

Approaching No-Kill:
Challenges and Solutions for the Los
Angeles Animal Services Department

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper is an examination of the Los Angeles Animal Services (LAAS) Department. It looks at the historical, political and philosophical context of the Department. It examines the validity of grievances made by local animal welfare groups against the Department and analyzes the LAAS Department structure and policies. Using a comparative case-study, it identifies the San Francisco animal care facilities as effective models for LAAS. Through an exploration of such themes, this report makes pragmatic policy recommendations for the Department with the goal of lowering shelter euthanasia rates.

INTRODUCTION

When asked about why activists have targeted LAAS in recent years, cofounder of Animal Defense League – Los Angeles (ADL-LA) Jerry Vlasik argued that the group wanted to focus on one municipal shelter whose reformed policies could translate “throughout the nation”. He believes that if the city goes “no-kill” it will serve as a model for all cities. Vlasik contends that LAAS is not worse than other municipalities. While LAAS shelters and policies are “bad” they are also representative of the vast majority of government-run animal shelters in the country. LAAS is one of the many shelters stuck in the 1950’s paradigm of a “catch and kill” philosophy. Because of this, most city and county shelters use policy favoring the control component of “animal care and control”. LAAS is among the many shelters that has not kept pace with the progressive animal welfare and rights movements in the U.S. As result of outdated policy, city and county shelters such as LAS still resemble the pound depicted in “Lady and the Tramp”, a veritable doggie jail and death row.

These shelters rely on the killing of companion animals in order to make room for more. This practice, called “space-saving” euthanasia, is commonly used by animal shelters for population control. Space-saving euthanasia, however, does not address the root of a nation-wide companion animal overpopulation. Pam Ferdin of ADL-LA compares the practice to “cleaning up a tidal wave with a paper towel”. The practice has resulted in nearly 10 million healthy dogs, cats, kittens and puppies killed each year.ⁱ

In Los Angeles, LAAS carries the burden of dealing with over 60,000 unwanted pets every year. Of these, about half are “euthanized” by poison within the city shelters. The cause of this, of course, is companion pet overpopulation in the city. While the

County of Los Angeles Animal Care and Control is not the focus of this paper, it should be noted that 18,000 animals were killed in its 6 shelters in FY2004/2006.

During a talk to UCLA law students, Vlasik explained that the ADL-LA chose LAAS as a target for a no-kill because it was a) local and b) it was winnable. He pointed to Los Angeles as a progressive city and insisted that such a thing had been done in smaller cities such as Atlanta, Philadelphia and San Francisco.

Today, euthanasia is the number one killer of cats and dogs in America. Costs to human society include the \$1 billion spent annually to deal with unwanted pets in animal care and control facilities, and \$500 million spent to pay animal control in U.S. cities and countries.ⁱⁱ Professionals in the animal care community have begun to treat pet overpopulation as a consequence of human error. A shelter-euthanasia cycle exists within shelters such as LAAS where animal care and control employees face huge volumes of unwanted animals. Shelters are forced to euthanize a large numbers of these animals to make room for the continuing wave.

Policies and funds are devoted to the euthanasia and care of large number of animals and rather than to spay/neutering programs, public outreach/education and other programs that target the root of pet overpopulation. When unaltered animals are free to breed, they yield exponentially growing animal populations. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) estimates that 1 female dog and her offspring can produce 67,000 dogs in 6 years. A female cat and her offspring can yield up to 420,000 cats in 7 years. The uncontrolled population turns up on the streets because there simply are not enough homes for them. There they are forced to fend for themselves and often end up in a shelter where they have the amount of days as mandated by the

particular state, city or county law before they will be killed as a result of “space-saving euthanasia”.

A look at the current politics of LA sheds light on the players and interests involved in LAAS. A case-study of the San Francisco animal care facilities provides a real-life example of how aggressive spay/neuter policies and community outreach can dramatically decrease the sheer numbers of unwanted animals in a city. The paper analyzes the causes of the euthanasia numbers in LAAS by examining LAAS policy. By examining official LAAS Department documents, it identifies a plethora of reasons including limited resources in funding, staff and volunteers.

The final recommendations suggest structural changes within LAAS. It does not refer to city and county ordinances that should be passed, although there are many. The paper concludes that LAAS must be updated from a philosophy of animal control to animal care. This shift requires a change in policy with an emphasis on spay/neutering programs and outreach. It also necessitates the rigorous self-assessment within the Department.

Making LA “no-kill” will not be a quick process. San Francisco has benefited from over two decades of spay/neutering programs. Experts in the field estimate that aggressively spaying/neutering takes about 30 years to have full success. This paper suggests, however, the initial steps in the transition. It emphasizes integrity on the part of LAAS and the cooperation of the greater Los Angeles animal welfare community. It does not suggest that LAAS employs any mean-spirited and cruel individuals but that the situation will not improve without reforming the Department. This paper concludes that

various alternatives to space-saving euthanasia can be implemented in LAAS's six shelters.

CHAPTER I

The Players and Politics Behind the LAAS Controversy

THE NUMBERS

In FY2001-02, LAAS euthanized more than 39,000 animals. In FY2004-05, the Department reports that this number had decreased to 24,932.ⁱⁱⁱ This year, LAAS estimates that 55,000 animals will go through its six shelters. It expects that, of these, it will euthanize 26,000.^{iv} Former LAAS General Manager Guerdon Stuckey said 34,002 cats and dogs were killed in the city-shelters in 2003.^v While this forecasted 46% euthanasia rate is lower than in previous years, it is far-cry from the “No-kill” status former Mayor James Hahn had pledged to reach by 2008. The high euthanasia rates in LAAS has cause the Department to be under heat from local animal welfare and rights advocates since the advent of the “no-kill” movement in the late 1990’s.

THE LOS ANGELES ANIMAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Los Angeles Animal Services (LAAS) Department runs six shelters throughout Los Angeles. It is subject to California State laws as well as LA County and City laws on sheltering. The department is overseen by its General Manager who answers to the civilian run Board of Animal Services Commission. Ultimately, the Mayor oversees the Department, its GM and its Board of Commissioners. LAAS presently has an \$18.1 million budget.^{vi} In a recent interview, Stuckey revealed that the department was understaffed by 50-60 people due to high turn-over and difficulty in hiring.^{vii} He alluded to a low morale in the department due to protests against LAAS employees in recent years.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN ANIMAL COMMUNITY AND SHELTER

LAAS's high euthanasia rates has tapped the wrath of animal rights groups such as the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and the Animal Defense League Los Angeles (ADL-LA). These groups have utilized militant protest tactics in recent years to draw attention to the large numbers of animals dying in the city's shelters. Protestors have also picketed outside LAAS staff members' homes. ADL-LA was blamed for September gas-bombing the former GM Stuckey's home in 2005. City Council found the situation serious enough to pass a motion allowing for increased security and surveillance in front of animal control workers' homes. The protests have attracted the attention of the Los Angeles media. The Los Angeles Times, The Daily News, LA Weekly and various local newspapers and news channels devoted regular coverage to the conflict during the height of protesting in 2005.

Following Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's June 2005 election, protests escalated as members of the animal welfare community's demanded the removal of GM Stuckey. During a campaign speech, Villaraigosa was recorded promising that Stuckey, appointed by Mayor Hahn, would not be GM to the Department under his leadership. After Villaraigosa was elected, groups such as ADL-LA accused Villaraigosa of going back on his word. Protestors criticized Stuckey's lack of experience in animal care prior to coming to LAAS, contending that Stuckey's leadership would not successfully lead to lower kill numbers. While the GM had 25 years of experience in city department and non-profit management, he had never worked in animal care or control. They also accused Stuckey of not holding shelter employees accountable and ignoring shelter law violations in his shelters.^{viii} With the smoke-bombing Stuckey joined the list of LAAS

city workers and administrators targeted by animal rights groups. The high-turnover of LAAS alluded to by Stuckey has also affected management. The Department has had four General Managers in four years. Stuckey replaced Jerry Greenwalt, who retired after activists painted “murderer” on his car. Greenwalt’s predecessor left LAAS following a series of stress-related seizures.^{ix}

In the summer of 2004, police had taken nine reports related to animal activists at the home of employees in five months, including five in July alone.^xIn June of that year, a LA judge granted a temporary restraining order issued by the city to stop protesters from “assaulting, stalking or following” David Diliberto, a high ranking official of LAAS, during working hours. The judge also prohibited the ADL-LA from coming within 100 feet of Dilberto or posting his address or phone number on the internet. Dilberto, had endured a bomb threat by protestors affiliated to ADL-LA and ALF. In July, his family was awoken at 3 am by protestors dressed as mortuary workers trying to pick up a body from his home. In January of this year, the California Appellate Court effectively overturned the restraining order against the activists by issuing an anti-slap order against summer 2004 ruling.^{xi}

In October 2005, LA City Council unanimously approved a motion by Councilmember Tom LaBonge to provide surveillance equipment at the homes of the Animal Services Department employees^{xii} who have reported being stalked and vandalized by activists. The ADL-LA called off a protest in front Mayor Villaraigosa’s Mount Washington home when he agreed to meet with them on October 21st. Not having received the answer they’d wanted, that Stuckey would be fired, the group held the protest the following morning.

In November, claiming that GM Stuckey citing no significant change in LAAS euthanasia or adoptions numbers^{xiii}, Mayor Villaraigosa announced the firing of Guerdon Stuckey. Despite criticism, Stuckey had had overall support from City Council and the LAAS union, SEIU 347.^{xiv} Following the firing, a letter signed by 149 members of LAAS staff insisted that Stuckey had brought down the euthanasia rate by 16% during his year as GM. They accused the Mayor of caving into “terrorists”.^{xv} The subsequent media coverage of the protests has resulted in a scramble by the Mayor’s office to appease the conflicting parties and juggle the needs of the various players.

After Stuckey’s firing, LA City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo filed 14 misdemeanor conspiracy charges against ADL-LA. Delgadillo argued that the group had violated a state law that bars people from threatening or attempting to threaten public officers or employees^{xvi}. The ADL-LA responded with a \$3 million lawsuit against the city. The Mayor insisted that the timing of the firing and the city's legal action were unrelated. Delgadillo filed the charges one day after Stuckey’s removal.

Following his firing, Stuckey pursued a severance package matching 11-months of his \$154,000 yearly salary.^{xvii} When the Mayor refused this demand, Stuckey’s lawyer’s filed an appeal against the city challenging his dismissal. Two months after the removal, the Mayor’s office announced that Stuckey would stay on the city pay-roll as an advisor to the newest LAAS General Manager Ed Boks. The position included a \$50,000 salary under a 12-week consulting contract in exchange for dropping the termination appeal. At the end of this period, Stuckey will present a report to the city on spaying and neutering strategies used in other cities. His work includes analyzing methods used by other municipalities to lower shelter euthanasia rates.^{xviii} Many believe while the \$50,000

fee is intended to lower euthanasia rates at LAAS shelters, it actually serves to appease Stuckey. Councilman Jack Weiss said in an interview, "This was a \$50,000 going-away memo. The people elected a new mayor last year and he is entitled to bring in his own general managers. That's what the mayor did. I see this as a waste of \$50,000."^{xix}

ED BOKS: NEW GM TO LAAS

Ed Boks is the fourth General Manager to LAAS in four years. He has argued in media interviews that LA can go "no-kill" within 5 years. Unlike Guerdon Stuckey, Boks has had experience in the field of animal services. He spent five years as director of Maricopa County Animal Care and Control (1998-2003) in Arizona and two years at New York City Animal Care and Control (2004-2006).^{xx} He worked in a Veterinarian's office during high school and college.^{xxi} He has pointed to the San Francisco municipal animal care agency as a "model shelter". Also unlike Stuckey, Boks is a pet owner. The former pastor said that while in Catholic school he idolized St. Francis of Assisi, the Patron Saint of animals.^{xxii}

Boks has said that the euthanasia rate at New York's animal agency dropped by 30% and the adoption rate shot up by 127% under his leadership. These statistics are roughly supported by the New York City Animal Care & Control website.^{xxiii} An LA Times article described Boks' time leading New York Animal Care and Control as a mixture of "frustration and success".^{xxiv} He left New York after two years when his contract was not renewed.^{xxv} Boks argues that leading LAAS is easier than the NY department as a result of sympathetic city government. While he never met with Mayor Bloomberg during his time in NY, Boks enjoys an "open-door" policy with Mayor

Villiaragosa.^{xxvi} The NY department was headed by the city's health commissioner and included the commissioner of parks as well as a police commissioner. Of the NY agency he said, "When you have a board whose primary interest is not animal welfare but lowering the budget and meeting other goals, you have all these competing priorities. Animal welfare will always fall to the bottom of the list."^{xxvii}

Prior to New York, Boks headed the Maricopa County Animal Care and Control in Phoenix, where he is said to have had a similar success rate. Maricopa County is the largest adoption center in the U.S. There he developed *Friends of Animal Care and Control*, a Phoenix non-profit, to raise money for animal welfare programs at the shelter.^{xxviii} A similar agency in San Francisco raises funds for its animal control agency.

