

**CITY COUNCIL BRIEFING**

**Animal Control Policy/Shelter**

**CODE COMPLIANCE  
DEPARTMENT**

**January 16, 2002**

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## **PURPOSE OF BRIEFING**

The purpose of this briefing is to review with the City Council recommended revisions to various existing policies/procedures, the creation of new policies to foster a more humane environment for animals, as well as create in-house spay/neuter facility for the Animal Control Division. This briefing also provides staff the opportunity to receive Council input regarding recommended policy changes.

## BACKGROUND

- i On June 27, 2001, the City Council awarded a contract to the Human Society of the United States (HSUS) to analyze the entire Animal Control Division operations.
- i On October 12, 2001, HSUS submitted a preliminary report to the Department of Code Compliance.
- i On November 12, 2001, the City Council Health, Environment and Human Services Committee (HEHS) was briefed on the preliminary HSUS report regarding the size and scope of the proposed replacement shelter and Code Compliance department's recommendations.
- i On November 15, 2001, the Animal Shelter Advisory Commission unanimously recommended the construction of a 41,000 square foot animal shelter.
- i On December 28, 2001, staff received the final HSUS report on the Animal Control Division operations.

## MISSION OF THE ANIMAL CONTROL DIVISION

To enforce the Rabies Control Act as addressed in the Texas Health and Safety Codes, and Chapter 7 (Animals) of the Dallas City Code, and foster a more humane animal handling environment through:

- i Providing a safe and humane environment for all animals
- i Impoundment of stray, biting, and unwanted animals
- i Enforcement action against violators of Animal related laws
- i Vaccination and registration of dogs and cats; and
- i Educating the public regarding responsible pet ownership, adherence to Chapter 7 and raise awareness of critical issues such as:
  - , Pet vaccination
  - , Pet registration
  - , Spay and neutering
  - , Pet restraint

## **ANIMAL CONTROL POLICY PRIMARY CHANGE DRIVERS**

- i** Create a safe and more humane animal environment at the shelters by:
  - , Reducing animal stress and increasing public safety
  - , Insuring animal safety
  - , Providing exercise facility for animals
  - , Providing a bonding facility for adoptable pets and potential owners
  
- i** Educate the public and promote responsible pet ownership by:
  - , Promoting increased adoption
  - , Fostering reduction in euthanization
  - , Promoting pet sterilization
  - , Fostering increased pet registration

## **POLICY CHANGES**

### **i Safety/Humane Environment Policies**

- , Minimize public contact with animals involved in a biting incident or suspected rabies animals
- , Enhance animal care
- , Enhance animal placement opportunities

### **i Educational Policies**

- , Designate an education facility
- , Establish a volunteer program
- , Promote pet sterilization

## **SAFETY/HUMANE ENVIRONMENT POLICY DESCRIPTIONS**

### ***Current Policy***

*Rabies Suspects: Straying animals (owned or unowned) involved in a biting incident or that has caused injury to a person not placed under **Quarantine** at home or at a veterinary clinic, as explained in Chapter 7 of the City Code, must be held at the City shelter for a period of 13-days. Ten days of quarantine observation and 3-days for redemption. Currently, animals are housed during the redemption period in a public area where they are subject to public contact.*

### ***Revised Policy***

*During the 3-day redemption period, animals will be housed in an area secluding them from public contact. This policy is intended to minimize the possibility of public contact. If the animal is not redeemed within the three-day period then it becomes the property of the City of Dallas.*

*\* The revised policy is consistent with HSUS recommendations.*

## **SAFETY/HUMANE ENVIRONMENT POLICY DESCRIPTIONS (CONTINUED)**

### ***Current Policy***

*Due to space limitation, animals are placed in protective custody in a specific kennel or cage based on their species, sex, age, condition or whether they are owned or unowned animals, rabies suspects, sick or injured.*

### ***Revised Policy***

*The additional space provided at the new shelter would allow for all animals to be placed in a protective environment (separate kennel or cage), except when the shelter is at full capacity, to reduce the spread of disease, stress, as well as prevent fights and injuries.*

*Large dogs/cats will be placed in the first available clean large kennel/cage respectively.  
Small dogs (i.e., toy breeds) may be placed in a cage when all kennels are occupied.  
Kittens will always be placed in cages.*

