

PERSONNEL AND ANIMAL WELFARE COMMITTEE REPORT relative to pre-categorizing or pre-pairing shelter animals with prospective adopters and counseling prospective pet adopters on responsible pet ownership.

Recommendation for Council action, pursuant to Motion (Ryu - Wesson):

1. INSTRUCT the Department of Animal Services (DAS) to review best practices in pre-categorizing or pre-pairing shelter animals with prospective adopters, counseling prospective pet adopters on responsible pet ownership and the feasibility of implementing such programs and standards in the City's animal shelters.
2. INSTRUCT the DAS to submit recommendations to City Council in regard to the provision of these services using in-house staff or by partnering with volunteers and other external agencies.

Fiscal Impact Statement: Neither the City Administrative Officer nor the Chief Legislative Analyst has completed a financial analysis of this report.

Community Impact Statement: None submitted.

Summary:

On March 16, 2016, your Committee a Motion (Ryu - Wesson) relative to pre-categorizing or pre-pairing shelter animals with prospective adopters and counseling prospective pet adopters on responsible pet ownership. According to the Motion, one of the metrics used to measure the success of the DAS is the number of pets adopted from City shelters. While maximizing the number of adoptions is an important indicator, the quality of those adoptions and rates of recurrent surrenders is also a key determinant of the DAS' success. Ensuring prospective adopters are aware of the services and resources available, as well as the responsibilities associated with pet ownership is a critical facet of this success.

However, limited DAS resources make it difficult to provide the in-depth counseling that private agencies provide their clients. The value of such counseling extends well beyond the adopter/adoptee relationship, but to homeowners and renters insurance requirements for pet owners, tenant rights, service animal requirements and animal welfare issues, amongst others. To improve the success of adoptions from the City's animal shelters, and reduce the rate at which animals are surrendered and re-surrendered, the DAS should explore opportunities to provide counseling services to its adopters and submit to the City Council recommendations for the implementation of such services.

After further consideration and having provided an opportunity for public comment, the Committee moved to recommend approval of the Motion as detailed in the above recommendation. This matter is now submitted to Council for its consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,



