



# PRESS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 12, 2012

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### **Huge step made toward land for HSJC's animal shelter**

*Jackson County BOC gives go-ahead for staff to draft a property lease agreement with the Humane Society of Jackson County for the county's first animal shelter*

Jefferson, GA – Monday, June 11, was a huge step toward land for the Humane Society of Jackson County to establish the county's first animal shelter. At the Jackson County Board of Commissioners meeting, commissioners voted unanimously to authorize county staff to negotiate a long-term property lease with the Humane Society of Jackson County to allow the organization to construct and operate an animal shelter on a 15-acre site owned by the county. The commissioners also authorized staff to negotiate an agreement related to the County's utilization of the Humane Society's animal shelter once it is completed and in operation.

"We are pleased to be at this point with the county," said Roxane Rose, vice president of the HSJC board of directors, speaking before the commissioners. "With the exception of land, we have all of the pieces in place to make this shelter a reality, and we are glad that the county realizes that as well and knows that the Humane Society of Jackson County is the solution to the animal problem in Jackson County."

While the organization has been fundraising for a shelter since its inception in 1998, talks with the county about a public-private partnership began in earnest in 2010. In March 2011, the group made a presentation to the county asking for land. Since then, board members have continually met with staff and commissioners. Rose summed it up for the commissioners, noting the tremendous positive impact HSJC has already had on the animal overpopulation problem

here with its foster program and public assistance spay/neuter program, which combined have taken thousands of animals off of the county's hands, saving substantial taxpayer dollars.

“We have done due diligence in researching the facility, by visiting and/or talking to more than 15 humane society and animal control facilities in and around Georgia as well as personal visits to the Best Friends Animal Society facility in Utah. This research has prepared us for all aspects, from groundbreaking to inception to annual operations. We have also illustrated board commitment for fundraising, which encompasses years of a fiscally responsible group that put money away in savings, beginning in 1998, to current giving by the board members individually as well as by bringing on a capital campaign manager and opening the ReTail Thrift store, which will raise annual operating funds for the shelter. We have demonstrated how this will be much more than “just” an animal facility – it will be a substantial community asset by providing a much-needed service to taxpayers; it will serve the community in numerous ways, most notably by working with the elderly and special needs; and, on the economic development front, it will provide jobs and is scheduled to be the first LEED-certified facility in Jackson County. The icing on the cake is the internationally renowned architectural firm, Urban Design Group, which has committed not only its vast resources in a number of areas pro bono, but who have also brought on a civil engineering firm pro bono as well.”

The BOC meeting had a large turnout from interested citizens as well as representatives of HSJC, including its board of directors, staff, members and volunteers.

“This is a major step in our dream of a shelter in Jackson County,” said Margaret Lang, president of the HSJC board of directors. “We are thankful for the many people who have persevered in this quest and we look forward to the day when we will be opening our doors.”

For more information on the capital campaign including how to donate, naming opportunities, brick sales, fundraisers and more, contact Claibourne Jordan at 706-424-4607 or [claibourne@hotmail.com](mailto:claibourne@hotmail.com).

Established in 1998, the Humane Society of Jackson County was the vision of native Marjorie Butler, who worked with Bob and Sandy Wells to make her dream a reality. A low- and no-cost spay neuter program for low-income families was started in 2006, and in February of 2007, the group got its Department of Agriculture License and began rescuing and placing homeless animals. In 2008, volunteers launched a courtesy placement program to assist with

animals who needed re-homing that the group could not accommodate, since it currently operates through an all-foster home network. In 2011, the organization launched its capital campaign to raise funds for the shelter and opened the ReTail Thrift Store, located in downtown Jefferson behind the Crawford W. Long Museum. HSJC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and donations are tax deductible. Community meetings are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the 2<sup>nd</sup> month of each quarter at locations around the county. For more information, visit the web site at [www.hsjc.com](http://www.hsjc.com), call 706-367-1111 or e-mail [hsjc1111@gmail.com](mailto:hsjc1111@gmail.com).

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**PHOTO**

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(L-R) Architects Ken Rhyne and Luc Helterbrand of Urban Design Group look over proposed site plans with Roxane Rose of the Humane Society of Jackson County and County Manager Kevin Poe in May.