*\* The revised policy is consistent with HSUS recommendations.*

## **SAFETY/HUMANE ENVIRONMENT POLICY DESCRIPTIONS (CONTINUED)**

### ***Current Policy***

*Presently, all animals in the adoption area are exercised as space and staff availability permits.*

*Within the Oak Cliff Shelter's Adoption area, 9 of 19 kennels have an outdoor extension (35 sq. ft.) which allows limited animal exercise capabilities. The Forney Shelter's Adoption area has a large open space (1570 sq. ft. on the East side and 1170 sq. ft. on the West side) on the outer section of the Ivor O'Connor Morgan Home Facility. Adoptable animals are escorted to this area by City staff for exercising purposes.*

### ***New Policy***

*The use of volunteers, staff and design of the new shelter will facilitate the ability to exercise all animals held for an extended period of time (animals held in excess of 5-days). This policy will enhance animal health care for all adoption animals, quarantined animals and other animals in the protective care and custody of the Animal Control Division.*

*\* The new policy is consistent with HSUS recommendations.*

## **SAFETY/HUMANE ENVIRONMENT POLICY DESCRIPTIONS (CONTINUED)**

### ***Current Policy***

*All dogs with no form of identification must be held for a minimum of 3-days. Thereafter, they become the property of the City. Dogs with identification are held until staff is able to effect a trace of the owner and reunite the pet accordingly.*

*Cats and kittens are held for at least 3-days when there is an indication that they belong to someone. Cats with identification are held until staff is able to effect a trace of the owner and reunite the pet accordingly.*

*\* The City ordinance does not require a holding period for cats or kittens without identification.*

### ***Revised Policy/Ordinance Change***

*Increase the redemption period from 3 to 5-days for an impounded animal that is without a form of identification or appears to be owned. This would reduce euthanizations and increase the possibility of reuniting pet owners with their pets as well as enhance pet adoptability (ordinance change required).*

*\* The revised policy/ordinance change addresses some of the HSUS concerns.*

**SAFETY/HUMANE ENVIRONMENT POLICY DESCRIPTIONS  
(CONTINUED)**

***Current Policy***

*There are no available bonding facilities at either shelters.*

***New Policy***

*The City will provide a bonding area for pets and potential owners to get acquainted. This area would also offer additional exercise opportunities for animals.*

*\* The new policy is consistent with HSUS recommendations.*

## ***EDUCATIONAL POLICY DESCRIPTIONS***

### ***Current Policy***

*Currently, there is not a designated educational facility at either shelter.*

### ***New Policy***

*Designate specific area to provide public education, facilitate group educational tours, staff training and promote responsible pet ownership and adoption. Each area would be equipped with VCRs, videos and other printed materials that promote healthy animal care and ownership.*

*\* The new policy is consistent with HSUS recommendations.*

## **EDUCATIONAL POLICY DESCRIPTIONS (CONTINUED)**

### ***Current Policy***

*To educate the public regarding responsible pet ownership and animal related ordinances, increase adherence to those ordinances and raise awareness of critical animal related issues through the Pet Canvassing Program.*

### ***New Policy***

*Establish a volunteer program.*

*Expand the Pet Education Outreach Program through the use of volunteers. Volunteers would be recruited to help increase public awareness regarding pet vaccination, registration, restraint, spaying and neutering. Area targeted will include: Public Schools, Private Schools, Community Groups, Public Library, City Recreation Centers, Civic Groups/Clubs, Dog Parks, Fair Park, Businesses-Safety Group, Churches and Special Events.*

*\* The new policy is consistent with HSUS recommendations.*

## **EDUCATIONAL POLICY DESCRIPTIONS (CONTINUED)**

### **Current Policy**

*State law requires that all animals adopted from a Municipal animal shelter must be sterilized (Texas Health & Safety Code Chapter 828).*

*Presently, the City does not perform spay/neuter surgeries at either shelters.*

*Persons adopting animals from City Shelters must enter into an agreement with the City to have the pet sterilized by a licensed veterinarian.*

*If a person signs an adoption agreement, but fails to comply with the terms, the agreement is not valid; the manager of Animal Control may re-impound the animal and/or issue a citation to the person. Current policy is unable to insure that all animals adopted from the City shelters are sterilized.*

