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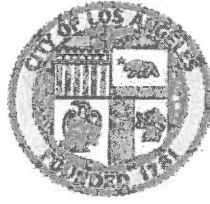
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CHIEF VETERINARIAN

Report to the Board of Animal Services Commissioners

MEETING DATE: November 28, 2017

PREPARED BY: Dr. Jeremy Prupas

REPORT DATE: November 20, 2017

TITLE: Chief Veterinarian

SUBJECT: FEEDING VEGAN FOOD TO SHELTER DOGS

BOARD ACTIONS RECOMMENDED:

1. DENY request to feed vegan food to shelter dogs.

SUMMARY:

We recognize that individual, privately owned dogs can do well on a wide variety of diets (Commercial, Vegetarian, Organic, Grain-free, Gluten-free, Raw, and Vegan). However, that is quite a different population than the group of dogs we encounter daily in our animal shelters.

Three clinical Nutritionists (affiliated with the Veterinary schools at UC Davis and the University of Pennsylvania), a Shelter Medicine specialist, and a Veterinary Toxicologist who works closely with a Pet Food Company were contacted about the use of vegan dog food in animal shelters. None of these veterinary specialists thought it would be a good idea to feed shelter dogs a vegan diet.

- Reasons cited included inadequate protein, calcium, and phosphorus levels, with additional concerns being raised over digestibility and palatability issues in feeding a widely varying population of dogs.
- The fact that we deal with a lot of injured dogs and dogs with medical conditions (who have increased energy demands) is also an issue. There was also the added concern over being able to meet the energy demands of pregnant and/or lactating dogs.
- The increased fiber content of these diets would also likely lead to increased fecal bulk and frequency of bowel movements which would increase the work for ACTs, impairing their ability to keep the facility clean.

The City has a central procurement process and vendors must be registered and approved before they can bid to supply products and supplies purchased for City use. The current cost for dog food is \$0.87/pound for dry dog food. The only currently contracted City vendor that offers a vegan diet would cost \$3.87/pound.

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Report to the Board of Animal Services Commissioners
SUBJECT: Feeding Vegan Food to Shelter Dogs

Many humane organizations have adopted a policy that only vegetarian/vegan food can be served to people attending agency sponsored functions. One possible compromise would be to make it a policy that any agency catered event held on Shelter grounds or officially sponsored by the Department must be vegan/vegetarian. This would not include food occasionally provided for staff and volunteers by non-city event sponsors.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact on the City General Fund if the request to Deny this suggested action is upheld.

Approved:

Brenda F. Barnette

Brenda F. Barnette, General Manager

BOARD ACTION:

_____ Passed

Disapproved _____

_____ Passed with noted modifications

Continued _____

_____ Tabled

New Date _____