

MOTION

PERSONNEL
PUBLIC SAFETY
APR 03 2007

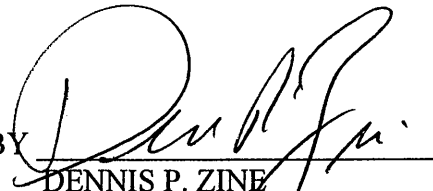
The Department of Animal Services (DAS) is currently experiencing a severe shortage of veterinarians. Currently, 10 out of 12 veterinarian positions, including that of Chief Veterinarian, are vacant. These vacancies have resulted in only two veterinarians absorbing the responsibilities to oversee the City's six shelters which handle approximately 46,000 animals per year. Consequently, the two veterinarians have been forced to work overtime to ensure that the City's animal shelter needs are met. As a result, the veterinarians have become exhausted and less efficient.

DAS reports that it has had difficulty hiring new veterinarians to fill the shortage. To begin with, there is a nationwide veterinarian shortage in both private practices and municipal shelters. In addition, working conditions in animal shelters may repel potential applicants due to the demanding and unpleasant work environment. Veterinarians may also be reluctant to work for the City since they often face heavy criticism for their role in euthanizing animals.

The shortage of veterinarians has raised concerns about the Department's ability to provide adequate services in City shelters. It is urgent that the City implement the necessary steps to increase veterinarian hiring and retention. Immediate action is needed to ensure that the quality of animal care does not continue to suffer.

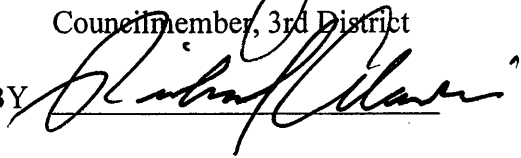
I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the Department of Animal Services and the Personnel Department to report to the Personnel Committee on: 1) the status of veterinarian vacancies in the City's animal shelters; and, 2) efforts taken by the Department to rectify the problem.

PRESENTED BY


DENNIS P. ZINE

Councilmember, 3rd District

SECONDED BY



APR 03 2007

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