### **New Policy**

*All animals selected for adoption will be spayed or neutered by the on-duty Animal Control Division's veterinarian. This policy enhances the ability of the Animal Control Division to insure that all animals adopted are sterilized in compliance with the state law.*

*\* The new policy is consistent with HSUS recommendations.*

## SUMMARY OF SHELTER OPTIONS

- i Recommended Option (medium size/40,924 sq. ft./\$9.7 million)
  - , Staff recommends the construction of a 40,924 square foot animal shelter including the following elements:
    - S Adoption Area
    - S Spay/Neuter Clinic
    - S Volunteer Area
    - S Educational Facility
    - S Bonding or AGet Acquainted@Area
  - , This recommendation is consistent with the HEHS directives, the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee and the HSUS recommendations.
  - , Staffing/O & M Cost \$ 932,000
  - , Required additional capital funding \$ 7.0 million
  
- i Alternate Option (large size/57,000 sq. ft./\$13.3 million)
  - , This option provides for a larger adoption area (7,990 sq. ft.), more than the medium size option, as well as provides our additional 2,600 sq. ft. to the Intake/Lost and Found area in comparison to the mid size option.
  - , Staffing/O & M Cost \$ 1,153,500
  - , Required additional capital funding \$ 10.6 million

*The above two options would require additional \$300,000 capital cost to retrofit the Forney Shelter for a Spay/Neuter Clinic.*

## PROGRAMMATIC IMPACT OF POLICY CHANGES (With No Adjustment in Resources)

Policy Changes	Current Facility Square Footage Oak Cliff	Current Facility Square Footage Forney	Total Square Footage	Current Staffing Oak Cliff (FTE)	Current Staffing Forney (FTE)	Shared Staffing Totals (FTE)	Current Programmatic Impact
Minimize public contact with animals involved in a biting incident or suspected rabies animals	1,640	2,710	4,350	1.0	1.0	2.0	- Animals are housed for the redemption period in a public area where they are subject to public contact.
Enhance animal care	8,660	14,376	23,036	2.0	2.0	4.0	- All animals are not placed in separate kennels. - All animals in the adoption area are exercised as space and staff availability permits.
Enhance animal placement opportunities	2,700	3,586	6,286	1.0	1.0	2.0	- Limited possibility of reuniting pet owners with pets. Higher rate of euthanizations. - No available bonding facility at either shelters.
Designate educational facility	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	- No facility is available at each shelter for public education, healthy animal care and responsible pet ownership.
Volunteer program	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-There is no volunteer program available.
Pet sterilization	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	- Staff is unable to ensure that all adopted animals are sterilized.
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>20,672</b>	<b>33,672</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>8.0</b>	

## PROGRAMMATIC IMPACT OF POLICY CHANGES (With Additional Resources - Recommended Shelter)

Policy Changes	Current Facility Square Footage Forney	New Facility Square Footage New Shelter	Total Square Footage	Forney Staffing (FTE)	New Shelter Staffing (FTE)	Shared Staffing Totals (FTE)	Programmatic Impact
Minimize public contact with animals involved in a biting incident or suspected rabies animals	2,710	5,515	8,225	1.0	2.0	3.0	- Animals housed in a secured area that prevents public contact.
Enhance animal care	14,376	23,932	38,308	2.0	3.0	5.0	- All animals are placed in separate kennels to reduce the spread of diseases, stress, as well as prevent fights and injuries. - Exercise facility will be provided.
Enhance animal placement opportunities	3,586	7,084	10,670	2.0	3.0	5.0	- Reuniting pet owners with pets and enhance adoptability. Decrease euthanizations. - Bonding area provided for the pets and potential adoptee to get acquainted.
Designate educational facility	0	2,368	2,368	1.0	1.0	2.0	- An area would be designated and equipped at each shelter to educate the public, interested groups and staff on responsible pet ownership and healthy animal care.
Volunteer program	0	Shared Space	Shared Space	0.0	1.0	1.0	- Additional manpower would be available to increase public awareness regarding pet vaccination registration, restraint, spaying and neutering.
Pet sterilization	0	2,025	2,025	3.0	4.0	7.0	- All adoptable animals are sterilized.
<b>Totals</b>	<b>20,672</b>	<b>40,924</b>	<b>61,596</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>23.0</b>	

