




MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Council

Thru: Stephanie Hayden-Howard, LMSW, Assistant City Manager

From: Don Bland, Chief Animal Services Officer 

Date: October 5, 2022

Subject: Staff Response Austin Animal Services (FY22-23 CM Tovo Budget Rider #10)

During the FY22-23 Budget adoption readings, Council Member Tovo submitted a budget rider that requested the following action by October 1, 2022:

- The City Manager was directed to add the following information to the online dashboard:
 - Location for the rescue groups taking animals from the Animal Center
 - Breakdown of the size and type of animals transported from the Animal Center, by rescue group
- The City Manager was directed to provide information online and at the Animal Center clearly detailing the most current procedures for applying to adopt an animal, including one in the “stray hold” period. Likewise, the Animal Center shall post information that makes it clear which animals individuals may interact with, and what the procedures are.
- The City Manager was further directed to return to the Animal Advisory Commission by October 1 with a recommendation for procedure changes that would better balance opportunities for local individuals to adopt small breed and other highly adoptable dogs.
- The City Manager was further directed to explore options for having interested adopters sign in to provide information about animal preferences upon entering and then using that information to create an automated text marketing campaign as animals meeting those preferences become available.
- The City Council desired that the manager includes funding for these programs in the city of Austin's base budget.

The Animal Services Office's (ASO) technology needs are provided by the Austin Public Health Department (APH). APH staff has updated the dashboard to include the location of the partnering rescue and a filter that will arrange animals that have been transferred by size.

The adoption process procedures at Austin Animal Center (AAC) can be found online at this [link](#). This information is also posted at the lobby of the AAC and all our Customer Service Representatives who process adoptions are versed in explaining the process to visitors of the center. The Website also includes a disclaimer notice for animals that are adopted while still on their stray hold period; this information can be found at this [link](#). These disclaimers are posted at AAC and shared with customers who express an interest in an animal that is still on stray hold.

ASO recently made changes to the transport program, specifically, the ages of animals who are eligible for transport has changed. ASO will not transport puppies younger than 12 weeks old or dogs older than eight years of age unless it is in the best interest of the individual animal. This information was shared with the Animal Advisory Commission via memo and at their last regular Commission meeting. Furthermore, an animal impounded at AAC must be within AAC custody for at least seven days before it can go to any rescue partner, either in-state or out-of-state, if there is available kennel space.

Currently services are offered through platforms that already host ASO data. For instance, 24petconnect is a national adoptable and lost & found database that allows a user to sign up and create preferences on animals of which the user wishes to be notified. ASO has added a link to this service on the ASO Adoption Webpage so customers can create a profile and be notified when the type of animal they are looking for is newly posted. If that animal is at AAC, the individual would then utilize ASO's adoption process to adopt the animal. ASO prefers utilizing this existing platform until additional research and cost information for the City implementing its own system can be attained.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 512-978-0565.

Cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager