

ITEM 6A – Euthanasia Protocol at SF Animal Care and Control

Lena Abuarafeh

To whom it may concern, I have worked with San Francisco Animal Control for close to ten years while volunteering with different nonprofit dog rescue organizations. They have been a shelter partner the rescue groups worked closely with pulling dogs who have been better candidates for rescue. It has been a pleasure to work with this group of dedicated folks who take on very hard and at times unforgiving work every single day. They go above and beyond reaching out on behalf of dog's who need rescue due to medical and behavioral challenges. They have certain policies and procedures as animal shelters must have to ensure productivity of the shelter - in my opinion they have always been extremely effective and good protocols.

There have been many times in which the rescue group needed more time to find a place for a dog, and we were given generous extensions. We have been able to spend extended periods of time with dogs we are evaluating to see if they will be a good candidate for our foster homes. The wonderful staff and volunteers give us great insight on the dogs that is very helpful. You can truly tell they care about the dog's and give them all a chance - I can also recount times in which there were dogs who were possibly not great rescue candidates due to bite history and the shelter still allowed us to evaluate and pull. They have had custody dogs in their care who spent many months there and when they needed rescue, the shelter went to great lengths to network and advocate for these dogs giving them the best opportunity to find rescue.

I have worked with many different shelters all over the greater bay area, and San Francisco animal control is by far I enjoy most working with.

For being an open door city run shelter, they are doing great work and go above and beyond for the dogs. It deeply saddens me to see the criticism they get, as I have first hand experience working directly with this shelter and the dogs - and know all they do to give them a fair chance.

Pei Ketron

I am writing to express my support for the ACC and their current practices.

My husband and I are members of the SF community and we adopted both of our dogs from the ACC (in 2016 and 2017, respectively). Through our numerous visits, we quickly grew to know and respect the employees there. They worked hard to ensure that the adoptions were appropriate for both us as adopters and the dogs we adopted. This was especially important when we adopted our second dog. Over the course of several visits where we brought our first dog along, the behaviorists observed the two dogs playing to ensure that they were exhibiting appropriate and safe play behaviors, which would be an indication of how successful the adoption would be.

Knowing just how much the people at the ACC work hard and love animals, it is 100% my belief that they always act with the best interests of the animals in mind. Shelter work is extremely emotionally taxing, especially when it comes to euthanasia. The decision to euthanize a dog is never made lightly. I believe that the people who work at the ACC would never euthanize an animal unless it was the ultimate last resort.

Requiring the ACC to change their policies to accommodate a 48-hour public notice in advance of any euthanization would siphon much-needed funds from other parts of the rescue, AND result in potentially dangerous situations for the dogs in question, the employees at the shelter, and the public at large.

Please do not require that the ACC change their current euthanasia policies.

Rebecca Schwartz

I've been volunteering with shelter dogs at ACC since 2015. I am speaking today about the euthanasia policy discussed last meeting. I can't imagine volunteering anywhere else because the staff is extremely dedicated and works tirelessly to serve our animals and the public. They are forced to make the most difficult decisions that we in the public are shielded from. They don't take this responsibility lightly, and I've seen first hand how they power through some days that would crumble and break most people. Resources are limited and they are forced to make impossible decisions; rescues can only take so many animals and they have their own resource constraints.

In terms of this specific proposal, I want to raise two issues. First, not all animals should leave the shelter. Sometimes the kindest thing to do is to euthanize, especially in cases where behavior could hurt members of the general public. When evaluating dogs, the behavior and training staff evaluate and often re-evaluate dogs if they are on the cusp of passing. They always make these decisions with the dog's safety and the public's safety in mind. It would be profoundly dangerous to allow the public to take these animals into their homes.

#2: If the ACC staff is forced to post all animals on social media, it will drown out the ones that actually have a fighting chance of getting out of the shelter alive. Moreover, putting unsafe animals in homes that have never fostered is putting the animal and people far more at risk. Our goal is to help adoptable animals find homes. If they aren't deemed adoptable, it's irresponsible to place them in the hands of the untrained public. Just because someone finds a dog and bring it in to the shelter does not entitle that person to take it in; they are not trained or qualified to do so. Volunteers at ACC go through months of intense training. If anything happens while in the care of some random person, it could destroy the public's trust in ACC, this animal welfare commission as well as both of your reputations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Grace Cheng

I have volunteered with the ACC for the past four years. I've been a heavy contributor to both Facebook and Instagram accounts for the past four years. When I first started, we had about 2000 followers and in the past 4 years, we now have 10,000 followers. In order to do this work, I spent, as a volunteer, about 2-4 hours a week of taking photos and videos and 2-3 hours a week of editing photos/videos and responding to comments. That was **4-7 hours a week, for years**, to help build in the social media presence of the ACC. I am happy to volunteer time because it is proactive, allows a more positive relationship with the community, brings people into the shelter, and educates the public on animal welfare.