Despite an impressive resume in animal care, some members of the animal welfare community have expressed concerns that the new GM's euthanasia numbers in New York and Maricopa are not something to brag about. In Maricopa during the last year Boks was director (2003), roughly 57,000 animals were impounded and 27,000 were euthanized. During Boks's last year in NYCACC, 41,623 were impounded and 20,849 were euthanized.^{xxix} Critics have also contended that billionaire L.A. surgeon-inventor Dr. Gary Michelson spearheaded the Boks appointment by introducing Boks to Villaraigosa while simultaneously promising to commit \$10 million of his substantial wealth to spay/neuter services.^{xxx}

PROTESTING ADVOCACY GROUPS

ALF (Animal Liberation Front) and ADL-LA (Animal Defense League – Los Angeles), along with many local aboveground animal welfare groups, had been

campaigning against Stuckey's appointment since 2003, when it became apparent that Stuckey was a strong choice for LAAS general manager by then-Mayor James Hahn.^{xxxix} ADL-LA insists that LAAS is a mismanaged bureaucracy insufficient to deal with LA's animal overpopulation problem. The group blames the shelters' high kill rates on LAAS's ineffectiveness as a department.

ADL-LA has conducted a two-year "Stop the Killing" campaign against the city and LAAS entitled. Founder of ADL-LA describes the group as a grass-roots, all-volunteer, above-ground organization.^{xxxix} Above-ground indicates that the group does not use any illegal protest tactics. ALF, on the other hand, is an under-ground organization made up of "clandestine" individuals. ALF has admitted to threatening and harassing LAAS employees, claiming responsibility for a bomb scare that forced the evacuation of a David Dilberto's street Larchmont Village in July and for the September smoke-bombing of Stuckey's Bunker Hill apartment building.^{xxxix}

According to the FBI, ALF and the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) alone are responsible for more than 600 criminal acts in the United States since 1996, causing damages in excess of \$43 million dollars.^{xxxix} While their actions have not yet taken human life, federal and state lawmakers are proposing legislation to give more muscle to law enforcement efforts against those committing violent acts in the name of animal rights or the environment. ALF is listed as one of the U.S. Department of Justice's domestic terror organizations.

Ferdin argues that her organization does not use illegal tactics, but that they do support illegal actions made by groups such as ALF.^{xxxix} Ferdin contends that the city has taken legal action against her because, "they want to stop us from exposing the

atrocities.^{xxxvi} Ferdin has been arrested several times in connection with various animal-rights demonstrations she insists were legally sound.^{xxxvii} In December of 2005, the group faced up to \$120,000 in fines after Los Angeles City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo filed 14 misdemeanor charges against them. Delgadillo accused the league of “trespassing, vandalism, violating noise ordinances, intimidating the child of a public employee and using threats” against David Dilberto. “What they're doing is criminal,” City Attorney Delgadillo said of the ADL-LA.^{xxxviii}

City officials say that the dramatic decrease in shelter euthanasia should discourage protests. According to Animal Services statistics, FY2004-05, the city euthanized 24,932 dogs, down from 39,086 in 2001-02. Animal activists dispute those numbers, arguing that LAAS is purposefully misleading the public.^{xxxix} From his new blog on the LAAS website, GM Boks contends that he’s made several efforts to communicate with ADL-LA. He said, “I truly believed the ADL had the best interests of the animals at heart. I believed they could set aside their focus on the past and negativity to work with the larger humane community to make the present and future better for all of LA’s animals.”^{xl}

In December 2005, ADL-LA sent packages to the homes of seven City Council members. The packages contained a computer disk labeled "Recent Undercover Footage Inside LA Animal Services," with a video the group says was taken this year of dogs being killed at shelters. The letter to one City Council member began: "Animal Defense League Los Angeles is hoping that you will take 4 minutes out of your day to watch the undercover footage from the six city animal Death Camps we are enclosing with this letter. We want you to see with your own eyes what goes on behind those cinderblock

walls of your six city animal 'shelters.'^{xli} Councilwoman Jan Perry said she felt personally threatened when she received the DVD at home because it indicated the ADL-LA knew where she lived.^{xlii} Ferdin said the group sent the packages to Council Members' homes to ensure they would receive them.^{xliii}

Vlasik concedes that the direct-action taken by ADL-LA against LAAS employees has "blurred the line" between legal and illegal.^{xliiv} Ferdin were acquitted in 2005 of charges brought against her by City Attorney Delgadillo for protesting within 100 feet of then Mayor James Hahn's San Pedro home. In January, a judge dismissed the charges against Ferdin and ADLA-LA cofounder Jerry Vlasak for trespassing on Diliberto's property and protesting within 100 feet of his home. The group is now anticipating the 14-misdemeanor conspiracy charges. While Ferdin admits that a significant portion of the groups finances go to legal bill associations with suits made by the city, she argues that the legal fight was "brought the protest into the courtroom."^{xlv}

While Ferdin insists that "everything we do is legal", ADL-LA concedes that ALF's illegal actions have supplemented the above-ground group's cause. Ferdin admits that the direct-action taken by the group is on the "militant side".^{xlvi} While the ADL-LA claims not to know the identity of ALF members, both groups are part of the recently formed Nort American Animal Liberation Press Office. The office received communiqués from anonymous sources to publicize actions made by animal-rights groups. It also opens up lines of communications between animal rights groups.

SEIU LOCAL 347

SEIU Local 347, LAAS employees' union, represents almost 12,000 public employees in Southern California. It is a part of the SEIU Local 347 that belongs to 1.5 million member Service Employees International Union (SEIU).^{xlvii} Julie Butcher represents workers at LAAS and stood next to City Attorney Delgadillo when he announced the conspiracy charges against ADL-LA. She said that, "even peaceful protest crosses the line when it's in front of people's homes."^{xlviii} Animal activists hold the union responsible for the high numbers of animals being killed by inhibited the number of volunteers able to work at LAAS shelters.^{xlix} They also contend that the union has made it more difficult for LAAS employees to be fired for animal neglect or mistreatment within the shelters.

SEIU Local 347 points to decreased euthanasia numbers in its defense. The union argues that, "This dramatic decrease represents long hard years of thankless work and should be celebrated, not protested."^l In addition to employees of LAAS, Local 347 represents all city workers, including District Attorney Delgallido and his staff.

CHAPTER II

Methods

I decided to make policy recommendations to the Los Angeles Animal Services (LAAS) Department after reading media coverage of the conflict between activists and the city. Between October 2005 and January 2006, the conflict yielded newspaper articles in publications such as the Los Angeles Times and the Daily News about twice a month. From these a “snowball effect” occurred as I secured a list of relevant players in the conflict. Media coverage also provided the contemporary political context for the Department. This information proved especially useful in understanding the interests of the involved parties.

However, media coverage did not expand on the issue of animal sheltering beyond the scope of Los Angeles beginning in the mid-1990’s. Furthermore, newspaper articles provided contrasting news and statistics around the Department such as its euthanasia rates. Newspaper provided accounts of the raucous protests surrounding the controversy and little more.

In the literature review, I wanted to provide a less politicized explanation of the issue. I sought historical and academic writings on animal sheltering. I tried to establish a context for the LAAS Department’s existence. Mostly, I wanted to prove why companion-pet overpopulation is an important and legitimate issue. This argument is based on the validity behind animal rights, something I wanted to demonstrate in the literature review. For me, the issue’s importance is obvious due of my life-long experiences with companion-pets that were once living in shelters or on the street. I believe that these animals are sentient and deserving of high quality of lives. I think in anthropomorphic terms (these terms are explained in the “Philosophy of Animal Liberation” chapter”) concerning my pets and have developed what I consider to be

personal relationships with them. My experiences with companion-pets have convinced me of their exceptionally high intelligence and sensitivity. Therefore, when animal activists claim that euthanizing 26,000 companion-pets a year is murder, I do in fact agree.

Qualifying this opinion isn't difficult for me but quantifying it, in an academic sense, proved trickier than I had thought. I imagine that to many people my point of view seems over-the-top. If most people had the type of affinity for dogs that I do, shelters like LAAS would not have to deal with the sheer volume of relinquished, stray and impounded pets that they do. So while I felt emotionally and even intellectually passionate about companion-pets, it was very challenging to justify this perspective to readers.

I began trying to build a nation-wide context for the issue by obtaining estimates about the companion-animal problem. Like numbers concerning LAAS, figures estimating the number of stray animals in the U.S. also varied. The numbers of animals annually euthanized in shelters did as well. "What portion of these animals are adopted or euthanized, why they are relinquished, and their sources of acquisition" remain largely unanswered questions.^{li} Consensus about the source of the pet overpopulation, or animal surplus, has also not yet been reached. What I did find provided me with enough information, however, to present an argument as to why animal surplus should be corrected.

I tapped into staple animal rights texts to provide the philosophical importance of animal welfare. I used the well-known books of philosophers Peter Singer and Tom Regan. Both of these texts advocated the rights of animals, in general, but did not speak

specifically to companion pets. I was able to find several dog behavior and evolution studies to explain why the interests of dogs are of particular importance.

Through websites pertaining to the issue of animal welfare and shelters, I located various essays and studies looking at the companion-pet surplus as well and possible solutions. These websites belonged welfare groups, professional associations and academic departments such as the Tufts Center for Animals, the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), the National Animal Control Association, HSUS and the Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science. While these sites provided me with plenty of intriguing essay titles, only a few contained links. Additionally, the databases available at Occidental didn't have access to most of the journals containing the articles I hoped to use.

Throughout the writing process, professionals in the animal sheltering industry provided some insights. I began my exploration of the industry by attending an Animal Care Conference held in Pasadena. Here I caught a glimpse of the challenges facing animal care and control employees. I had been alerted to the conference by the public relations representative at the largely-privately funded Pasadena Humane Society as well as by the Captain from the city of Burbank's municipal shelters. While Burbank is publicly funded, its shelters resembled the Pasadena Humane Societies by being pleasant to visit. Both individuals were very willing to discuss the realities of companion-pet overpopulation and their perspectives on Los Angeles in particular.

My first visit to an LAAS shelter provided me with increased incentive to make recommendations. Walking through the city's East Valley shelter was a vastly different experience than my visits to Burbank and Pasadena. I left East Valley feeling destroyed

by what I had seen. It dawned on me that while I could leave the shelter the dogs scrambling for my attention remained. Once I recovered from what I'd seen, the equivalent to a children's death-row, the experience had strengthened my resolve.

I used San Francisco as a comparison case-study largely due to convenience. Those shelters had significant advantages to those of Los Angeles because of their extensive history and reputation in the city. The San Francisco SPCA was privately funded and in a partnership with the city municipal shelter, the San Francisco Animal Care and Control department. The city's comparatively low animal population also distinguishes these shelters from LAAS shelters. These low numbers, however, turned out to be a result of the SF/SPCA and SF/ACC policies. My experience in San Francisco provided a great look at what is possible in animal sheltering. It became clear to me that these shelters represent the ideal animal shelters. I realized in San Francisco that effective sheltering policies are as much about vision as they are about resources. What San Francisco lacks in budget, it makes up for in volunteer support. My meetings with representatives from each facility told the story of the city's longstanding spay/neutering practices. I determined that the relatively low amount of animals coming into the SF/SPCA and SF/ACC was a result of aggressive spay/neutering programs beginning in the 1970's.

Delving into the bureaucracy of LAAS and the politics of Los Angeles that surrounds the department proved particularly fascinating as well as baffling. It was difficult to secure hard numbers on the issue. I utilized a 2000 study conducted on the shelter's physical infrastructure. This provided concrete recommendations on the shelters in terms of structural condition but commented on little else besides shelter crowding.

The LAAS Department Manual, close to 120 pages, provided little insight into the conditions at the shelter. For that I could only depend on my own experiences, what the shelters look and smell like and what kind of shape its animals are in. The only other evaluations of LAAS resided in the critiques of animal welfare and rights activists in the form of qualitative disapproval.

I depended on each component of my research, experiential and academic, to make recommendations for the Department. My recommendations could be viewed as idealistic, designed for a world where municipalities have endless amounts of money rather than deficits to fund their visions. I wrote my recommendations with the best-case scenario in mind as a starting point. They encompass a particular sheltering philosophy that I believe must be used to reform LAAS.

CHAPTER III

Animal Shelters and the Companion-Pet Surplus

THE ORIGIN OF COMPANION ANIMALS (PETS)

In 2002, scientists at Sweden's Royal Institute of Technology presented strong evidence that dogs were first domesticated from the grey wolf in Eastern Asia about 15,000 years ago, preceding the domestication of pigs, sheeps and goats as the first domesticated animal.^{lii} They are still a subspecies of wolves and thus capable of interbreeding. Its estimated that humans' relationships with cats began about 10,000 years ago when they began being used for rodent control.^{liii} Dog and cat domestication has resulted in the unique inter-species living situations that exist today, owning and caring for a pet. Additionally, artificial selection has yielded over 800 recognized breeds of dog and about 80 breeds of cat. They vary in size, temperament and selection purpose but still remain of the same species.

