

To: Mayor Adler and Austin City Council, Judge Eckhardt and County Commissioners

Cc: Interim City Manager Hart and Asst. City Managers Lumbreras & Hensley

From: Austin Animal Advisory Commission Chair

Re: Letter of Commendation for Austin Animal Center Management & Staff

Dear Mayor Adler, Judge Eckhardt, Council Members and Commissioners:

By every objective measure, 2016 was the best year ever for lost and homeless animals in the City of Austin. We write to commend Austin Animal Center, its staff, and its leadership team including Chief Animal Services Officer Tawny Hammond and Deputies Kristen Auerbach and Lee Ann Shenefiel.

2016 was a record year for Austin Animal Center. The Center's live-outcome rate was 95% for cats and 98% for dogs, making the total live-outcome rate for the year 96.4%—the highest ever. The Center adopted out 7,886 pets in 2016, which is also the highest ever and roughly 500 more than in 2015.

Other 2016 accomplishments include:

- Coordinating with Austin Animal Center rescue partners, who took in 4,715 cats, dogs and other animals from the Center.
- Returning 2,760 impounded animals to their owners.
- Working with 795 volunteers who contributed 53,797 hours of service (the equivalent of 26 full-time staff positions).
- Cultivating 900 pet-foster families who housed 2,500 pets, 65% of which were adopted out directly from foster families. Pet-foster families contributed 81,830 hours of service (the equivalent of 39 full-time staff positions).

In addition, Animal Services staff responded to calls from the public needing animal-related assistance; provided veterinary care and spay/neuter services; conducted free rabies-vaccine and microchipping clinics; coordinated pet-related emergency response and management during weather events; and provided daily care and enrichment to the roughly 17,000 total animals impounded.

The Austin Animal Center leadership and staff have done a truly extraordinary job. They have continued to improve Austin's already nationally acclaimed Animal Services, saving more and more animals and inspiring a nation of animal lovers to save more pets in their own communities. Please join us in thanking them for their outstanding work, leadership and life-saving efforts.

Sincerely,

AAC Chair