

From: Nicole <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, July 06, 2014 3:14 PM
To: Board of Representatives
Subject: Policies & procedures for Stamford Animal Shelter

Dear Ms. Heaphy, Mr. Layton, Ms. Kleinschmitt, Ms. Taylor, Ms. Geary, Dr. Zeide and Mr. Leydon,

As you work to address the policies and procedures for the Stamford Animal Shelter, I ask that you consider implementing a key series of programs and services, collectively referred to as the “No Kill Equation”, used by successful and modern municipal animal shelters across the country.

No Kill is a humane, sustainable, cost-effective model that works hand in hand with public health and safety, while fulfilling a fiscal responsibility to taxpayers.

Today, shelters collectively representing about 500 cities and towns across America, including those in Kentucky, Virginia, Indiana, Utah, California, New York, Texas and elsewhere, are saving animals and as high as 99%, using the programs and services of the “No Kill Equation”. Connecticut lags behind the rest of the country.

To see some of the hundreds of No Kill communities:
<http://www.nokilladvocacycenter.org/shelter-reform/success/>

No Kill is:
95% Minimum Adoption Rate
Public Health and Safety as vicious dogs are not adopted out
Fiscal Responsibility to Taxpayers
Improved Public Satisfaction with Government

No Kill Is Consistent with Public Safety

No Kill communities are ones where no savable animals are killed. Unfortunately, there are some animals who are hopelessly ill or injured, irremediably suffering, or in the case of dogs, vicious with a poor prognosis for rehabilitation. These animals are not adoption candidates and sadly, at this time in history, they are often killed, unless hospice care and sanctuaries are available. But since the No Kill philosophy does not mandate that vicious dogs or irremediably sick animals be made available for adoption, it is wholly consistent with public health and safety.

No Kill Is Cost Effective

To begin with, many of the programs identified as key components of saving lives are more cost-effective than impounding, warehousing, and then killing animals. Some rely on private philanthropy, as in the use of rescue groups, which shifts costs of care from public taxpayers to private individuals and groups. Others, such as the use of volunteers, augment paid human resources. Still others, such as adoptions, bring in revenue. And, finally, some, such as neutering rather than killing feral cats, are simply less expensive, with exponential savings in terms of reducing births.

The Mandatory programs and services of the “No Kill Equation” include:

1) TNR Program

Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) programs for free-living cats allow shelters to reduce death rates.

2) High-Volume, No-and-Low-Cost Spay/Neuter

No- and low-cost, high-volume spay/neuter reduces the number of animals entering the shelter system, allowing more resources to be allocated toward saving lives.

3) Rescue Groups

An adoption or transfer to a rescue group frees up scarce cage and kennel space, reduces expenses for feeding, cleaning, and killing, and improves a community's rate of lifesaving.

4) Foster Care

Volunteer foster care is a low-cost, and often no-cost way of increasing a shelter's capacity, caring for sick and injured or behaviorally challenged animals, and thus saving more lives.

5) Comprehensive Adoption Programs

Adoptions are vital to an agency's lifesaving mission. The quantity and quality of shelter adoptions is in shelter management's hands, making lifesaving a direct function of shelter policies and practice. If shelters better promoted their animals and had adoption programs responsive to community needs, including public access hours for working people, offsite adoptions, adoption incentives, and effective marketing, they could increase the number of homes available and replace killing with adoptions. Contrary to conventional wisdom, shelters can adopt their way out of killing.

6) Pet Retention

While some surrenders of animals to shelters are unavoidable, others can be prevented—but only if shelters work with people to help them solve their problems. Saving animals requires shelters to develop innovative strategies for keeping people and their companion animals together. And the more a community sees its shelters as a place to turn for advice and assistance, the easier this job will be.

7) Medical & Behavior Programs

To meet its commitment to a lifesaving guarantee for all savable animals, shelters need to keep animals happy and healthy and keep animals moving efficiently through the system. To do this, shelters must put in place comprehensive vaccination, handling, cleaning, socialization, and care policies before animals get sick and rehabilitative efforts for those who come in sick, injured, unweaned, or traumatized.

8) Public Relations/Community Development

Increasing adoptions, maximizing donations, recruiting volunteers and partnering with community agencies comes down to increasing the shelter's public exposure. And that means consistent marketing and public relations. Public relations and marketing are the foundation of a shelter's activities and success.

9) Volunteers

Volunteers are a dedicated "army of compassion" and the backbone of a successful No Kill effort. There is never enough staff, never enough dollars to hire more staff, and always more needs than paid human resources. That is where volunteers make the difference between success and failure and, for the animals, life and death.

10) Proactive Redemptions

One of the most overlooked areas for reducing killing in animal control shelters are lost animal reclaims. Shifting from a passive to a more proactive approach has allowed shelters to return a large percentage of lost animals to their families.

11) A Compassionate Director

The final element of the No Kill Equation is the most important of all, without which all other elements are thwarted—a hard working, compassionate animal control or shelter director not content to continue killing, while regurgitating tired clichés about “public irresponsibility” or hiding behind the myth of “too many animals, not enough homes.”

No Kill is simply not achievable without rigorous implementation of these programs. They provide the only model that ever created No Kill communities.

<http://www.nokilladvocacycenter.org/shelter-reform/no-kill-equation/>

I would be happy to provide you with more information and put you in touch with any of the hundreds of communities who are successfully running these programs.

Thank you.
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