Extensive domestication has resulted in genetics and behaviors distinguishing companion animals, or pets, from other undomesticated animals. Selective breeding has cultivated animals to live with humans and serve human purposes. Dogs and cats have accumulated genetic changes spanning generations. Domesticated species have the common characteristic that they are tolerant of humans and often dependent on them. Their "fight or flight" adrenal response in the presence of humans is muted.^{liv} They are genetically prone to human attention, loyalty, and affection and are therefore set apart from other animals.^{lv}

Joshua Frank, of the Foundation for Interdisciplinary Research and Education Promoting Animal Welfare (FIREPAW), argues that because dogs have been bred for thousands of years to serve our needs, they have ceased to be wild and are in fact

dependent. As a result, humans have a specific responsibility to dogs as being the “creators a species dependent on humans”.^{lvi}

COMPANION ANIMAL OVERPOPULATION

Today, pet ownership is at its highest point in history. Cats and dogs are found in 60% of U.S. households.^{lvii} Americans have half a billion pets, including fish, birds, and rodents. Dogs can receive root canals and radiation treatment. Boston’s Angell Memorial Animal Hospital has a blood bank for cats and dogs. The growing pet-products industry attests to America’s increasing affinity for pet ownership and care. The pet food industry is currently a \$7 billion dollar industry.^{lviii} Pets are property and tradable “goods” and therefore are a part of the human economy.^{lix} All of this indicates that Americans hold increasingly amorous views about their animals.

The overpopulation of companion animals became a concern during the reemergence of the animal protection movement in the 1950’s. While animal welfare groups such as SPCA’s and humane societies had persisted up until this point, the stability and economic growth of the ‘50’s spurred the movement’s growth during the decade. Various welfare groups formed during this decade in response to research animals as well as shelter conditions and animal overpopulation.

Today, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) estimates that 8 to 10 million companion animals are relinquished to shelters each year. Of these, 4 to 5 million are euthanized.^{lx} These numbers contrast from figures provided by other literature sources in the field, ranging from 5 million to 20 million. Regardless of contrasting numbers, euthanasia serves as the number-one killer for pets in America. The former

General Manager to LAAS, Guerdon Stuckey, described the practice of companion pet euthanasia used for population-control as a byproduct of human societal ills. Joshua Frank described America's companion-pet overpopulation as a result of, "human creation with significant human costs that can only be address through human action."^{lxi}

Many writers concede that a lack of comprehensive information and data pervade the subject of animal overpopulation. Joshua Frank explains that while millions of dollars each year are spent trying to lessen the problem, little analysis exists to "direct these efforts down the most fruitful path."^{lxii} Those who do study the subject list possible "treatments" to dog euthanasia rates that include low-cost spay/neutering programs, public relations programs to encourage spaying/neutering, PR programs to encourage adoption from shelters rather than pet shops or breeders, PR regarding responsible ownership and increased shelter space.

The various methods of animal surplus prevention divide expert opinion, especially regarding the importance of sterilization. Besides preventing the growth of the companion animal population, sterilization prevents various behavioral problems associated with unfixed animals. Uncontrolled breeding has been cited as the largest factor behind the country's animal surplus. PETA estimates that an unfixed cat, having a year litter of average size, can yield up to 420,000 cats in seven years if each of her descendents breeds.^{lxiii} Over time, Joshua Frank found spay/neutering to be the most effective method of addressing overpopulation.^{lxiv}

REASONS FOR COMPANION ANIMAL RELINQUISHMENT

Owner-relinquishment, or surrendering of a dog to a shelter, constitutes 44% of animals entering shelters.^{lxv} While specific figures have not been determined, a significant portion of strays also appear to have been recently owned. These relinquished animals add to the sheer volume of companion animals being dealt with in shelters in addition to impounds, those dogs and cats brought in by shelter animal control. Behavioral problems are the most common reasons cited by relinquishers, causing 40% of dog relinquishment and 28% of cat relinquishments.^{lxvi}

Often times, addressing this principal factor in surrendering of dog is not within a shelter's capacity or part of its services. A study of 12 U.S. animal shelters revealed that the three top reasons an owner surrendered an animal to the shelter was behavior related.^{lxvii} Common behavioral complaints include unruly behavior towards people, house soiling and reactions to attachment separation.^{lxviii}

Shelter Acquired Behavior

The essay about shelter dogs, *Dogs in Animal Shelters: Problems Suggestions, and Needed Expertise*, provides evidence that the dog's experience in the shelters may actually increase the likelihood for the behaviors associated with non-adoptability and relinquishment. During their time in shelters, dogs face a variety of psychological stresses including isolation from attachment figures, disruption of routine, exposure to intense and unpredictable noise and inability to control environmental factors.^{lxix} If the dog does not have behavioral problems upon their entrance, features inherent to the shelter experience may actually contribute to the development of ill-behavior. Clinical studies have also

revealed that dogs often react to adoption with abnormal behavior such as constant shadowing of their new owners and destructive behavior during owner-separation.^{lxx} The non-profit, Give-A-Dog-A-Bone, located in the San Francisco Animal Care and Control facility, lists the following demeanors as prevalent among “custody” dogs within the shelter:

- **No attention span:** *Some dogs are highly aroused with no attention span. These dogs know no boundaries, jump up, nip, spin in their kennel, have glazed eyes, and pant. They are constantly frantic, bark non-stop and are mouthy.*
- **Undersocialization:** *These dogs have lived in confinement (a garage, a backyard, a bathroom, a junkyard, etc.). They are unsure or fearful in new surroundings and react with uncertainty, fear, or (fear) aggression to sounds, smells and locations. Usually these dogs come around, gain confidence, and become socialized.*
- **Fearfulness:** *Fearful dogs have been physically abused and do not trust humans. These dogs will not approach a human. They flinch and cower at hand movements, body movements, etc. Many of these dogs become socialized after re-establishing trust in humans; gaining confidence as we work with them.*
- **Depression:** *These dogs are shut down. They will not stand up, eat, or move out of their beds or corners. They have no interest in treats or toys. With enough time, these dogs usually respond and gain enough confidence to rejoin the world.*
- **Aggression towards dogs:** *Upon seeing other dogs, or reaching a certain physical proximity to other dogs, some dogs quickly become aroused. They exhibit barking, lunging, growling, and hard stares. They will kennel fight with neighbors and try to break out of their kennel to fight with other dogs. These dogs may go out to our shelter park with safety precautions.*
- **Aggression towards people:** *Some dogs snarl, bark, and lunge at people. These dogs cannot be vaccinated because they cannot be handled. They must be tranquilized to be treated medically. Often these dogs are deemed vicious and dangerous and are confined to their kennels; humans cannot enter the kennels. Our interaction with these dogs is very similar to how zookeepers work with large predators like bears and lions that cannot be touched: behavioral enrichment, clicker training, food rewards to teach targeting, etc. These dogs are confined to their kennels with no human touch contact allowed.^{lxxi}*

If instances of ill-behavior are not corrected, they will be passed onto next owner and the likelihood for relinquishment rises. Thus the cycle of owner-relinquishment and adoption will persist.

In many shelters, limited budget allows animals no more than minimum care, such as feeding and kennel cleaning, from employees. But socialization with human being can prevent shelter acquired behavioral habits as well as familiarize staff with possibly undesirable behaviors.^{lxxii} Volunteers at SF/ACC’s Give-A-Dog-A-Bone

program socialize dogs through affection, physical activity in the shelter's exercise program, socialization with other dogs and people in uniform, and obedience training.^{lxxiii} Volunteers even work dogs classified as too dangerous to touch through the barrier using backscratchers for touching.

Misconceptions about Pet Ownership

General misconceptions about animals serve as another reason for owner-relinquishment. A study examining factors contributing to owner-relinquishment of animals in 12 shelters found that 12% of surrenderers believed there to be no difference between cat and dog breeds. It also found that nearly 60% of cat owners believed their animal's misbehavior was out of spite. A fourth of owners answered that they believed animals were better off producing a litter before being spayed.^{lxxiv} This indicates that adoption programs should include an assessment and education component to assess the adopter's level of knowledge and expectations for his or her pet. Doing so could determine the likelihood of a possible relinquisher.

STANDARDS FOR EUTHANASIA

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) first published guidelines for animal euthanasia in 1963. Criteria for the evaluation of euthanasia techniques include physical pain and psychological distress. Other criteria include the emotional affect on humans present; the availability of appropriate drugs; and the compatibility with subsequent use of the animal's body and tissues.^{lxxv}

Euthanasia methods are much more humane than they were in the past. After Women's Pennsylvania SPCA stopped clubbing in Philadelphia, various methods were used including gas and electrocution. In the past, decompression and carbon monoxide chambers were hailed as humane alternatives to gunshots, drowning and strychnine. In the decompression chambers, animals die from lack of oxygen. They may also suffer acute panic, discomfort and even pain. For this reason many states have outlawed the use of decompression chambers.^{lxxvi} Carbon monoxide chambers have decreased in use.

The least painful method used for euthanasia is the injection of sodium pentobarbital. The animal experiences drowsiness and is then "put to sleep". This type of intravenous injection is preferred for calm, friendly animals. Frightened animals however, may need additional tranquilizers or alternative euthanasia methods such as carbon dioxide inhalation. Large numbers of animals being euthanized, such in a city-wide shelter, often requires the use of decompression of carbon monoxide chambers.

The AVMA panel divides methods of euthanasia into three categories: those that directly destroy the conscious centers of the brain, those that interrupt the supply of blood or oxygen to the brain, those that anesthetize the brain.^{lxxvii} The drug succinylcholine paralyzes animals' muscles before the collapse of the respiratory muscles cause death. It is considered stressful and painful and condemned by the AVMA panel.

TODAY'S SHELTERS

The terms "humane society" and "SPCA" does not require an affiliation and can be used by any organization. Therefore, organizations with these names vary dramatically in range and quality of services. Two organizations, HSUS and the American Humane

Association (AHA) offer guidelines for shelters. Local agencies and private organizations, however, are under no obligation to follow these recommendations.^{lxxviii}

While recommendations can be made for proper shelter policy and practices, animal shelters are only accountable to state, city and county laws.

HSUS suggests that responsible shelters invest energy into three areas: (1) preventing cruelty and/or suffering; (2) enforcing animal-protection laws; (3) and instilling humane principles in society. The latter can be achieved through community outreach and educational campaigns. Human education is particularly effective among youth. Guidelines for shelters include accepting very animal brought in; maintaining a clean, comfortable, safe, and healthy environment; holding strays for at least five days; screening adopters; using sodium pentobarbital, administered by well-trained individuals, for euthanasia; and ensuring that all adopted animals are sterilized.^{lxxix}

Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)

HSUS was founded in 1954 to promote humane treatment of animals and foster compassion for all animals. HSUS has grown into the largest animal-protection organization with over 200 full-time staff and a constituency of 3.5 million people. It is funded by membership dues, contributions, and gifts. HSUS is one of the best funded animal welfare organizations in the country.

From 1974-1984, it worked to upgrade the standards of animal shelters as well as zoos and launched a major campaign exposing the cruelty of puppy-mills. Since 1984, HSUS has conducted the “Be a P.A.L. – Prevent a Litter” campaign to promote the importance of spaying and neutering. It has a diversity of interests with special sections

that coordinate efforts in areas of animal research, companion animals, farm animals, state and federal legislation. There are nine regional offices and is supported by an umbrella of organizations underneath.^{lxxx}

THE “NO-KILL” MOVEMENT

The “no-kill” movement emerged in the 1990’s in response to the country’s number of companion animals being euthanized as a result of persisting overpopulation. The movement is committed to “eliminating the practice of euthanizing healthy and treatable animals altogether.”^{lxxxix} The proper usage and definition of the term “no-kill” has raised considerable debate in the animal sheltering community. Guerdon Stuckey questioned the nature of being a no-kill shelter claiming that they get to “cherry-pick their animals”, refusing those that may be less desirable than others.^{lxxxii} Like LAAS, the San Francisco Animal Care and Control is an *open-admission* or *open-door* shelter. This means that the municipal shelters, as dictated by state law, must accept each and every animal brought to the shelter. Much of their euthanasia takes place in order to make room for every additional animal brought into the shelter.

PETA advocates open-admission shelters over no-kill, limited-admission shelters. PETA argues that the only way to save companion animals from euthanasia is through implement spay/neutering programs.^{lxxxiii} No-kill shelters that refuse non-desirable or adoptable companion animals give the dirty work to open-door shelters. They argue that shelters which are “no-kill” use the term deceptively and waste funding on sheltering animals for longer periods of time. They estimate that no-kill shelters spent \$9 million in 2004 to house 1,500 animals. With the same amount, the article argues, these shelters

could have spayed/neutered 6 to 8 million dogs and cats. They estimate such an investment would prevent the births of 67,000 dogs in six years and 420,000 cats in 7 years.^{lxxxiv}

On a national level, though, the term “no-kill” is used as battle-cry euphemism rather than a literal description. It indicates that a shelter’s priority is to reduce the number of animals killed on its premises. In his essay, “Care or Control?”, Ed Boks refers to the San Francisco Department of Animal Care and Control (SF/ACC) as a good no-kill model. However, neither the SF/ACC nor the privately funded San Francisco SPCA (SF/SPCA), are actually no-kill. In fact, they seek to raise their adoption rate to just 75%, not 100% in 2006. This rate, or percentage of animals adopted out of the shelter, only refers those animals deemed “adoptable”. That is, animals deemed adoptable because of health or disposition during healthy and behavioral analysis by shelter staff. Those animals not considered non-adoptable might be dangerous and will ultimately be euthanized. Carl Friedman, director of SF/ACC, devoted the facility to going no-kill in 1994. He worries that the “no-kill” label has been misused in advertising, setting no-kill shelters against open-door shelters and painting those shelters that do euthanize as “bad guys”. Ultimately, such a distinction, he argues, “the very facilities that most desperately need public support and resources....are instead scorned.”^{lxxxv}

Nathan Winograd, founder of the consulting firm No-Kill Solutions, explained that the term “no kill” rouses public interest and support. This PR consideration is probably why Mayor Hahn declared that LA would go “no-kill” in 2008 rather than “low-kill”.