## PROGRAMMATIC IMPACT OF POLICY CHANGES

(With Additional Resources - \$13.3 Million Facility)

Policy Changes	Current Facility Square Footage Forney	New Facility Square Footage New Shelter	Total Square Footage	Forney Staffing (FTE)	New Shelter Staffing (FTE)	Shared Staffing Totals (FTE)	Programmatic Impact
Minimize public contact with animals involved in a biting incident or suspected rabies animals	2,710	5,515	8,225	1.0	2.0	3.0	- Animals housed in a secured area that prevents public contact.
Enhance animal care	14,373	32,108	46,481	2.0	5.0	7.0	- All animals are placed in separate kennels to reduce the spread of diseases, stress, as well as prevent fights and injuries. - Exercise facility will be provided.
Enhance animal placement opportunities	3,586	14,952	18,538	2.0	6.0	8.0	- Increases the ability to adopt animals.
Designate educational facility	0	2,368	2,368	1.0	1.0	2.0	- An area would be designated and equipped at each shelter to educate the public, interested groups and staff on responsible pet ownership and healthy animal care.
Volunteer program	0	122	122	0.0	1.0	1.0	- Additional manpower would be available to increase public awareness regarding pet vaccination registration, restraint, spaying and neutering.
Pet sterilization	0	2,025	2,025	3.0	4.0	7.0	- All adoptable animals are sterilized.
<b>Totals</b>	<b>20,672</b>	<b>57,090</b>	<b>77,759</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>28.0</b>	

## **CITY OF DALLAS ANIMAL SHELTER LOCATIONS**

- i** Oak Cliff Animal Shelter
- i** Forney Road Animal Shelter
- i** Proposed Replacement Shelter Site

**(See area map identifying location of City Shelters on following page.)**

## NEEDS INVENTORY FOR REPLACEMENT SHELTER (Recommended Facility)

FUNCTION	OAK CLIFF SHELTER EXISTING SQUARE FOOTAGE	REPLACEMENT SHELTER SQUARE FOOTAGE	JUSTIFICATION
*Education Resource Center	None	2,368	- Responsible pet ownership and volunteer classes.
Adoption Area	2,700	7,084	- Reception/waiting area. - Larger single occupancy cages/kennels.
*Intake, Lost & Found, Impound	5,000	15,566	- Larger single occupancy cages/kennels.
Animal Control Operations	612	2,460	- Adequate office. - Enclosed storage.
*Quarantine Isolation	1,476	5,515	- Expand capacity.
Euthanasia	350	546	- Improve sanitary conditions.
*Veterinary Hospital	None	2,025	- Improve sanitary conditions. - Conduct in-house spay/neutering.
Support	2,862	5,360	
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>40,924</b>	
Outside Exercise Area	None	1,500	- Outdoor runs or exercise space for physical health.

\* The asterisk denotes changes needed to implement revised and/or new policies.

## NEEDS INVENTORY FOR REPLACEMENT SHELTER (\$13.3 Million Facility)

FUNCTION	OAK CLIFF SHELTER EXISTING SQUARE FOOTAGE	REPLACEMENT SHELTER SQUARE FOOTAGE	JUSTIFICATION
*Education Resource Center	None	2,368	- Responsible pet ownership and volunteer classes.
Adoption Area	2,700	15,074	- Reception/waiting area. - Larger single occupancy cages/kennels and increases housing capacity.
*Intake, Lost & Found, Impound	5,000	18,128	- Larger single occupancy cages/kennels.
Animal Control Operations	612	3,117	- Adequate office. - Enclosed storage.
*Quarantine Isolation	1,476	5,515	- Expand capacity.
Euthanasia	350	954	- Improve sanitary conditions.
*Veterinary Hospital	None	2,025	- Improve sanitary conditions. - Conduct in-house spay/neutering.
Support	2,862	9,909	
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>57,090</b>	
Outside Exercise Area	None	None	- Outdoor runs or exercise space for physical health.

\* The asterisk denotes changes needed to implement revised and/or new policies.

## NEXT STEPS

- |   |   |             |
|---|---|-------------|
| i | City Manager's Recommendation of Bond Program | April, 2002 |
| i | Council Recommendation of Bond Program        | June, 2002  |
| i | Citizen Vote of Bond Program                  | Sept, 2002  |
| i | First Bond Sale                               | Nov, 2002   |