

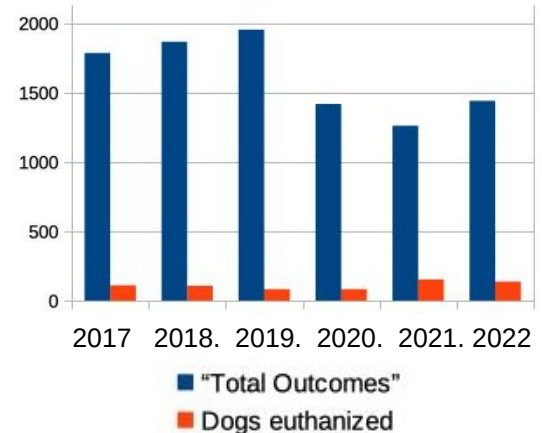
To the Jackson County commissioners, administrator, and management of the Jackson County Animal Shelter:

We’re writing as Jackson County voters and residents to demand simple, economical, and substantive changes in the operation of the County’s animal shelter (JCAS).

JCAS relies in large part on volunteers to provide walks, attention, affection, adoption assistance, and other help for the dogs and cats in its care. Until recently, volunteers assisted at the shelter every day of the week. JCAS changed that policy, closing the shelter to volunteers on Mondays, and asserting that the animals there would be cared for by staff. It has become apparent, however, that dogs are confined to their kennels for about 40 hours, from Sunday afternoons at 4pm to Tuesday mornings at 10 am, with only a few minutes out of the kennels while they are cleaned. Cats are similarly neglected. Pretexts for this situation have ranged from the need to hold staff training and meetings, to landscaping work, but the interests of the animals are clearly being downgraded. This situation flies in the face of guidelines from the Association of Shelter Veterinarians that “reducing the duration of time spent in cages or kennels is critical.” (<https://jsmcah.org/index.php/jasv/article/view/42/20>). Requests to Jackson County’s commissioners and administration to remedy this situation have been rebuffed.

This is one aspect of the deterioration in the quality of care at JCAS. The shelter has shown a decline in live release rates of dogs, and a rise in euthanasia cases, even as the total number of dogs the shelter handles each year has declined since 2019.

Year	“Total Outcomes”	Dogs euthanized	“Save Rate”
2017	1785	110	93.60%
2018	1866	106	94.15%
2019	1953	82	95.39%
2020	1417	82	93.95%
2021	1261	152	87.43%
2022	1440	137	89.49%



(Source: <https://jacksoncountyor.org/hhs/Animal-Services/About-Us>)

While the reasons for these negative trends may be complex, it is clear that the recent policy changes at JCAS, such as excluding volunteers on Mondays, do nothing to turn the situation around. Likewise, volunteers formerly eased the burden on JCAS staff by transporting animals to and from spay/neuter surgeries at local veterinary facilities and taking them offsite for brief stays, but JCAS management now prohibits this.