THE LOS ANGELES ANIMAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Los Angeles's former Mayor James Hahn, proclaimed during his term (1997-2001) that the six shelters under the Los Angeles Animal Services (LAAS) Department would be no-kill by 2008. The high euthanasia rates of the shelters, as well as their relatively poor conditions, have been a source of protest for the animal rights community for decades. In 1997, private citizens brought a lawsuit against the LAAS Department ordering it to comply with the legal standards of animal care. Affidavits described conditions within the department's six shelters as grave enough to deviate from law. Following the lawsuit, then California State Senator Tom Hayden proposed SB 17851, or the Hayden Bill. While it applied to all state shelters, the law, ten pages in its entirety, responded to conditions specifically in LAAS shelters.^{lxxxvi}

In 2000, the city of Los Angeles hired consultants to investigate conditions at LAAS shelters in order to determine flaws and solutions to the city's high euthanasia rates and rampant crowding. The Summary Report of the *Master Facilities Study of Animal Care Facilities* also included several other shelters to determine the practices and policies contributing to lower euthanasia and higher adoption rates. The report was designed to determine "what is possible" and presented three alternatives to department status quo including the ideal. In the study's assessment, it suggested that three of the six city shelters needed to be replaced. It also estimated that LAAS shelters had less than one-third of the kennels provided in the best Not-for-Profit shelters and half as many as the average Southern California Agencies. This led to an average of 3-4 dogs per kennel. It also determined the current shelters as understaffed having only half the number of

veterinarians and animal care technicians required to adequately serve the animal populations compared with Not-For-Profit-Agencies.

The study looked at particularly successful programs within the model shelters. These included free spay/neutering services, bilingual education programs, and wellness clinics. Due to the high numbers of owner-relinquished pets, the study also recommended adoption counseling at the point of placement to increase animal retention. To diminish crowding further, the report recommended that LAAS shelters be extended from 6 to 11, including the three needing to be replaced, by 2005. A doubling of the number of Animal Control Officers was also recommended.

Upon visiting any of the six LAAS shelters, it becomes obvious that the recommendations made in this study have not been implemented. Crowding persists with an average of 3 dogs per kennel. The staff remains short by about 50-60 staff members. The number of shelters has not increased at all. Former GM Stuckey estimated that in 2004-2005, 57,000 animals were impounded. Of these, 24,932 animals were euthanized. The Los Angeles Animal Services (LAAS) Department estimates that it will shelter 55,000 animals this year. It foresees that 26,000 of these will have to be euthanized.^{lxxxvii} While this forecasted 46% euthanasia rate is lower than in previous years, it is far-cry from the “no-kill” status Mayor Hahn had pledged to meet by 2008.

CHAPTER IV

The Animal Welfare and Liberation Philosophy

THE ANIMAL LIBERATION/WELFARE MOVEMENT

Animal rights activists use the term “companion animals” when they refer to their pets. This implies a relationship based more on friendship than dominion.^{lxxxviii} They believe that their animals, like children, are vulnerable and unable to demand their own rights and thus must be protected. The English word “pet” dates only back to the 15th century. By 1700, there’s record of upper-class people in the Western world were naming their pets.^{lxxxix} But before the 19th century, very few people wrote about the issue of animal protection or welfare.

The animal welfare movement emerged in the late 1800’s during the industrialization of the Western world. As people began moving to cities, they began increasingly experiencing animals as pets rather than a source of labor, revenue or sustenance. Science also began to blur the lines between humans and animals with the advent of Darwin’s theory of evolution. Difference between animals and people became, “of degree, not kind”.^{xc}

THE HISTORY OF HUMANE SOCIETIES

The Industrial Revolution spawned dense city neighborhoods susceptible to unhygienic conditions and crowding. Stray dogs and cats added to the problems characteristic to late 19th century urban neighborhoods. They were considered both a nuisance and a danger and regularly killed by inhumane methods. In New York City, dog catchers as well as normal citizens received 50 cents per dog they killed.^{xcii} The methods of killing dogs were largely unregulated, ranging from shootings, trapping, poisoning, etc. Dogs were even chained and clubbed to death. In 1860’s New York, dog catchers

conducted daily drowning of caged dogs on the East River while onlookers watched. The heir to a wealthy shipbuilding family, Henry Bergh, was in Saint Petersburg when the mistreatment of a work horse ignited his interest in animal protection.

On his way back to the US, Bergh stopped in London to examine the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). The organization began in 1824 seeking to pass animal welfare legislation in England. Like the U.S., vivisection, the surgical experimentation on a living animals, was a hot 19th century topic in England.^{xcii}

Using his social connections and wealth, Bergh returned to open New York City's American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) in 1866. It was the first animal-protection organization in the country and had the power to enforce animal welfare laws the following year. In the years following the ASPCA's incorporation, wealthy individuals opened humane societies in Philadelphia, San Francisco, Chicago and Boston. By the end of the 19th century, 700 humane organizations had been started throughout the country. Wealthy elites founded most of these organizations.

The Pennsylvania SPCA chartered the Women's Pennsylvania SPCA in 1870 and opened the country's first animal shelter. Preceding Philadelphia's "City Pound and Dog Shelter", pounds were used only in the name of public safety and not for animal welfare. The word "shelter" had never been used in connection with animals.^{xciii} Two years later, the Women's Pennsylvania would extend their sheltering to cats.

Humane societies saw two groups, children and lower classes, as needing education.^{xciv} A publication on the the Massachusetts SPCA described its SPCA's mission to:

...restore lost animals to their owners, find good homes for other which are valuable, and to mercifully kill by carbonic acid gas and chloroform such as are worthless.

Nonprofit shelters proliferated as municipal animal control services' primary goal was to catch and dispose of strays. A rift began between these types of agencies in their services, operations, and missions.^{xcv} Today's shelters fall under three categories: (1) municipal animal control agencies, run by governmental entities in cities and towns; (2) private, nonprofit agencies governed by a board of directors; and (3) private, nonprofit agencies with a governmental contract to provide animal care and control services. In his essay, "Care or Control?", Ed Boks explains that two schools of thought within the industry of animal sheltering and emerged. He distinguishes these "distinct methodologies" as animal/humane care and animal control.^{xcvi} Boks argues that an "animosity" has developed between the two types of establishments.

The animal welfare movement expanded in the U.S. during the 1950's, the decade in which the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and other organizations began. Many of these groups focused on the issues of pets such as overpopulation, shelter issues and cruelty.^{xcvii} Organizations such as HSUS also sought to create a connection between municipal and county animal shelters and private humane societies and shelters. Philosopher Peter Singer's 1975 book, *Animal Liberation*, laid the philosophical framework for the movement during its reignition in the 1970's. The movement retained its emphasis on animal "sentience" but added the language of "rights" to underscore the movement.^{xcviii} In this way, the contemporary movement largely took after the feminism and civil rights movements that preceded it. In Singer's *Animal Liberation*, he coins the

phrase “specieism” as a prejudice similar in nature to racism. Activists were inspired by Singer’s “unsentimental, rational, and defensible” basis for animal rights.^{xcix} Since the advent of the modern movement, various forms of animal welfare schools of thought have emerged.

Authors of the book *Animal Rights Crusade* categorize animal welfare organizations into three groups: welfarist, pragmatist, and fundamentalist. Examples of welfarist groups include the ASPCA and HSUS. These organizations’ formations preceded the modern movement and remains one of the wealthiest and largest animal protection groups. Welfarist groups accept most animal use but seek to minimize suffering, and remain the most powerful animal welfare groups in the country. Fundamentalists thinkers, those who tolerate no animal treatment whatsoever, emerged as fringe groups in the 1970’s, with the inspiration of Singer’s book. These groups include the Animal Liberation Front (ALF), the group currently involved in the protests of the Los Angeles Animals Services (LAAS) Department. Such groups, “want nothing short of a moral revolution” concerning animals.^c

THE ANIMAL LIBERATION PHILOSOPHY

Singer’s *Animal Liberation*, described as the “Bible” of the new movement, added the new language of right to the animal welfare movement. It also insisted that animals were sentient or capable of both pleasure and pain. The book was rooted in progressive movements that preceded it such as feminism, the civil rights movement, and environmentalism. Like the feminists and civil rights advocates preceding Singer’s book, his philosophy emphasized the basic principle of equality, arguing that it does not require

equal or identical treatment, but requires equal consideration. He applies the issues of rights to animals and accuses the human race of practicing “specieism in their treatment of animals. The rationale behind equal consideration is, quoting philosopher Jeremy Bentham, “is...not, Can they *reason*? Nor can they *talk*? But, can they *suffer*?” (7) Echoing the arguments behind the civil rights of the 1960’s, Singer defined moral “rights” as the protection that people and animals ought to morally have.

The philosophical application of sentience to animals fueled the modern movement. Science had also begun to blur the lines between humans and other animals. Increasing animal behavior and intelligence experiments justified activists’ positions that animals were not as different as previously believed. Under the Carter administration, human rights became a commonly discussed issue in America. Animal activists were able to use the language of such rights and apply it to animals.^{ci} Singer articulated the moral sentiments of the movement in an explicit ideology by rationalizing the advocates’ tendency towards “sentimental anthropomorphism”. Nelkin and Jasper define anthropomorphism as, “the portrayal of animals as partners to humans in intimate emotional relationships not to be simply used as tools”. Singer rooted his vision for the treatment of animal rights in utilitarianism. Jeremy Bentham, founder of utilitarianism in the 18th century, directly applied the philosophy to animals.

In the 1980’s, the issue of animal rights reached high media visibility with protests by groups such as the People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and the Animal Liberation Front (ALF). In 1983, Tom Regan addressed and rejected arguments against animal welfare in his book, *A Case for Animal Rights*. He articulated the perspective of animal protection fundamentalists, developing a more absolutist position

than utilitarianism.^{cii} In his book, Regan presents similarities between mammals and humans, further justifying anthropomorphism. Like Singer, Regan rejects instrumentalism. This alternative attitude contests that animals are resources to be exploited. It argues that not only are animals not sentient and thus not deserving of rights, they are in fact inanimate machines, incapable of feeling pain. Rene Decartes first verbalized animals as unfeeling machines in the 17th century. Regan claimed that Cartesian arguments for the instrumentalism were faulty and actually instances of “human chauvinism”, failure or refusal to recognize admirable and important qualities in others.^{ciii} He also alludes that the instrumentalist take on animals furthers the goals of those exploiting them by removing any guilt. He quotes a philosopher who argued that Cartesian theory was as, “cruel to animals as they are indulgent to mankind...since it absolves them of the suspicion of crime when they eat or kill them.”^{civ}

The proliferation of animal welfare literature contributed to the growing movement of the 1980’s and 1990’s. Additionally, scientific research gave credibility to anthropomorphic beliefs about animals. The study of animal-human relationships persists as a growing field of scientific investigation. Such studies result in the further humanization of animals. The increasing research on animal communication and intelligence has also given the movement validity.^{cv} Despite all these factors contributing to the rise of the animal welfare concerns, the movement continues to be based on moral arguments. Its strongest motivation lies in the realm of compassion and ethics. While complemented by logic, rationality and science, the animal rights campaign remains, a “moral crusade.”^{cvi}

RELEVANCE TO COMPANION-PET EUTHANASIA

Contemporary British philosopher Mary Midgley took a step away from the interest-based arguments of Singer and Regan and resurrected the basic notion of compassion. She argued that the avoidance of suffering was key to the movement. While a stray dog “put to sleep” in the pound may not have suffered from physical abuse during his time there, he has experienced suffering for lack of care.^{cvi} Scientific research of the dog’s psychology and intellect would also suggest that he suffered from the lack of human companionship, affection, intellectual stimulus and the general pleasures in life that both dogs, cats and many other mammals might enjoy. Most importantly, the dog has suffered from loss of life.

Regan pushes the fundamentalist view that animals “have a full, conscious life to lead, so that humans cannot morally justify cutting that life short, even painlessly.”^{cvi} In *A Case for Animal Rights*, Regan states three prerequisites for the proper use of euthanasia. One of these necessitates that the animal is killed in what its killer believes is its best-interest.^{cix} Having too little space or not enough loving homes does not present a strong enough case that the dog is better off dead. Without meeting this prerequisite of the animal’s best-interest, Regan argues, the animal’s death does not constitute as euthanasia. It is simply killing. Singer argues that the question of whether or not it is right to kill an animal is not the correct question. He explains that, “As long as we remember that we should give the same respect to the lives of animals as we give to the lives of those humans at a similar mental level.”^{cx}

CHAPTER V

What is possible: The San Francisco SPCA And Animal Care and Control Facilities

THE SF/ACC AND SF/SCPCA ADOPTION AGREEMENT

San Francisco has fundamentally reversed the pattern that prevails in many communities, where healthy, adoptable shelter dogs and cats are routinely killed to make room for incoming animals.

From the SF/ACC and SF/SPCA 2002/2003 annual report

In 1994, the privately funded San Francisco Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SF/SPCA) and the city municipal agency, the San Francisco Animal Care and Control (SF/ACC) Department, joined forces to make San Francisco a “no-kill” city. The two entities signed an agreement, the “Adoption Pact”, formalizing the relationship between the open-door SF/ACC and the limited-intake, non-profit SF/SPCA. The Pact guaranteed a home for every *adoptable* dog and cat entering the San Francisco shelter system.

