Dear [NAME],

I am writing on behalf of Charlie’s Place (Clear Creek/Gilpin County Animal Shelter) to request you keep the Shelter open in Dumont, Colorado, with the necessary staff and facility upkeep.

While I am aware of the fiscal challenges faced by the county, I want to impress on you the far-reaching value Charlie’s Place offers the residents of Clear Creek and Gilpin Counties. It is not just a dog pound. It is a community of animal lovers, many who adopted their beloved family pet from Charlie’s Place. Countless dogs and cats have been saved from euthanasia and placed into loving homes.

The options that the Board are currently considering would negate the reasons Charlie’s Place is so beloved.

* Having Foothills Animal Shelter, a kill shelter, take over the facility is against every fiber of Charlie’s Place values. Helen Buck donated the land in good faith to save animal's lives, which Charlie’s Place has been doing since opening its doors in 2008.
* Although it was recently stated on social media that cuts have not been made at the shelter, the backfilling of one full-time staff position, currently within the budget, has been put on hold as well as eliminating one half-time position. This has put an immense strain on staff and volunteers. It is an unsustainable long-term solution.
* Selling the land may be a seen as a quick fix for the current fiscal challenges, but it ignores the deed restrictions Helen Buck and the county agreed upon and it goes against everything Helen intended for Charlie’s Place. I believe the voters will see this as a break in faith and integrity and not in the spirit of serving the community.
* Animal Control personnel “pitching-in,” is equally unsustainable. Caring for the animals at Charlie’s Place is not a “pitch-in” type of job. The animals require a commitment of food, water, clean facilities, consistent care, and daily interactions. Animal Control has an important role in the community and must be available to always do their job.
* Relying on community donations to staff/maintain the shelter is also an unsustainable and unreasonable plan. County taxes fund and support facilities and services precisely like those provided by the Shelter. While Friends of Charlie’s Place (FOCP) is committed to supporting the shelter animals, it does not have the consistent and reliable funding sources required to staff the shelter and maintain the structure. FOCP has helped with the expense of spaying and neutering to keep dog populations in check, helped improve the shelter property; added roofs on outdoor kennels, built an exercise yard, created the Helen Buck memorial park complete with memorial windchimes and park benches, and provided specialized training to help animals become more adoptable, all to improve and support the county’s animal shelter.

It is heart breaking that the BOCC sees the elimination of Charlie’s Place as an option to solve the potential fiscal shortfall in the current budget. Who will replace the services Charlie’s Place currently provides? Foothills is already too crowded and is known as a kill shelter.

Please reconsider the options currently on the table and keep Charlie’s Place open in its fully functional capacity.

"The time is always right to do what is right!” Martin Luther King, Jr.

Yours Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

[YOUR COUNTY]