

Dear Council Member:

I am writing you today since I am not able to attend the meeting this morning. As the new chairman of the Animal Services Advisory Committee I would like to be made aware of situations at Animal Services before it is taken to City Council. I was informed of this latest complaint on Tuesday last week when one of my clients approached me. I asked that the complainant contact me with the problems that were discovered and any supporting photos or documents. I never received any information regarding the incident. I am aware that in the past there were problems brought up about the cleanliness and protocols at Animal Services. The ASAC even formed a subcommittee to look into this problems. After two monthly visits by the chairman of the subcommittee, she resigned her post since she felt continued inspections were not needed. She also reported improved conditions at Animal Services.

Animal Services is required to have a yearly inspection by a state veterinarian. As far as I know Animal Services has passed each year. I do not know the grade which it received but I would assume the city would have been informed if they were not in compliance with state mandated codes.

The volume of pets that are brought into Animal Services each year is enormous. Even with the best protocols in place there will be an occasion where a pet is found in unsanitary conditions. If this is brought to the attention of the staff then a prompt removal of the pet to a clean cage or to have the cage cleaned is warranted. If there is a lack of urgency of the staff or if the supervisor does not seem concerned then there maybe an issue with the training or selection of employees. I would like to know the times and dates of each problem discovered. It would also be beneficial to know if an employee was informed of the problem and the response that was observed. Also the name of the supervisor on duty at the time and what was the supervisor informed of the problem. There could be a common theme as to the personnel present when these problems occur.

I would also like to know what were the positive experiences that occurred when at Animal Services. If all the complainant is looking for is bad things then they could be overlooking the positive aspects of Animal Services and its personnel.

What exactly is the complainant trying to achieve by bringing the matter before City Council? Does the complainant want people to lose their jobs over this? Does the complainant want Animal Services to change its protocol? Does the complainant want a new city veterinarian? It is easy to find the short comings of any large organization. When you also bring in the care of helpless animals it becomes emotional as well.

If there truly is a disregard for the well being of the animals by the employees at Animal Services then the those employees need to be retrained, reassigned or terminated. Judging how all animals at Animal Services are treated and the competence of the staff by finding some dirty cages is not fair. I wish the complainant would have contacted me before this so I could speak to specific problems they might have.

Sincerely,

Roger Freund, DVM
Chairman, ASAC