The agreement defined three classifications of animals entering the shelters: *adoptable*, *treatable* and *non-rehabilitatable*. The Agreement prohibits either shelter from euthanizing animals deemed *adoptable*. The category includes any cats or dog older than 8 weeks of age that have no behavioral defect posing a “health or safety risk” to people. Adoptable animals have no sign of illness or injury that would adversely affect these animals in the future. The pact guarantees that *treatable* cats and dogs would receive treatment from the SF/SPCA and/or the SF/ACC to order to become adoptable. The pact defines *treatable* animals as animals that could become adoptable with “reasonable” efforts. Finally, the *non-rehabilitatable* category includes those animals for whom euthanasia is the most “humane alternative” due to sickness or injury as well as animals who pose as a health hazard.

Additionally, the Adoption Pact directs both the SF/ACC and SF/SPCA publishes complete and accurate information regarding their euthanasia rates and that these rates should not be published “out of context” and exclude any numbers.^{cxii} Carl Freidman, Director of the SF/ACC clarifies in his article, “The ‘Kill Versus No Kill’ Animal Shelter Controversy”, that the term ‘no-kill’ in San Francisco does not mean that no animals are euthanized in the city. He attests that in the year of the article’s publication, more than 3,000 animals were euthanized in the city. Neither the SF/SPCA or the SF/ACC are literal no-kill shelters because both euthanize companion animals. However, the Agreement effectively began the no-kill movement throughout the country and serves as a model for other city shelters in pursuit of going no-kill.

Following the agreement, the two shelters developed series of programs and practices directed at eliminating the euthanasia of adoptable animals. The facilities have expanded their adoption programs in order to place all adoptable animals. Various programs have been developed to rehabilitating animals classified as *treatable* into the adoptable category. Rehabilitation and behavior modification practices combined with increased services in the SF/SPCA’s animal hospital have lowered the overall number of non-rehabilitative animals that face euthanasia in the two facilities.

THE SAN FRANCISCO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS (THE SF/SPCA)

The SF/SPCA is one the country’s oldest and most renowned animal welfare organizations. Started in 1868, it is a privately funded nonprofit fully supported by donations, grants, bequests and fees for service revenue from hospital treatments, training

sessions, and adoptions fees. In the fiscal year of 2004-2005, the organization staff included 150 paid employees and 885 volunteers with about ten thousand members supporting it through private donations. The SF/SPCA shelters only dogs and cats and takes in a limited number of animals from the public, SF/ACC and other shelters and rescue groups in Northern California. Last year, the shelter took in animals from the SF/ACC (2,182 cats, 95 dogs), out-of-county shelters (575 cats, 613 dogs) and from the public (122 cats, 26 dogs). It adopted out a total of 3,298 of these animals (2539 cats, 759 dogs). In combination with the SF/ACC, a total of 4,538 animals were adopted out last year.^{cxii}

The SF/SPCA seeks to educate members of the San Francisco community in the humane treatment of animals in addition to saving homeless cats and dogs. It fulfills its goal of eliminating the euthanasia of adoptable pets through various programs including a hearing dog program; a feral cat assistance program; human education and outreach; an animal assisted therapy program and dog training classes. The SF/SPCA's vigorous adoption program is designed to prevent the relinquishment of its shelter animals and create permanent homes for all adopted pets. Before adoption, animals receive a complete health screening in which they are microchipped for subsequent identification. New arrivals are held out of the public's view generally between 24 and 48 hours. These animals undergo an initial behavior assessment by behavior specialists. Temperament testing determines whether the animal is adoptable, treatable or non-rehabilitatable. A staff separate socializes new arrivals and those up for adoption.

Maddie's Pet Adoption Center

Maddie's Pet Adoption Center, the SF/SPCA's newest facility, opened in 1998. It functions specifically to raise adoption rates. The spacious center contains 67 "kitty lofts" and 18 "doggy apartments". In total, the facility has a capacity for approximately 200 animals. At any give time, however, The SPCA, cares for approximately 500 animals at any given time. Homeless companion animals also reside temporarily within the Community Veterinary Services department, the SPCA Foster Care program and Hearing Dog Program.^{cxiii} The adoption center facility cost \$7 million to build and covers 27,000 square feet.

The adoption facility was designed to be user-friendly and welcoming to visitors and possible adopters. It is open from 11 am to 6 pm, seven days a week. Several companion dogs sit behind the desks with employees during the center hours. While these the dogs belong to staff members, and are not up for adoption, they serve as encouraging examples of great companion pets.

The dog and cat spaces in Maddie's Center resemble a room of a house, allowing possible adopters to see the animals in a home-like environment. The setting also increased the likelihood of a smooth transition when the animals are adopted into homes. The dog quarters generally house one to three animals (depending on their size and temperament) and contain objects that would be found in a home such as chairs and rugs as well as toys. Each dog sleeps in a dog carrying crate that could be easily moved into the adopter's home. In the cat enclosures, each cat is housed alone unless they have been socialized with another cat prior to entering the center. In such cases, the cats are housed together and adopted out together. The cat spaces each contain litter boxes, food and

water bowls, and multi-level “climbing trees”. Like the dog enclosures, glass encloses the cat quarters allowing visitors full view of each animal. The size of the dog and cat rooms allows interested visitors to enter and socialize with the animals. The dog enclosures have “sniff holes” through which visitors can introduce themselves by way of their fingers before entering the enclosure. Walls separate each dog dwelling, they cannot see their neighbors. Each of the rooms faces an interior courtyard. This space is used to introduce possible roommates, and holding space during room cleaning, and as an apparatus to change the dogs’ scenery.

The adoption center believes that, “a trained dog is a retained dog”. In order to prevent the relinquishment of an already adopted dog, the Center implements training and socialization prior to adoption. Maddie’s Center makes sure that each of its animals has substantial stimulation through daily human interaction. To prevent unattractive dog behavior induced by sheltering, (excessive barking, listlessness, hyperactivity, withdrawal, etc.), the dogs are taken out of the shelter 2-3 times a day. Volunteers walk the animals to a nearby park or to the exterior courtyard. Daily “playgroups” also allow groups of dogs to interact with one another.

An open office constitutes as the volunteer center, an area in which volunteers can communicate with one another and with the paid SF/SPCA trainers and behavior specialists. After socializing with a particular animal, volunteers log their observations in a binder containing “Volunteer Notes” subsequently read by the center’s 7 dog trainers. Each animal is trained prior to adoption. The SC/SPCA tailors each animal’s session according to the behavior notes logged by the volunteers in order to improve or eliminate the identified undesirable behavior. The Director of Behavior and Training, award-

winning dog behavior author Jean Donaldson, oversees the training staff. She also heads the center's Academy for Dog Trainers. The six-week program educates prospective dog trainers for \$4,500 in positive-reinforcement dog training.

To discourage relinquishment, the SF/SPCA conducts rigorous screening prior to adoption. Potential adopters receive counseling from a staff member of the SF/SPCA to determine that their desired animal will enter a home that is both permanent as well as appropriate to their demeanor, age, breed, etc. Separate questionnaires for cats and dogs require the adopter to divulge information that could signify a possible bad match or subsequent relinquishment. Among other things, adopters must be able to demonstrate that they can keep pets in their homes as well as the willingness to spend sufficient money and time on their adopted animal. With questions looking at how much play and exercise time a potential adopter is willing to spend, trainers can steer people to a particular cat or dog. (how to include this questionnaire?) For potential dog owners, questions include, "What type of *daily* activities will you dog get?", "What times of the day will your dog be alone?", "How long to you plan to provide a home for this dog?" and "Who will take care of the dog in your absence?" Possible cat owners are asked to provide the primary reason for wanting a cat, the number of children and adults in their household, the other types of animals living in their household (age and breed) as well as the general noise level, and what type of experience the individual has had with cats. Both questionnaires ask about the potential cost for a pet and whether or not the adopter will allow SF/SCPA representatives into their home following or prior to adoption.

The SF/SPCA Special Programs

The Foster Care Program provides animals with needed rehabilitation and care outside of the shelter. In 2004-2005, 155 volunteer foster parents cared for 980 cats and kittens, 20 dogs and 8 puppies. The program is intended for very young kittens and puppies as well as animals that require health and behavior related rehabilitation exceeding the capacity within SF/SPCA. Prospective foster parents attend a two-hour Foster Care Class to prepare them for their fostering experience. The SF/SPCA provides the food, veterinary care, a Behavior Hotline and a Foster Medical Hotline for foster parents. The Foster Care Program further decreases the SF/SPCA euthanasia rates by caring for animals that would otherwise have to be killed within the shelter.

The organization's Humane Education program seeks to improve the lives of companion animals by teaching children "empathy, compassion, and respect for life"^{cxiv}. Education outreach includes, "Dog Talk", a feature teaching children how to safely interact with dogs to avoid bites. Dog safety is especially pertinent in San Francisco. A 12-year-old boy was mauled to death in his home by two family dogs last year. In 2004-2005, The SF/SPCA educated 2,185 students by touring 276 classrooms and conducting 20 school and community tours. The Humane Education Program offers week-long Summer Camp Sessions at the SF/SCPA. Last year, 11 sessions of the day camp enrolled 52 students.

The Hearing Dog Program began in 1978. It has since trained and placed 760 shelter animals with hearing-impaired or deaf owners. The SF/SPCA trainers choose and train dogs for the program. They often come from other Northern California shelters. The dogs are generally mixed-breed, usually small to medium size, and always spayed or

neutered prior to placement. Months of training teach the dogs to alert owners to a knock at the door, a doorbell ring, and telephone, alarm clock, a smoke alarm, etc.^{cxv} They are also taught basic obedience and learning verbal and sign-language commands. Hearing dogs enjoy the same rights as guide dogs for the blind. Any adult resident of California or Nevada who has severe hearing loss qualifies to receive a Hearing Dog. Graduation takes place three times a year.

Maddie's Center's Animal Assisted Therapy program takes companion animals to hospitals, nursing homes, senior center, special schools, etc., throughout the Bay area. Volunteers take shelter animals as well as their own pets. Last year, the SF/SPCA reached approximately 7,000 patients and deploying animals to about 100 facilities. The program began in 1981 and was the first of its kind. One-hundred and fifty volunteers run the Animal Assisted Therapy Program, working an average of three hours a week to Therapy visits.

During a visit to Maddie's Center, Community Outreach Specialist Tracy Pore informed me that much of the SF/SPCA's adoption program and outreach would not exist without volunteers. In 2004-2005, volunteers worked 112,260 hours. If paid, The SF/SPCA estimates that these volunteers would have earned \$1,458,487.00^{cxvi}. In addition to acting as Foster parents in the Foster Care Program and running the Animal Assisted Therapy Program, volunteers can work as cat socializers and adoption counselors, or as cat behavior volunteers to target behavioral issues in cats. These volunteers also evaluate the cats and help in introducing them to potential adopters. Volunteers work with the dogs, exercising and socializing the animals. They can assist with the dog play groups, take the dogs on "field trips" outside of the shelter, and train

the dogs in basic training. Volunteers can also assist in the SF/SPCA's Adoption Outreach when the adoption mobile units go into the community. Last year, the 885 volunteers could assist in virtually every area of the SF/SPCA including the Humane Education Program, the Hearing Dog Program as well as in the Animal hospital.

Founded in 1924, the SF/SPCA's Community Veterinary Hospital is open six days a week from 8 am to 6 pm and 8 am to 8 pm. The hospital is open to the public and treats more than 20,000 animals a year^{cxvii}. The full-service veterinary facility resides in the old wing of the SF/SPCA and is attached to Maddie's Center. The hospital has the capacity for complete medical and surgical care, dental services, day time emergency services, radiology and ultrasound and 24-hour nursing care for patients. The hospital employs 2 ½ full-time veterinarians, registered veterinary technicians and veterinary assistances. The hospital's Pet-A-Care program gives a discount on hospital services to qualified San Francisco seniors. Low-income bay area residents receive financial assistance from the Hospital Emergency Fund. It program allows qualified individuals whose pets have either a life-threatening illness or injury with special payment terms. The SF/SPCA requires that all animals participating in its special programs be spayed or neutered.

The hospital has housed the SF/SPCA's Spay/Neuter Clinic since its opening in 1976. The organizations spay/neutering policy is described as the cornerstone of San Francisco's lifesaving efforts. The SF/SCPA began aggressive spay/neuter programs in the 1970's, it was the first local animal welfare organization to spay and neuter all dogs and cats prior to adoption. In 2004-2005, the clinic performed surgeries on 6,533 animals^{cxviii}. The Spay/Neuter Clinic's services include low-cost fees that are 60 to 75

percent less than of the average spay/neuter surgery. The Clinic charges \$40 for male cats and \$64 for females. Neutering of dogs costs \$85, spaying of female dogs are \$100.^{cxix} The clinic is open 6 days a week and only performs surgery on animals between the ages of 4 months and 6 years of age. Free surgeries are provided for dogs and cats belonging to San Francisco seniors, homeless San Franciscans and to San Francisco residents on Social Security and Disability Insurance.

