
Request to Meet – Animal Advisory Council Restructuring

Gwinnett Animal Advocacy Alliance <gwinnettanimalshelteradvocates@gmail.com>
To: "Hendrickson, Nicole" <Nicole.Hendrickson@gwinnettcountry.com>

Thu, Aug 13, 2026 at 11:45 AM

Chairwoman Hendrickson,

Thank you for responding. We have read the County's press release. However, the press release does not address the specific questions raised in our email. A general statement about the intent of the new skills-based structure is not the same as answering why the existing Council was dismantled or what led to that decision.

We are specifically trying to understand what information you personally relied upon before casting your vote, why you believed it was necessary to dismantle the existing Council at that particular time — when Council members were actively working to address animal welfare issues and improve transparency — and whether you would consider amending the ordinance to restore independent citizen representation.

I'm disappointed that you have declined our request to meet. This is now the second time we have requested a meeting with you to discuss animal welfare concerns, and the second time you have declined to meet with us.

We are your constituents, and we are asking to speak with you about a decision you made as our elected representative. Residents should be able to have that conversation directly with the officials they elected.

We will continue seeking answers through the public records process. If you reconsider, our request to meet remains open.

Thank you,
Melissa

On Thu, Aug 13, 2026 at 11:08 AM Hendrickson, Nicole <Nicole.Hendrickson@gwinnettcountry.com> wrote:

Melissa,

Good morning. My position regarding the Board's August 4th decision to restructure the Animal Advisory Council is reflected in the County's press release following the vote, which includes my statement and additional information regarding the intent behind the new skills-based structure. You can review it here: [Gwinnett County Restructures Animal Advisory Council Around Professional Expertise](#).

I understand that you and others may disagree with the Board's decision. At this time, I don't have anything further to add beyond what I have already shared publicly, so I will respectfully decline the request for a meeting. I remain committed to improving animal welfare outcomes in Gwinnett County and appreciate the continued engagement of residents who care deeply about these issues.

Warm Regards,



Nicole Love Hendrickson | Chairwoman | Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners
770.822.7010 | 75 Langley Drive, Lawrenceville | [GwinnettCounty.com](#)
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From: Gwinnett Animal Advocacy Alliance <gwinnettanimalshelteradvocates@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2026 8:55 AM

To: Hendrickson, Nicole <Nicole.Hendrickson@gwinnettcountry.com>

Subject: Request to Meet – Animal Advisory Council Restructuring

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Dear Chairwoman Hendrickson,

I'm reaching out on behalf of Gwinnett Animal Advocacy Alliance to request a meeting with you regarding the Board's August 4 decision to dismantle and restructure the Animal Advisory Council.

We would really like to understand your individual reasons for supporting the restructuring and what information you relied upon before casting your vote.

This decision came at a time when the former Council appeared to finally be gaining momentum. Council members were asking more substantive questions about shelter operations, advancing recommendations for improvement, and community engagement had grown significantly. More than 50 residents attended the July 13 meeting, and a special meeting had been scheduled for September 3 to continue that work.

Some of the initiatives being discussed included greater transparency and accountability, increased meeting frequency, improved medical oversight, and prevention efforts such as a spay/neuter voucher program.

For the past couple of years, advocates have repeatedly raised concerns with County and shelter leadership. Many emails and concerns have gone unanswered, and the meetings we had with Community Services and shelter leadership last year produced no meaningful change on many of the issues we raised.

That is one reason the independence of the Animal Advisory Council matters so much to us.

We would appreciate the opportunity to sit down with you, understand the basis for your vote, share some of the information and public records we have gathered, and discuss whether you would consider amending the ordinance to restore independent citizen representation and allow voting Council members to elect their own leadership.

We aren't asking the Board to eliminate the new professional seats. We believe professional expertise and independent community representation can coexist.

Please let me know if you would be willing to meet with us. We are happy to work around your schedule.

Thank you,
Melissa