

## PERSONNEL & ANIMAL WELFARE

### MOTION

On an annual basis, the Department of Animal Services manages the wellbeing of thousands of animals housed in one of the City's six modern animal shelters. The modern habitat for dogs and cats in these facilities was creatively designed to provide adequate indoor and outdoor space to meet the needs of each species, while protecting them from the elements and other animals. Rehabilitative spaces are also provided for sick animals. Throughout the year, the department holds numerous events throughout the City where dogs and cats are offered up for adoption. Dogs and cats available for adoption are also advertised on the department's website to help find them forever homes.

Recent visits to local shelters, however, highlighted the fact that other animals besides dogs and cats appear to receive less specialized care and attention. Many of these animals are housed in areas of City shelters that may not been designed specifically for their species, but are the only available spaces within those facilities. Last fiscal year, nearly 700 rabbits were housed at various animal shelters, most of which do not have specific "rabbit rooms" that are designed to meet the special needs of rabbits. Similarly, special habitats are not always available for numerous turtles, snakes, and other reptiles that are either rescued or confiscated by Animal Control Officers, or abandoned by their owners. Many of these non-feline and non-canine animals require temperature controlled environments and other needs.

In addition, it is unclear what efforts are made to advertise the availability for adoption of many of these animals. One advocate for rabbits describes them as the "third-class citizens of the animal shelter" since they receive less extensive care and attention than dogs and cats.

The Department of Animal Services does an excellent job of working with the resources and facilities budgeted for department operations to meet the housing needs of animals in its shelters. The Department also makes a concerted effort to find homes for these animals. However, to ensure the health and safety of all animals in the City's shelters, the Department should report to the City Council with a discussion of the specialized facilities and services that are provided for rabbits, reptiles, and other animals besides cats and dogs. This report should include any requests from the department to improve housing for these animals, shelter signage and resources needed to improve the adoption process and prospects for these animals.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council request the Department of Animal Services to report to the Personnel & Animal Welfare Committee within 30 days with details on the specialized facilities and services provided to animals, besides cats and dogs, housed in the City's animal shelters, as well as a discussion of the department's efforts to advertise and promote the availability of these animals for adoption both internally and externally.

PRESENTED BY:



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SECONDED BY:



DEC - 9 2016



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