The Spay/Neuter Clinic altered 1,474 feral cats in 2004-2005. It accepts feral cat drop-offs three days a week between 7:30 and 8:30 am. Feral cats cannot be tamed and cannot be adopted. While many shelters euthanize these animals, The SF/SPCA works with feral cat caregivers in the Bay Area to control feral cat populations, provide medical care and keep the cats fed outside. The Feral Cat Assistance program uses the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) method to reduce feral cat populations. The SF/SPCA Cat Assistance Team (CAT) consists of volunteers throughout San Francisco who act as caregivers to the feral cat colonies that form around the area. The volunteers trap feral cats, bring them to The SF/SPCA Spay/Neuter Clinic (called the Feral Fix), provide post-surgery recovery care, and rescue kittens young enough to be socialized. The SF/SPCA maintains that simply trapping and killing feral cats leads to increased breeding in a particular cat colony. An informal survey of feral cat caregivers found that every caregiver who implemented a TNR program saw their colony diminish or stabilize.^{cxx} The SF/SPCA provides resources and education for feral cat colony caregivers as well as free spay and neutering services.

THE SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL
(SF/ACC)

In 1989, under the influence of Carl Friedman, now Director of the SF/ACC, the city of San Francisco opened its municipal shelter, San Francisco Animal Care and Control (SF/ACC), supplementing the work done by the SPCA. It effectively took over all animal welfare enforcement and control. Financed by the City and County of San Francisco, its primary stated mission is public protection and animal welfare. It is an open-door shelter, meaning that it lets in every animal brought in. Other animals up for adoption at the facility include rabbits, guinea pigs, mice, hamsters, rats, birds and reptiles. The SF/ACC's deputy control officers enforce animal-control laws and anti-cruelty ordinances. They also patrol the city, impound dogs at large, rescue animals in distress, investigate reports of animal abuse, pick up seriously sick or injured strays and respond to animal-related emergencies. The shelter also cares for animals in protective custody or quarantine.

SF/ACC is open to the public every day from noon to 6:00 PM, or until 7:00 PM on Wednesdays. Dogs cost \$105 to adopt. This cost includes spay or neuter surgery, microchipping, a San Francisco dog license, DHLPP and rabies vaccinations, and a vet exam. Cats also cost \$105. Their fee includes spay or neuter surgery, microchipping, a registration tag and collar, FVRCP and rabies vaccinations, and a vet exam. The adoption fee for birds and reptiles is determined by SF/ACC according to their species and market value. Rabbits cost \$49 for males and \$59 for females, their price also includes spay or neuter surgery as well as a vet exam. Other small animals cost \$14. This includes rats, mice, hamsters, and guinea pigs. All of the small animals, reptiles and birds come with a

vet exam. The SF/ACC alters rats and male guinea pigs before they go home. The cost of all small animals, birds and reptiles also comes with a vet exam.^{cxxi}

The SF/ACC had a \$3.2 million budget last year. In 2004-2005, 11,200 animals came through the shelter. The SF/ACC estimates its life-release rate, the percentage of animals that leave the shelter alive from the total amount of animals cared for, has reached 80%. SF/ACC is overseen by Director Carl Freidman. Under him, Deputy Director Kathleen Brown oversees SF/ACC operations. The tasks of SF/ACC are divided into five divisions each overseen by a Supervisor: Field Services, Animal Care Servies, Veterinary Meidcal Services, Shelter Office Servies and Volunteer Services. The Field Services Division includes the Deputy Animal Control Officers. The Animal Care Services Dicsion includes the Animal Care Attendants. The Selther Office Servies Division employs the Shelter Service Representatives (see organizational chart?). The Volunteer Coordinator serves as the contact person for the media and any media stories. The Field Servies Supervisor, Deputy Director or Director may also coordinate a story. The Volunteer Coordinator coordinates events and outreach projects.

In contrast with Maddie's Adoption Center, the SF/ACC facility resembles a more traditional shelter environment. The lobby consists of a large information desk with 5/6 administrators to assist visitors. Various posters promoting spay/neutering and the humane treatment of animals hang out the walls. Additionally, information pamphlets on SF/ACC services, printed in five different languages, hang at the entrance. The cats and dogs are held on separate floors. Impounded and stray cats and dogs have separate entrances and brought into separate holding and examination rooms. Upon entrance, staff members immediately check strays and impounds for microchips. They then undergo a

health examination and behavior analysis. New arrivals are held for five days, a day more than what's mandated by the 1998 Hayden Bill, to give their owners an opportunity to claim them. They must pass a temperament test before being placed up for adoption. Lost or stray new arrivals are held in separate halls from animals available for adoption.

In the dog wards, one set of dog kennels line each hall way, so the dogs within them face the wall and not each other. The individual kennels' walls are high enough so that the dogs cannot reach one another nose to nose. These same size kennels, about 3 by 5 feet, also house the cats. Each of these kennels has been transformed into "kitty condos", resembling those found in Maddie's Center. The cat kennels have chairs with hanging towels to provide hiding spaces as well as a raised area for climbing. Both the cat and dog floors include "Getting to Know You" rooms where SF/ACC staff members accompany prospective adopters to meet an animal. A separate room houses smaller animals, including birds, snakes, lizards, guinea pigs, rats, and mice. The dog floor also has a separate, glass-enclosed room for its puppies.

Partnerships and Programs

SF/ACC classifies animals into the same three categories used by The SF/SPCA. As mandated by the Adoption Agreement between the two organizations, SF/ACC seeks to rehabilitate and adopt out every animal deemed "treatable". Volunteers play a huge role in lowering SF/ACC's euthanasia rates through volunteering adoption alternatives as well as socialization. The municipal shelter runs a Foster Care program intended for the fostering of young kittens and puppies as well as sick animals in need of rehabilitation. In 2004-2005, SF/ACC adopted out over 600 kittens cared for by foster parents. In addition

to its foster care program, SF/ACC depends on its partnerships with various Bay Area rescue groups to lessen the amount of animals housed in the shelter and to make room for new arrivals. Give-Me-Shelter-Cat-Rescue takes cats likely to be euthanized due to fearful or aggressive behavior. These cats are fostered by volunteers and socialized individually in hopes that they will become adoptable. The nonprofit Save-A-Bunny rescues rabbits from the shelter. A cockatiel rescue group as well as a chinchilla rescue, among others, also assists SF/ACC in placing homeless animals.

A few San Francisco nonprofits exist for the sole purpose of supplementing the work done at SF/ACC. The Give-A-Dog-a-Bone (GADB) Program is run out of the SF/ACC. The organization is devoted to the socialization and behavior modification of dogs kenneled at SF/ACC for an extended period of time. “Custody dogs” are held at the facility and often never seen by the public. They are sheltered at SF/ACC as a result of a court order requiring their holding until their legal situation has been solved. They may have been abused, neglected, or forced to fight. Others await owners who have been hospitalized, evicted or arrested. Some of these animals are never put up for adoption while others, because of undesirable temperament, are unlikely to be adopted once made available.

Volunteers for GADAB seek to enrich the quality of life for custody dogs through physical, behavioral, mental, and emotional stimulation. They work with dogs in medical quarantine as well as with animals having the “telltale signs of an abused dog”. Such behavior includes hiding under tables, dropping onto his back with her tail tucked when approached, jumping away and refusing to eat if approached when eating. In 2004-2005, GADAB worked with 271 dogs. Of these, 55 were adopted (20.30%), 122 were

redeemed (45.02%), and 94 were euthanized (34.69%) GADAB admits that the animal care division's duties do not allow enough time for more than environmental basics of food, water, and kennel cleanliness for custody dogs. The organization seeks to supplement the work of SF/ACC's staff for those animals most likely to have been victimized before entering the shelter. GADAB's contract with SF/ACC includes office area space, telephone, computer, fax, etc. In addition to trained dog handlers, they have volunteers working as a grant writer, a website developer, and a volunteer coordinator/office manager. "Volunteers are crucial to the continued success of Give a Dog a Bone."^{cxvii}

One-At-A-Time Rescue targets those animals unlikely to pass the temperament testing that follows the 5-day waiting period. A former SF/ACC animal control officer began the nonprofit in 2001. The organization Friends of the San Francisco Animal Care and Control (FSFACC) is exclusively dedicated to raising funds for the municipal shelter. The organization is completely volunteer-run. Since 2002, the organization has subsidized the microchipping of almost 2,500 dogs and cats.

FSFACC funded PetHarbor, an online touch-screen lost pet reunion system for SF/ACC. They also provide grants to a dozen other rescue partners of SF/ACC including those already mentioned. FSFACC is supported by donations. Grants to the other organizations were made possible by a \$20,000 donation from one individual.^{cxviii} The group subsidized the training of SF/ACC staff at a national conference in San Jose and has provide necessities at SF/ACC over the years, including volunteer smocks, blankets for the cats, green vet "scrubs," kitten formula, and a \$20,000 dog group socialization

training pilot project produced by Donna Duford, a nationally recognized expert in dog training an behavior.^{cxxiv}

Policies and Procedures

In accordance with state law under the Hayden Bill, all stray animals are held four full working days, not including the day of the animal's arrival. An owner-relinquished animal may be available for adoption the day after the animal's arrival. The only exception to this is when an emergency veterinarian determines that the animal should be euthanized for human or safety reason.^{cxxv} Striking or baiting/teasing an animal constitutes as grounds for dismissal. Euthanasia is performed by trained staff, certified by the Shelter Veterinarian, and must first be approved by a Supervisor. The Community Affairs Coordinator, Deputy Director or Director are the media spokespeople for all but the most basic information.

Unaltered cats and dogs cannot leave SF/ACC without having been altered first. Exceptions can only be made with medical or compelling personal reason. In such cases, the adopter must sign an agreement to have the surgery performed within a specific timeframe. A Shelter Rep performs a follow up to insure compliance with the adoption.^{cxxvi} The SF/SPCA performs SF/ACC available animals at a reduced price of \$35 for male or female cats, \$35 for male dogs and \$45 for female dogs.

Any cats deemed vicious or dangerous have a plastic covered pnik sign on their cages informing workers of such. These animals cannot be handeled or socialized other than that required by feed, cleaning, or medically treating such animals. Worker are required to enter the cages of dangerous animals with restraint poles for dogs and a net for cats. The Animal Control Officers and Shelter Service Representatives are responsible

for describing the reason why these animals have been deemed dangerous or viscous in detail enough to assist the Animal Care and Veterinary Medical staff.

Cages and runs are cleaned every day. The animals are removed during cleaning. Cleaning areas must be cleaned by 12 pm. The stainless steel food and water bowls and cat litter trays cannot never be reused unless properly cleaned. The proper cleaning of a cat cage includes six steps while that of a dog run has 12 steps. Attendants are required to know the common signs of animal diseases and conditions. Each new animal received a preliminary check and any medical conditions are noted on the vet board, the computer and the Activity Car. As part of the daily routine, staff look for signed of illness including diarrhea, lack of stool or appetite. Such conditions are noted on the Animal Activity Card. All Animal Care Attendants are required to know how to safely handle animals, how to administer first aid, how to recognize common disease, how to properly clean the areas and cages. The Animal Care Attendants should also provide “fast and curteous” customer service. The Animal Control Officers of SF/ACC can arrest indivudal suspected of committing a crime against an animal. They can also issues citations. Each new officed partakes in a ten-weel field training course given by experienced officers assigned by the Captain.

Shelter Service Representatives are responsible for educating potential adopters and screening out people who would not be responsible pet owners. SF/AFF will not adopt out to any applicant who wants their animal to live exclusively outside. The Crieteria for adoption intends to place animals into “permanent, responsible and loving homes, as companions, where the individual animals will be thought of as ‘part of the family.’” While some of the criteria is absolute, mot of it serves as guidelines from which

Shelter employees should use their best judgement and common sense in the interest of the animal. An appropriate home is one in which the adopter is willing to provide for needs of animal for its LIFETIME (emphasis included). Landlord approval is necessary only for dogs. SF/ACC requires that the adopted make enough time to spend with their animal as well as treating the animal as a companion.

No dog will be adopted sole as a hunting or guard dog and no cat will be adopted as a “mouser.” Adoptions will be refused if the adopter expresses their intention to declare their cat. SF/ACC also requires that children of the adopter be brought in to meet the animal prior to adoption. Additionally, adopters must have adequate space for a dog to provide enough exercise. All adopters are issued the adoption questionnaire. Shelter staff are instructed to pay particular attention to the spay/neuter question and the landlord question. A negative response for either constitutes as grounds for disqualification.

Employees must be trained by a supervisor or approved by the Shelter’s Veterinarian are authorized to euthanize animals. The employee must have read and signed the document, “DACC Euthanasia Policy”. Two people must be present during euthanasia with the exceptions of sick or injured animals classified as wildlife have been taken in during late hours. No animals may be euthanized in the presence of another dead or dying animal. All feces, bodily fluids and blood must be cleaned before an animal is brought into the room for euthanasia. If the animal show signed of fear or apprehension, staff are instructed to tranquilize him/her with attempting euthanasia. Confirmation of death occurs with the listening for a heartbeat using a stethoscope. The CO2 chamber is only used for bats in order to protect staff from rabies as well as for small rodents and

iguanas. Additionally, if “ at any time, an employee may request to stop euthanizing an animal if he/she feels the animal should not be euthanized. This should be brought to a supervisor’s immediate attention.”

