

12-0216

PERSONNEL & ANIMAL WELFARE

MOTION

Increasing adoptions – finding loving homes for the companion animals inside our City Shelters – must be Job Number One for the Department of Animals Services. While the Department has made great strides in recent years, it is critical that the Department continue to explore new and creative programs to increase successful adoptions.

Recently, certain shelters around the country have begun to develop comprehensive matching systems that analyze behavioral data about the pet and potential adopter with the goal of finding the best match. An example of one successful system has potential adopters answer a survey of 19 questions to evaluate such things as personality, playfulness, energy, and drive. Staff videos and spends time with the animals studying their individual traits. The process does not evaluate good or bad; rather, the process allows the shelter to learn more about the animal with the goal of aiding the adoption process. As just one example, some pets have a better temperament to be better left much of the day while their adopter works or goes to school. A successful match program could assist in ensuring that the right pet goes with the right adopter.

The Richmond Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals reports that the use of a comprehensive match program helped it to increase adoptions by nearly 20 percent in just a few years. In 2008, when they launched the program, they found homes for 2,891 dogs and cats. Last year, 3,452 pets were placed. In addition, returns dropped from 13 percent to 10 percent.

While a comprehensive match program is not the only solution to increasing successful adoptions in Los Angeles, it could be one more tool to assist the DAS. While the City is facing continuing budget challenges, it is possible that Los Angeles could evaluate such a tool through some kind of pilot program through the use of volunteers at limited shelter locations.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the Department of Animal Services to report back to the Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee in 30 days on the feasibility of establishing a comprehensive matching system to assist in increasing successful adoptions.

Presented by: Paul Koretz  
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