

PUBLIC SAFETY

MOTION

TO CITY CLERK FOR PLACEMENT ON NEXT REGULAR COUNCIL AGENDA TO BE POSTED #65

In February 2008, Council passed an ordinance requiring all pet owners, with certain exceptions, to sterilize their dog or cat by the age of four months. The ordinance is designed to further the City's efforts to achieve a "No Kill" goal as it seeks to reduce the number of unwanted pets in animal shelters. The ordinance officially took effect in April and penalties can be imposed beginning on October 1, 2008.

Despite the six-month grace period, there are concerns that the Department of Animal Services has not conducted sufficient outreach on the new measure. The Department has personnel focused on canvassing and licensing, but they have struggled due to staffing shortages. This has also limited the City's ability to collect dog license fees required under Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 53.15. In addition, as evidenced in a recent Controller audit, the Department may not be conducting sufficient outreach to pet shops and breeders regarding LAMC Section 53.27 to ensure that the Department is notified of all dog sales.

As the Department copes with a staffing shortage, consideration should be given to resources that exist outside the City. The Department currently works with veterinarians and animal groups, but it is unclear if whether this outreach is sufficient. Other partnerships should be explored, such as working with LA Unified School District on programs to increase canvassing and community education efforts.

The Department of Animal Services should continue to publicize existing City laws, especially as the mandatory spay/neuter ordinance takes effect. At this time, it is necessary to identify the Department's available staffing for canvassing and outreach, the staffing level necessary to be more effective in these areas, and how to achieve any staffing increase. Serious consideration should also be given to utilizing resources outside the Department to better educate City residents on current laws.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Department of Animal Services be instructed to report to the Audits and Governmental Efficiency Committee with a detailed plan to increase community outreach and education regarding the mandatory spay and neuter ordinance, in response to the Controller's audit.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of Animal Services, with the assistance of the City Administrative Officer, be instructed to report with: (1) the current staffing allocated to canvassing and licensing activities; (2) the staffing level necessary to achieve increased more effective outreach regarding the new spay/neuter ordinance; and (3) methods to utilize available resources outside the Department to improve canvassing and outreach, including a partnership with the school district and maximizing support from volunteers and community organizations.

PRESENTED BY:

JOSE HUIZAR
Councilmember, 14th District

SEP 10 2008

SECONDED BY:

JD

07-1212-53