insist that animals treated in our clinic, be sterilised. Overpopulation remains one of our greatest challenges, with hundreds of unwanted kittens and puppies crossing our threshold every year. Backyard breeding has become a source of income for many unemployed families and this practise is ongoing without any thought being given to full impact and long-term effects of this perpetual breeding, on communities, the animals and on animal welfare organisations.

## Cats and Dogs

Between April 2024 and March 2025, HAWS cared for:

- **412 dogs through the pound**
- **782 dogs in our kennels**
- **157 dogs adopted**
- **456 cats through the pound**
- **413 cats in our cattery**
- **197 cats adopted**

## Education

Education continues to be a vital part of our work within our communities. Thanks to the dedication of Sheetal Gordhan, Rinaldi Meyer, Razah, and Clair Tuttleberg. Our focus has been on reaching younger children through primary schools, pre-schools, and the Hermanus Library — instilling early lessons of kindness and compassion for animals.

## Fundraising

Fundraising grows more challenging each year, requiring fresh ideas and creativity. This year we:

- Developed and distributed a **Legacy Donations brochure** through lawyers and senior citizen facilities
- Held **two street collections**, raising just over **R60,000**
- Raised **R37,000** at the Country Market
- Hosted a **Starry Night Long Table event**, raising **R45,000**
- Secured a **R250,000 donation** from the Nussbaum Foundation towards a much-needed new bakkie

## Cost Savings

From the beginning of my term as Chairperson, controlling and reducing costs was a top priority. This year we:

- Negotiated a donation from the landlord in place of a rent reduction for our Gateway Shop
- Reduced warehouse rent by moving to smaller premises, and opted not to renew the staff contract of the person managing the warehouse — saving approximately **R8,000 per month** in rent and salary
- Cut costs on bank charges, equipment hire, and short-term insurance wherever possible

## Gratitude

Taking over from Pam Quinn was no small task — she left very big shoes to fill. I could not have done it without Vice-Chair Marlene Deneeghere and every single committee member. Thank you Clair and Caroline for your tireless work with Dog Matters; Nicolene and Kelly for Marketing and Fundraising; William for stepping in to handle Cat Matters; and Anthony, who not only took over Treasury but has also become our go-to DIY problem solver along with William and Claudelle who took on the challenge of being the Secretary.

To our General Manager, **Rinaldi Meyer**, and the entire HAWS team: you deal daily with heartbreaking cases and impossible decisions. We cannot save them all, but you always show up, you give your best, and you go beyond the call of duty. HAWS is what it is because of you. Thank you to the Kennels and Clinic teams for your dedication and resilience.

## In Closing

Before I hand over to our Interim Treasurer, Anthony Olivier, I want to address one final group — the critics, the haters, and the social media trolls. To them I say: *come and join us*. Step out from behind the keyboard and be part of the solution. We all share the same passion — the wellbeing of animals. And together, we can achieve so much more.

Thank you.