

**2020 CVNL Heart of Marin Nomination for Excellence in Board Leadership:
Chip Smith, Board Chair, Marin Humane Board of Directors**

1. Describe how the nominee has made a significant, positive, and measurable impact on the organization.

Chip Smith joined Marin Humane's Board of Directors in 2013. He is the current Board Chair and is serving his last year in that position. Under his leadership, Marin Humane's fundraising support overall has increased and he has inspired the Board of Directors to step up their financial support in new ways. For example, Chip oversaw the first-ever Board Matching Gift Challenge, raising \$35,000 from board members (in addition to their normal levels of support) which resulted in more than \$100,000 to benefit Marin Humane programs and services. He actively participated in the planning and execution of a first-time, virtual Gala alongside the event staff - videotaping the welcoming remarks (on the hottest day of the year), making a leadership-level gift toward the \$200,000 raised for the Fund-a-Need, and helping with donor stewardship activities before and after the event.

Of special significance is his help in securing renewed support from a former donor. He brokered introductions and initiated dialogue between a donor and Marin Humane. His patient cultivation efforts resulted in Marin Humane receiving pre-IPO stock shares that raised over \$780,000 for Marin Humane!

Chip's boundless energy and enthusiasm, his "outside the box" thinking, willingness to introduce new ideas and challenge the board and staff to do better, has been transformational; it makes him an outstanding board chair. With his leadership and passion for progress, he brings Marin Humane's mission, vision, and values to life. He champions our desire to be more visible in communities throughout the county. With his background and deep expertise in architecture and real estate development, he has helped identify and analyze possible satellite locations, as well as work on a Master Facilities Plan for our main campus in Novato. He served as the architect for our first satellite location, Kitty Corner, in San Anselmo (pro-bono). The combination of creativity and knowledge of architectural systems (all provided pro-bono) has been invaluable to Marin Humane! In one case, he reached out to a commercial broker, toured multiple locations with staff, and helped us determine that taking on a new physical location would not be the best course of action, and instead championed the purchase of a specialized vehicle with a broad range of functions that can offer adoptions, vaccination clinics, disaster response, and other outreach activities in locations throughout the county, or beyond.

In another case, during one of his Board Observation Opportunities (*a requirement for all board members to observe various programs and activities at Marin Humane*), Chip observed our veterinary staff in action. Within hours of watching the veterinary team operate in very tight quarters and noticing where efficiencies could be found, Chip sketched out ways to meaningfully improve the functions and expand our veterinary services' footprint on campus. His keen eye for workflow and physical structures provided us with new possibilities to improve

the layout in the spaces essential to our ability to provide shelter animals with examinations, diagnostic tests, imaging, medical treatments, and surgery.

During COVID-19, there is a tendency to be extra cautious and stay the course when it comes to taking on new projects. Chip actively participated in the merger/acquisition negotiations between Marin Humane and an animal organization based in Oakland. During the challenges (and stress) of conducting a major expansion of Marin Humane's operations, his thoughtful strategic leadership and warm welcoming demeanor led to smooth and successful negotiations with both boards approving the decision to integrate the other organization as a new division of Marin Humane.

Despite Chip's amazing abilities, he is also humble. He did not intend to become Chair when he joined the board. When the need for leadership arose, however, he was open to learning. He sought sage advice from the outgoing and past board chairs and CEO and then accepted the challenge. He was re-elected Board Chair this past June. He has driven our organization to higher levels and demonstrated a never-ending commitment to learn, listen, and be a thoughtful leader, especially during these challenging times. During his tenure, the board has been well-functioning, highly effective, and engaged.

2. How has the nominee demonstrated leadership, dedication and exhibited best practices in nonprofit governance during the past 12 months?

Chip has demonstrated leadership, dedication, *and* best practices in the past year. In 2020, his attendance at all board meetings is perfect and he has attended over 30 committee meetings. He is well prepared and anticipates and proactively addresses board member concerns. He always puts a priority on being available for board work.

This past year has brought with it some very important challenges for Marin Humane: budget and staffing challenges arising from the impacts of the pandemic, postponement of capital campaign efforts, merger discussions and securing the important votes to proceed, and the selection of a financial firm to better manage our assets. Chip has guided the board through these tough topics with finesse and confidence, easily adapting to managing board meetings on Zoom and facilitating discussions with the same agility and care to ensure all board members are heard.

Chip's enthusiastic involvement in Marin Humane's relationship building with high-potential donors sets the bar high, and he is modelling best practices for other members of our board. Chip is the longest-serving member of our Donor Relations Committee and has gained valuable insights with each of his contacts at the several donor gatherings held throughout the year. He is also one of our top ten lifetime donors.

One practice which often seems lacking among most nonprofit boards and nonprofit senior managers is that of succession planning. While essential to an organization's long-term success, succession planning can be a difficult topic to tackle and is often neglected as a top priority. Fortunately, under Chip's tenure and with the guidance of the Board's Governance Committee

(on which Chip serves), Marin Humane recently identified the slate of officers for 2021-22, giving each of the incoming leaders plenty of time to prepare for the many important duties that will ensure the success of the Executive Committee and the ability to provide onboarding of the incoming officers.

3. Describe how the nominee has supported a collaborative relationship with the executive director, constituents and/or the community.

Chip is in regular communication with the CEO, senior managers, and other stakeholders. He is also a great advocate for Marin Humane and is at ease meeting with the public and promoting Marin Humane in the community. Before COVID-19, his imaginative ideas resulted in new ways to bring donors together. He has attended conferences and other forums to learn more about animal welfare and gain a broader appreciation for Marin Humane's role and work at the state and national levels.

4. Briefly state the organization's mission and services offered.

Marin Humane's mission is to transform lives through exceptional animal care, humane education, and advocacy. Every day, we inspire compassion and positive relationships between people and animals.

For over 100 years, we've been here to adopt, foster, and advocate for animals, but we do so much more. We help low-income families care for their animals, train people to be better pet parents, and educate the next generation of compassionate community members. Our groundbreaking programs utilize the love of animals to help teach kids to read, build confidence for people with autism, and help rehabilitate inmates at San Quentin.

We're also responsible for 24/7 animal protection and rescue for domestic animals and wildlife for the whole of Marin County. Our officers stop abuse, bring animals to safety, and reunite lost pets with their worried families. Our devoted staff and volunteers transform the lives of over 10,000 animals a year (and countless humans, too).