A Measure of Success: Drop in SF Pet Overpopulation

As dictated by the Adoption Agreement, The SF/SPCA alters animals from SF/ACC prior to adoption. Both organizations’ aggressive promotion of low-cost, high volume spay/neuter surgery has dramatically reduced pet overpopulation in San Francisco. In 2004-2005, The SF/SPCA received a total of 6,447 dogs and cats.^{cxxvii} They estimate that cities with a population equal in size to that of San Francisco have an average shelter intake of about 25,000.^{cxxviii} Of these animals, 82% of cats and 74% of dogs left the shelter alive.^{cxxix} They estimate an approximate 30% decrease in stray animals entering both The SF/SPCA’s and SF/ACC since the 1970’s. SF/ACC received a total of 4,407 cats and 2,040 dogs in 2004-2005. Of these, 938 cats and 701 dogs were euthanized.

LESSONS FOR LAAS

Through their programs, the SF/ACC and SF/SPCA seek to break the euthanasia/pet overpopulation cycle behind the high kill-rates in American shelters. In addition to lowering the overall euthanasia numbers in the shelters, these programs also generate positive public relations in San Francisco and the Bay Area. PR brings in volunteers as well as donations. At the SF/SPCA, bequests comprise the majority of giving. People donate funds because they trust the shelters’ spending discretion. Partnerships with local rescue organizations are also important in lowering euthanasia

rates. Volunteer efforts, nonprofit partnerships, donations and fund-raising, all supplement the work done in the SF/SPCA and SF/ACC and lessen the volume of animals cared for in the shelters.

The work done at the SF/SPCA and SF/ACC have made San Francisco the safest city in the U.S. for a homeless cat or dog.^{cxxx} Despite this, Carl Friedman maintains that both organizations must look beyond the classifications of animals as adoptable, treatable or non-rehabilitatable. He argues that the “more meaningful and relevant statistics regarding this issue can be measured by how many animals come into our shelter alive compared to how many leave alive.” The President of the SF/SPCA, Daniel Crain, echoes this sentiment, “We need to look beyond subjective evaluations that categorize animals as ‘adoptable’, ‘treatable,’ or ‘non-rehabilitatable.’”^{cxxx}

Under Carl Friedman, a philosophy emerged in San Francisco in the 1970’s that favored alternative methods of population control over euthanasia. The philosophy guiding the SF/SPCA’s aggressive spaying/neutering policies and ultimately lowered euthanasia rates by targeting San Francisco’s pet surplus through other means. This philosophy developed into the no-kill movement of the 1990’s when the SF/SPCA decided that in order to better care for animals, the tasks of animal control would be handed off to the SF/ACC. The municipal shelter developed under the premise that euthanasia was not a valid solution to pet overpopulation. The two facilities supplement one another with the overarching goal of attaining a true no-kill status.

Kathleen Brown emphasized to me that like most municipal animal shelters, the SF/ACC works on a limited budget. What the shelter lacks in funds, however, is made up with volunteer services and donations. The SF/SPCA, in particular, would be unable to

provide nearly all of its services without the help of its 885 volunteers. The SF/ACC and SF/SPCA have over 1,000 individuals devoted hours to the shelters, nearly three times the number of paid staff. Additionally, donations are the basis of SF/SPCA funding so the shelter works diligently to foster its reputation as a worth-while cause in the Bay Area.

The two shelters have high standards for themselves because they depend on the support of Bay area donors, volunteers and rescue groups. They are accountable to the entire community as well as to themselves. The city of San Francisco seems to take pride in its animal shelters, a five block radius around the facilities had flags with the SF/SPCA's emblem, advertising its proximity. The shelters' reputations have emerged from over one-hundred years of services in the city. This image is based on trust, integrity and accountability. Its current status as a no-kill model for the nation emerged after philosophical shift to eliminating euthanasia. This philosophy must guide LAAS in order to attain a similar reputation in Los Angeles and all of the volunteers, donations and partnerships that come along with it.

CHAPTER VI

A Policy Analysis of the Los Angeles Animal Services Department

THE LOS ANGELES ANIMAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Los Angeles Animal Services Department (LAAS) serves the 3,819,951 residents of Los Angeles.^{cxxxii} This section takes a look at the Department by way of its most recent Department Manual, from 2002, and its publicly accessible website. Portions of the Department Manual also date back to 2000. The Department is organized into six geographic districts each having an animal shelter. These shelters vary in size and condition. East Valley and West L.A. are currently being rebuilt. A third, North Central, is being renovated. The three existing shelters are the South LA, Harbor and West Valley Shelters. The shelters are open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 am to 7 pm and on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 8 am to 7 pm. Shelters are closed Mondays and Holidays. The LAAS Department manual contains its mission statement:

To safeguard animal welfare, provide protection to residents endangered by animal related conditions and provide safe facilities for animal in need of confinement. To maintain service for the care and treatment of sick and injured animals to provide consistent, reliable and professional solutions for animal related problems that promote responsible attitudes and allow people and animals to coexist in a safer environment.

LAAS has been charged through the City Charter with, “providing animal care and control to the people of the City of Los Angeles.”^{cxxxiii} The Department Manual from 2002 places more emphasis on the animal control over animal care. Law enforcement guidelines exceed those for animal care policy in the field within the shelter.

FR 2005/2006 PROPOSED BUDGET

LAAS received \$19,683,500 in the LA budget in FY 2005/06. Of this, \$17,768,178 paid salaries for the Department's 267 employees. The proposed salary increased by 21.4% from the FY 2004/05 to supplement 29 new employees slated for hiring.^{cxxxiv} Ed Boks noted that these new employees are needed in the new shelters set to open. The total percentage in budget increase for LAAS consists of the following:

Total	+25.4%
Salaries	+21.4%
Expense	+85.6%
Equipment	-10.4%

While the budget for salary has increased, staff members have steadily decreased from 318 in 2002 by 51 people. Salaries consist of 90% of the Department's total budget. The proposed budget change for each LAAS branch of operation for FY2005/06 is as follows:

Field Operations	+10.5%
Shelter Operations	+27.5%
Licensing & Permitting Operations	-9.6%
Pet Sterilization	+416%
Information and Education	+7.4%

The most notable increase is that of Pet Sterilization, or spaying and neutering services. The new East Valley and West L.A. shelters will both have spay/neutering clinics. In FY 2005/06, Pet Sterilization receives \$671,600. This is an increase from the \$130,154 in FY 2004/05 by \$541,506. Pet Sterilization employs two staff members. While this is a significant increase in budget, the resulting allocation falls short of the

\$5,085,888 for Field Operations and the \$10,487,509 for Shelter Operations. In contrast, the budget for Training and Humane Education, under the Information and Education category, increased by just \$608 to a total of \$113,819.^{cxxxv} Two employees work under Training and Humane Education.

Proposed Cost of New Facilities

In 2000, voter-approved Proposition F, *Bonds for Paramedic, Emergency Helicopter and Animal Shelter Facilities*, allotted LAAS \$154.1 million for the construction of 5 new shelters and the improvement of 3 existing facilities. A summary written by the city's Chief Legislative Analyst concluded that, "Animal shelters lack fire protection systems and are too small to keep the number of lost, abandoned and stray animals collected each year. Overcrowding in shelters results in a very high rate of euthanasia, increased illness and injuries to adoptable animals".^{cxxxvi} The funds sought to pay for the first phase of a 10-year, two-phase shelter construction program. The first phase will increase the number of shelters from 6 to 8. The extra space should provide a more "humane environment" for impounded animals as well as spaces available for "public education in animal welfare".^{cxxxvii}

In FY 2005/06, three facilities are scheduled to open: North Central, East Valley and West Los Angeles. These are all larger than the existing shelters and will expanding the existing 359 dog kennels to 1,001.^{cxxxviii} Each shelter will have a new Spay and Neuter Clinic thus necessitating the expansion of the LAAS budget in the Pet Sterilization program.

BRANCHES OF OPERATION

LAAS is broken into six branches of operation. This includes the Field Operations, Shelter Operations, Licensing & Permitting Operations, Pet Sterilization, Information and Education, and General Administration and Support.

Field Operations

Field Operations “provides for the enforcement of all laws relative to the care, treatment, and impoundment of animals and for the prevention of cruelty to same”.^{cxvix} It also enforces all animal related ordinances in LA.^{cxl} The Field Operations includes the Enforcement Division. Under the Director of Field Operations are the Animal Control Officers that include a Captain, Lieutenant, District Manager, Field Supervisor, Hearing Examiner and Animal Control Officers.^{cxli}

In FY 2004/05, LAAS estimates that the branch picked up 9,500 animals upon request and caught 6,500.^{cxlii} It estimates that Field Operations officers conducted 60,000 investigations in the city. Field Operation personnel issued 13,000 enforcement notices and conducted 170 pertaining to barking dogs complaints and potentially dangerous animal cases.^{cxliii}

Shelter Operations

Shelter Operations includes the task of caring for the animals within the shelters. It also “euthanizes sick, injured, or unwanted animals” and received the fees established by the Municipal Code for adopted animals or those animals returned to their owners.^{cxliv} The Shelter Operations staff includes the Chief Veterinarian, veterinary assistants, an animal care technician supervisor and an animal care technician.

In FY2004/05, Shelter Operations staff rescued an estimated 50,000 animals. Of these, 19,490 were adopted, 4,800 redeemed to their owners, and an estimated 26,000 euthanized.^{cxlv}

Licensing & Permitting Operations

The Licensing & Permitting Operations branch issues licenses for dogs and horses within LA in accordance to local law and collects the resulting fees. The branch also issues permits for animal activities requiring is under City ordinance.^{cxlvi} In FY 2004/05, Licensing and Permitting issued an estimated 190,000 licenses including 2,000 dogs and 500 horses. It issued 200 breeders permits and 700 other types of animal permits.^{cxlvii}

General Administration and Support

General Administration and Support provides management for department operation. It is responsible for training for personal and volunteers as well as public and humane education.^{cxlviii} This branch includes secretaries, clerks, personal and management analyss, a public information director, and an emergency preparedness coordinator.^{cxlix}

Pet Sterilization

The Sterilization branch consists of the the “Big Fix Spay and Neuter Program”. Under the Department’s Adoption Program, adopters pay \$28 for the surgical alteration of unaltered animals. Big Fix Spay/Neuter forms are distributed at the six shelters. Adopters bring these forms to participating animals hospitals that perform the surgeries.^{cl}

Coupons are offered for people adopting dogs over 60 pounds. These coupons have a value of \$50. The Sterilization branch includes a pilot in-house program to spay and neuter animals within the shelter prior to adoption. LAAS estimates that the program will alter 6,500 animals in FY2005/06.^{cli}

Another Pilot program implemented in 2003/04 is the Feral Cat Program. In FY 2004/05 it altered 1,400 feral cats.^{clii} In total, 6,405 adoption surgeries were performed at LAAS shelter clinics FY 2004/05. These cost \$40/\$48 per surgery.^{cliii} LAAS offers discount coupons for \$20/\$30 surgeries as well as coupons for free surgeries coupons for off-site surgeries in participating Los Angeles animals hospitals. The Sterilization branch issued 18,000 free spay/neuter certificates in FY2005/06. Of these, 9,000 free surgeries were performed.^{cliv}

Its Mobil Spay/Neuter Van performed 4,000 surgeries that year. The Sam Simon Foundation provides another van in addition to the LAAS “spaymobile” for free spay/neuter surgeries, covering the \$60 cost for spay/neutering. Low-income households, the elderly and the disabled qualify for the van surgeries.^{clv} The schedule for both vans is posted on the LAAS website and can be accessed by calling the Department. To qualify for free spay/neuter van services, LAAS requires that participants entire household net income be less than \$38,500 per year. They also accept of the individual qualifying for government assisted programs such as Food Stamps, WIC, No-Cost Medi-Cal, VA Disability, Healthy Families, CalWORKS, Section 8 Housing, SSI, etc.^{clvi}

LAAS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following selections are pieces of information taken from the LAAS Department Manual dating back to 2000 and 2002.

Department Duties and Responsibilities

As listed in the City Charter Provisions, the powers and duties of LAAS include the following:

- A) To enforce all ordinances of the City of Los Angeles and the penal laws of the state relating to the care, treatment or impounding of dumb animals or for the prevention of cruelty to the same.*
- B) To provide and maintain a public pound wherein animals may be impounded.*
- C) To enforce the ordinances of the City requiring the payment of money for licenses for animals within the City.^{clvii}*

LAAS is under the “control and management” of the five-member Board of Animal Services Commissioners. The board includes people working for the City of Los Angeles in another department, individuals in animal care and civilians. The Board has the power to “make and enforce all necessary and desirable rules and regulations for exercise of powers and the performance” of LAAS chartered duties.^{clviii} They are subject removal by the Mayor and must be approved by a majority vote in City Council.

The General Manager to the Department has the power, among other things, to “appoint, discharge, suspend, or transfer” employees and to expending the funds of the department. He may also recommend an annual departmental budget to the Board. He is subject to the Board’s removal or appointment.^{clix}

Employee Code of Conduct

Discipline for services complaints can be administered by the General Manager or the employee's supervisor.^{clx} Rules for personal conduct pertains to the treatment of fellow employees, loyalty to the job, attention to duty and compliance with lawful orders.^{clxi} In the manual, there is reference to proper dress and appearance as well as proper employee etiquette to coworkers, supervisors and the public. Guidelines for proper animal care are not listed within the manual.

