

Communication from Public

Name: Michelle Cornelius

Date Submitted: 10/21/2022 03:20 PM

Council File No: 22-1176

Comments for Public Posting: Centralizing the volunteer application process and giving third parties oversight over disciplinary procedures is an improvement over the current system. The current LAAS volunteer application asks a series of inappropriate questions like asking applicants to describe the elements of an ideal workplace and why does animal euthanasia present a dilemma between public safety and animal welfare? The application also tells people that bags of pet food or litter can weigh 50 lbs and dogs can weigh over a 100 pounds and then asks if they can work 6 hours per month for at least 6 months. Not all volunteer positions are that physically demanding and obviously the department needs to accommodate people's physical limitations - this question makes it seem like if they aren't young and healthy they can't volunteer. That's ridiculous. And why would applicants need to list character references? They also have to agree to a set of rules prior to even submitting their application without agreeing to "I will not speak to the media without direct authorization from the public relations specialist and I understand that media inquiries are to be directed to the Animal Care Technician Supervisor, volunteer liaison, or appointed coordinator or lead at a mobile site." The City has already been sent a cease and desist letter about using language like this as it requires volunteers to give up their First Amendment rights to speak on their own behalf about issues of public concern. Volunteers also have agree to the following: "I understand that any of my communications verbal or written will be cause for disqualification, rejection, and/or removal from the volunteer program at any stage of the application/onboarding process and any date thereafter." This is outrageous and also probably violates their First Amendment rights. There should be clear guidelines for disciplinary procedures which are known to all volunteers and the appeals process should NOT be handled internally by DAS.