

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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In light of the recent wave of accusations regarding the Commerce Animal Shelter, the City of Commerce would like to state that operations of the Animal Shelter follow proper protocol, rules, regulations and statutes set forth by the City and the State. It is an unfortunate fact, but a fact nonetheless, that certain animals arrive to our city's shelter in a deplorable condition. Many of these animals enter our shelters after having been abused, neglected, malnourished, and exposed to disease by their owners. Animal Control is necessary to remove animals running loose in the City, as such animals pose concerns of property damage, injury to citizens, nuisance and potential disease. It is the policy of the Commerce Animal Shelter to accept all animals delivered to the shelter regardless of their condition or illness. In these instances, protocol is observed for the safety of all the animals involved and appropriate care is rendered.

It should also be noted that the Commerce Animal Shelter, like every animal shelter in the State of Texas, is subject to state inspection. At the most recent inspection, the State Inspector informed the City of Commerce that the Commerce Animal Shelter was in compliance with the regulations of the State of Texas. Furthermore, the Commerce Animal Shelter has never been cited for any infractions by the State of Texas. The City takes recent criticism very seriously, and it is the position of the City, at this time, that the Commerce Animal Shelter's actions have been performed with good intentions and are legally and ethically sound.

Due to the horrific allegations and criminal violations which came to light regarding the Barchard Animal Shelter, the City of Commerce was compelled to restrict its policies in dealing with certain persons affiliated with removing animals from the Commerce Animal Shelter to the Barchard Shelter, where they were subjected to operations which were described in the press as amounting to butchery. These restrictions were to safeguard the animals in the care of the Commerce Animal Shelter.

Animals at the Commerce Animal Shelter are held to be claimed by owners, and if not claimed, they are available for adoption. The City encourages adoption and any group or individual may do so. While the City of Commerce would rather that all animals coming into its possession be adopted, such option has not played out. It is a sad fact that the failure of animal owners to spay and neuter their pets causes most of the problem. Across the United States, some six to eight million animals are admitted to shelters annually, and approximately half of the animals are euthanized due to no one adopting the animals. Sometimes, unfortunately, euthanizing these animals is the most humane thing to do for the animal, as many animals are unadoptable due to rejection by society, aggression, or severe illness that puts them at death's door. For example of the magnitude of the problem, one need only look to the experience of the PETA organization. Even PETA finds that it has to euthanize animals in its care and states that doing so does not mean shelters are not trying to help animals. Despite its anti-animal-cruelty advocacy, PETA killed nearly 90 percent of all the cats and dogs dropped off at one of its shelters in 2012. In an interview with USA Today, PETA spokeswoman Jane Dollinger acknowledged that most shelters euthanize about 39 percent of their animals. The method of euthanasia used by the City of Commerce is a quick, effective, safe and humane solution for handling the difficult situation when animals are not adopted. No one with the City of Commerce takes any pleasure in the putting-down of these animals, but when it comes to that unpleasant task, using a humane and effective method is followed. It would be wonderful, indeed, if we never had to deal with this problem, but the fact is, we do.