The probationary period for entry-level employees includes an evaluation after two months, five months and ten months.^{clxii} After 5 ½ months, the employee's supervisor will recommend whether or not the employee should be made permanent. If an unsatisfactory probationary employee faces retraining under their supervisor.^{clxiii} Grounds for unsatisfactory work are not specified. Employee performance is rated as *competent*, *improvement needed* and *unsatisfactory*.^{clxiv} Employee ratings are based on the quantity and quality of work completed, work habits, personal relations and adaptability.^{clxv} These categories do not include references to animal handling.

Impoundment Procedures

Animals brought into the shelter are given an Impound number. The date and time of their impound is recorded as is the name of the employee who processed the animal. Gender, breed, species, whether or not the animal has been altered and estimated age are recorded. The animal's origins are listed as *stray* or *owned*, and *caught*, *brought in*, *trapped*, *deceased*, or *picked up*.^{clxvi} The Department accepts animals whose owners have requested that they be euthanized, accepting the associated Fee. These requests are denied

only when the animal has bitten somebody in the last 15 days, indicating possible rabies infection.^{clxvii}

Adoptable Animals

LAAS policy is that, “no adoptable animal shall be euthanized if it can be adopted into a suitable home.” Adoptable animals do not include animals under 8 weeks of age, animals that have developed a behavioral or temperamental defect that poses, “a health and safety risk”, or those who have signs of a “disease, injury, or congenital condition” that affects the animal’s health.^{clxviii}

Euthanasia

Animals that are “irremediable” suffering from illness of injury are exempt for the one-day hold period for owner redemption. Newborn animals that have been impounded without their mother may also be euthanized prior to the holding period.^{clxix} Cats classified as “truly feral” may be euthanized or relinquished to a non-profit that will spay or neuter the cat. The Department manual defines a feral as a cat “without owner identification of any kind whose usual and consistent temperament is extreme fear and resistance to contact with people.”^{clxx} The Department policy on euthanasia includes the following:

- 1) ... adoptable animal should be euthanized if it can be adopted into a suitable home.*
- 2) ...no treatable animal should be euthanized. A treatable animal shall include any animal that is not adoptable but could become adoptable with reasonable efforts.*
- 3) ...animals that are irremediable suffering from a serious illness or severe injury shall not be held for owner redemption or adoption. Newborn animals that need*

maternal care and have been impounded without their mothers may be euthanized without being held for owner redemption or adoption.^{clxxi}

Euthanasia is performed under the direction of the Chief Veterinarian using sodium Pentobarbital solution. The Chief Veterinarian and Field Veterinarians may perform euthanasia for “surplus considerations and over population”, medical reasons or when the owner requests such.^{clxxii} Owner-requested euthanasia is not permitted at either the SF/SPCA or SF/ACC

The Manual instructs that no animal shall witness the euthanasia of another and that bodily waste and fluids must be cleaned prior to the euthanasia of other animals. It provides examples of the verification of death and that medical breeches that involve leaving an animal that has not yet died or disposing of a living animal will face the “severest disciplinary action possible.”^{clxxiii}

Sterilization

State law required that dogs and cats over six months old shall be sterilized within 60 days of purchase. Younger dogs and cats may be adopted out without having been altered.^{clxxiv}

CHAPTER VII

Recommendations

My recommendations seek to create programs within LAAS that will be self-sustaining. They will require a new Department manual, structure and set of priorities.

The following recommendations are meant to achieve three goals at LAAS:

- 1) **Lower shelter euthanasia rates**
- 2) **Raise shelter adoption rates**
- 3) **Alter external perceptions and reputation of the Department Recruit volunteered resources in the form of donations, time, and expertise**

1) INCREASED BUDGET

With Los Angeles facing a \$300 million deficit, acquiring additional funds for LAAS should prove particularly difficult. However, it is my political opinion that the recent protests and media coverage of the issue lends LAAS some fiscal priority. Kathleen Brown of SF/ACC explained that the leadership of Director Carl Friedman secured sufficient funding for the shelter on account of his political savvy and clout in the San Francisco government. This increased budget not only serves to provide the extra staff required for LAAS's soon-to-be opened shelters, but could also be viewed more or less as temporary.

- A) An increase to \$25 million in FY2006/07
- B) Stabilized funding until success in the following areas have been achieved crowding, euthanasia, and numbers of animals entering LAAS have been significantly decreased

2) REORGANIZATION OF DEPARTMENT SERVICE BRANCHES

LAAS branches should be reorganized to emphasize those programs that will promote the shelter as an adoption center and generate a positive public image. LAAS should also be structured to increase humane education in the way of spay and neuter policies, animal cruelty and responsible pet ownership.

A) VOLUNTEER SERVICES DEPARTMENT

This department should include a supervisor whose tasks exclusively include volunteer recruitment, training and program development. The following volunteer positions would be particularly helpful.

- 1) Foster care families for unweaned puppies and kittens and special needs animals
- 2) In-shelter animal socializers
- 3) Outreach assistants
- 4) Public relations representatives

B) TRAINING AND BEHAVIOR DEPARTMENT

“Comparative psychologists, psychobiologists, ethologists, and other experts in animal behavior have much to offer agencies.”^{clxxv} At least two trainers and two animal behaviorists should work to alleviate undesirable behavior among the shelter animals. These specialists should work directly with volunteers and volunteer staff to effectively identify and target instances of bad behavior.

1) Obedience classes should be offered to dogs following adoptions. The class fee should be mandatory while the attendance may not be. This will generate revenue for LAAS as well as increase pet retention. “A trained dog is a retained dog”, SF/SCPA says.

4) ADDED/EXPANDED PROGRAMS

These programs will ultimately foster community participation and appreciation of companion pet care as well as general animal welfare. These programs warrant sufficient funding in order to enhance LAAS’s adoption rates. Eventually, these programs may become largely volunteer-run. Obviously this transition from paid staff to unpaid workers can not take place until the Department has an increased interest in volunteer work. Until that point, the budget must include the following programs:

A) INCREASED HUMANE EDUCATION OUTREACH

Humane education should target Los Angeles youth, especially in areas prone to stray companion pets and cases of animal neglect as citing by Animal Control. Staff should be at least bilingual in Spanish and English.

- 1) Staff hired for school visits
- 2) Humane summer camp

B) PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN

Advertisements should receive increased funding to target LAAS euthanasia rates as well its adoption rates. Since Ed Boks came to the Department, the LAAS website can now be viewed in six different languages. However, a large percentage of Los Angelinos do not have access to the internet. Bilingual campaigns should be visible to everybody.

- 1) Should highlight:
 - a) LAAS as a shelter including location, phone number showing adoption and spay/neuter services
 - b) Importance of Spaying/Neutering companion animals
- 2) Bilingual advertisements visible billboards, bench signs, busses

C) EXPANDED ADOPTION SERVICES

Adoption services should initially be executed by trained staff members who have been had special training in adoption services. The services should be intended to encourage pet retainment and discourage animal relinquishment.

- 1) Expand pre-adoption counseling
- 2) Detailed adopter evaluations
- 3) Increased adoption training for employees
- 4) Include responsible pet ownership education
- 5) Conduct follow-ups

3) INCREASED STAFF

Recommended changes in staff number and tasks should supplement the reorganization of the Department. Despite paying their employees higher-wages than other municipal shelters employees in the country, LAAS is understaffed. Due to the additional shelter space being built, additional staff is needed regardless. Additionally, more staff is needed to fill the newly formed recommended Departments.

- A) Positions already in use
- B) Psychologists, trainers
- C) Adoption services staff
- D) Volunteer coordinator
- E) Public Relations representative

4) AGGRESSIVE SPAY/NEUTERING PROGRAM

An aggressive spay/neuter program should be the focus of LAAS's population control. "Not only are spay/neuter efforts the most powerful, but they also grow in strength over long horizons and combine well with adoption efforts."^{clxxvi} Studies have shown that spay/neuter programs takes 30 years to reach full effectiveness but that even a small decrease of companion pet birth-rates will have a significant impact on a particular shelter's euthanasia rates.^{clxxvii} The SF/SPCA and SF/ACC will not release an unaltered animal. With the new spay/neuter clinics this can be possible at LAAS as well. Increased resources for the Pet Sterilization branch of service need to be distributed to the following areas as well as staff salaries:

- A) Public education campaign
- B) Increased PR and advertising
- C) Spay/neutering must occur within shelter prior to adoption, not subsequently with the use of vouchers
- D) Higher license fees for unaltered pets
- E) Spay/neuter services offered to community members at discount/free rate for those who qualify

5) ADDITIONAL SHELTERS

The new shelters should supplement those three presently under construction. Each new shelter should be visible from the street and aesthetically inviting. Dogs should not be

facing one another in order, decreasing barking. Each shelter should have its own spay and neuter center as well as administrative offices for the LAAS GM and top staff.

- A) Facilities should be located in highly populated area with access to parks for volunteers to exercise animals
- B) Spay/neuter clinics in each
- C) Should mimic “adoption” centers with welcoming visitor area
- D) Kennels should be designed in house-like style
- E) Facility should be visible and on the street
- F) Animal exercise areas separate from getting-to-know-you space

5) INCREASED EMPLOYEES REQUIREMENTS

Changes will require renegotiation in SEIU 347 contract. Staff accountability is essential to the quality of LAAS services. Base salaries should be maintained. The high-pay will ensure interested parties. The “care” component of animal care and control must be emphasized in services and training at all LAAS shelters.

- A) Bi-yearly assessments conducted by branch supervisor
- B) Monthly self-assessments reviewed by supervisor
- C) Extended probation period upon hiring
- D) Increased training in animal welfare/etiquette
- E) Emphasis on customer service
- F) Increased penalties for infractions having to do with animal handling and care

CONCLUSION

Successful shelters with low euthanasia rates such as those in San Francisco depend on volunteers. As outreach, advertising, and improved image bring in more volunteers, less LAS budget will have to be devoted to the areas in which volunteers can help. LAAS is presently under-funded in both budget and volunteers. These recommendations should also act as recruitment methods for volunteered resources in the form of donations, time and expertise. In most other municipal shelters, essential services such as dog socialization and pre-adoption screenings are provided by volunteers. LAAS does not have the volunteers to provide these services. Additionally, shelters such as SF/ACC rely heavily on funding in the form of donations, particularly from deceased financiers. The

motive behind Departmental changes is to create a cause attractive to volunteers. The increased budget will financially jump-start the LAAS transformation. The increased budget should provide all services I've listed below until enough volunteer support has been secured to support extra shelter services. Increased emphasis on public information campaigns will also encourage monetary gifts. These gifts, theoretically, will help fill in the holes of program funding, further relieving the burden on the city.

Partnerships with animal rescue and welfare groups are essential to the success of LAAS in alleviating the city's companion pet overpopulation. My recommendations seek to create an environment conducive to the Los Angeles animal welfare community's burgeoning partnership with LAAS. These partnerships can also provide services generally out-of-reach in the budget. Partnerships in Los Angeles can only be created through increased trust from potential partners and the perceived integrity of LAAS. My recommendations seek to foster such perceptions of the city's animal welfare community.

Finally, studies have shown that an aggressive spay/neuter policy yields significant results in around 3 decades. If effectively executed, spay/neuter policies will drastically decrease the amount of animals coming into shelters in the future. This decrease in volume will ultimately decrease the necessary budget.

CONCLUSION

This report is titled “Approaching No-Kill” because it is hopeful that LAAS is beginning the process of significant reform. The Department has had the unfortunate luck of being targeted by a loud group of local animal activists for their deplorable, but common, euthanasia rates. While the conflict between activists and LAAS staff has put a temporary stigma on the Department, the subsequent media has ultimately expedited the possibility of Los Angeles becoming a “no-kill” city.

This is a hugely daunting task. A recent article in *The Los Angeles Magazine* estimated that LAAS, the county and 24 smaller municipalities killed 104,841 animals last year, more than any other metropolitan area in the country.^{clxxviii} In the past 35 years, the article goes on, Los Angeles has killed more than 5 million pets.

But even ADL-LA’s Jerry Vlasik admits that Ed Bok is a good alternative to previous Department General Managers. Since Bok’s arrival there have been noticeable changes. The LAAS website can now be translated into 7 languages. It also contains the number of animals entering, leaving and euthanised in LAAS shelters. LAAS is also presently redoing its Department Manual. Additionally, it’s encouraging that the most significant budget increase for FY2005/2006 was the funds allotted for LAAS Pet sterilization.

The protestors are correct in their choice of LA as being a progressive city capable of reforming its municipal shelters. Given Mayor Villaraigosa’s stand on the issue of LAAS euthanasia rates, it seems likely that it’s an appropriate time for the Department to be transformed into a “no-kill” model for the rest of the country’s animal shelters.

Animal care and control facilities are not the cause of pet overpopulation in America. Irresponsible and uncaring citizens, those who are capable of murdering their own kind in addition to neglecting other species, can be blamed for the number of homeless animals by being irresponsible owners. Animal shelters, however, have been given the role of protector and controller of animals by their communities.

This report concludes with the assertion that the high euthanasia rates at LAAS shelters are preventable. The culprit behind these numbers, L.A.'s companion pet overpopulation, can be solved. This paper also concludes that LAAS success could counter the nation-wide cycle of pet overpopulation and euthanasia by serving as a no-kill model for other shelters. With the right resources and vision, LAAS may prove that while most shelters conduct themselves as a band-aid to pet overpopulation, in reality, they have the potential to be the solution.

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