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January 27, 2017

Honorable Paul Koretz, Chair
Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee
Los Angeles City Council
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

CF# 16-0600-S4

RE: HIRING PROCESS FOR ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS (ACOs)

The Department of Animal Services has been working on recruiting and hiring Animal Control Officers for well over a year. The City allocated a total of 24 new Animal Control Officer positions over two budget cycles. These positions are necessary for adequate field deployment and appropriate response times to critical calls for service.

The exam for Animal Control officer opened in July 2015. It was opened as a continuous exam meaning the exam would be given multiple times until a sufficient number of eligibles were on the list. The first test date was in August of 2015. At that time 51 applicants were invited to take the exam. Only 38 of them showed up. Of those only 23 moved on past the physical abilities test. The Personnel Department had another test administration scheduled for October of that year where another 55 applicants were invited. It became clear to Animal Services that the examination schedule was insufficient for our needs and a meeting was arranged with the Examining Division of the Personnel Department. During the meeting we explained our concerns and the Examining Division managers were open to assist. In response they scheduled a number of additional test dates inviting well over 330 candidates. At the end of the testing cycle over 100 candidates had passed all elements of the written and physical exams and were eligible for interview.

After certifying the list, interviewing candidates and making selections, those selected moved on to the Backgrounds portion of the process which is where the real challenge was met. In short, the Personnel Department did not have an active contract for field investigations. As such, they were limited to available City staff to complete the field investigations. Likewise, once the field investigation was completed, it was determined that many of the candidates did not meet the threshold for maturity, integrity, or judgment required for this position. Unfortunately as those candidates were non-selected, they remained on the eligibility list preventing the Department from moving past them and hiring candidates with lower scores. Overall the Department was

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only able to hire 8 Animal Control Officers from this effort. Four of them have completed training and have been deployed at animal shelters. Two of them terminated employment and two remain in the training program.

Animal Services is working in cooperation with the Personnel Department to make necessary changes to the process. Those changes must be discussed with the affected labor organization but we believe that these changes will make for a more seamless and efficient hiring process to the benefit of both the City as well as the candidates. Until those changes are made, however, we are continuing to work with the process as it currently exists.

The current Department Personnel Ordinance (FY17) authorizes 54 ACO I's and 29 ACO II's for a total of 83 ACO's. Of those 26 are vacant. To address those vacancies, there is an active certification for 25 vacancies. We are processing all candidates with a score of 92 and above. 24 conditional job offers have been made. These candidates are scheduled for medical and psychological exams that are scheduled January 30- February 2, 2017. In addition, there are 18-22 candidates that are still in some phase of the background process. If cleared they will be scheduled for medical and psychological exams.

We are ready to receive the candidates who successfully complete the medical/psychological exams. The next class estimated start date is March 6, 2017. The chart below reflects the desired time line for processing the current group of Animal Control Officer candidates as well as the next round.

STEP		CURRENT	NEXT ROUND
1	"What-If" generated and info sent to BIU		01/18/17
	PHF sent to eligible candidates	08/22/16	01/20/17
2	Initial Background Interview (IBI)	09/09/16	02/10/17
3	Department Review of IBI recommendations		02/13/17
4	Certification created	11/10/16	03/10/17
	Certification expires	01/08/17	05/08/17
5	Department Interviews start	12/19/16	03/20/17
	Department Interviews end	12/23/16	03/24/17
6	Conditional Job Offers signed by	01/08/17	03/31/17
7	Complete Background Field Investigations (45-60 days)	02/21/17	05/29/17
8	Medical & Psych	02/21/17	05/29/17
9	Appointments by	03/06/17	07/06/17

Any additional questions or concerns can be directed to Assistant General Manager Dana Brown at 213-482-9558.

Respectfully Submitted,



Brenda F. Barnette
General Manager