I would defer to those who have experience and expertise about the efficacy of the 48 hr notices, but I

do want to speak to the background work that happens if it goes into effect. **There are times, when we post a high-interest animal, we can get up to 50-75 direct messages within 24 hours.** To respond, to educate or even to redirect those folks will take a significant amount of time. Chameleon does not respond to direct messages. Chameleon does not post to Facebook or Instagram. That's people. A part-time photographer and a volunteer - me.

By making the argument that saving just ONE animal would make it all worth it, disregards the experience, skills, and emotional burden that career animal welfare workers endure on a daily basis. It is easy for someone who does not do the work to judge and claim that they could do better. We heard last month from many cat volunteers. But the 48 hr would be a blanket for all animals. A feral/difficult cat is very different when it is 8 lbs versus a 50 lb dog with behavior issues.

As a dog volunteer, I want to share that there are incidents where fantastic humans want to adopt animals that we know collectively are on a downwards trajectory. But it's not as simple as just getting an animal out of the shelter and they are magically alright. That's what PART 1 #6 is essentially allowing.

I've seen cases where vulnerable animals were adopted by well-intentioned folks who were not equipped to handle the dog, and for devastating outcomes to happen when the dog bites another dog, or a human, and comes back in to be put down. It takes an emotional toll on all those involved. That is why I have seen animals be moved off adoption lists to give them either time with more consistent staff or advocate for them with an adoption partner that is equipped to support this dog.

I am in contact with the behavior and training team and many of the animal care attendants regarding animals that may or may not be able to be posted so I am also aware of how much time the team spends on matching animals with rescues as far as to Boise Idaho for animals that are not deemed dangerous but may have been on the decline. In recent months, there have been several transports of vulnerable animals matched to rescue partners in Portland, Boise, and Seattle. Katy Jones has done an amazing job of outreach, advocacy, and connection with out-of-state partners. That's a sustainable solution, not the shiny optics of posting for posting sake.

Thank you, Commissioners, for your time and service.

Marion Gourlay

As a 25 year volunteer with SF SPCA (banned now for leafletting off their property re the cruelty of leaving moms with kittens "out there" until weaning age) and with ACC., I'd like to comment :

- a) Please give interested parties 48 hour notice prior ACC euthanasia.
- b) Need CIP (call interested party) policy reinstated at ACC, will save lives
- c) Personally want to re-iterate : It is a shocking, cruel, wrong policy of both SF SPCA and SF ACC to not save moms with young kittens outdoors when volunteers would willingly help but are not asked to do so. Need standard replies when callers to SF ACC report that situation.

Ian Murphy

I joined the SFACC staff as an animal control officer (ACO) in February 2015 and worked in this role until September, 2019. In my time at SFACC, I saw a dramatic increase in the amount of dogs who made it out of the shelter alive, but only in the most recent of years.

When I began at SFACC, if I brought in a stray or surrendered pit bull, chances were that it would be euthanized at the shelter. There are numerous dogs who I still think about who were deemed too "high arousal" to be placed into homes. At the time, "high arousal" meant anything from "too aggressive" to "too strong" to "too young and enthusiastic". There were countless dogs euthanized who fell into the last two categories. I remember hearing the Behavior and Training Department (the staffing of which has completely changed since then), lament that there were dogs in the shelter who were "too large" or "too strong" to be walked by the aging volunteer population (most of who are in their late sixties/early seventies). As a result, a couple of those "Good Dogs" were euthanized because they were too strong to be walked by our volunteers. Additionally, there were plenty of young dogs who were euthanized as they were too jumpy or mouthy (not bitey, but mouthy). It got to the point, where I knew if a dog would make it out of the shelter alive when I picked it up in the field. The under socialized, friendly and enthusiastic pit bulls were primarily euthanized as they were seen as a "potential liability" in placing them in the public (this was directly told to me by members of staff on multiple occasions). There are countless "Good Dogs" who are now dead based on these outdated practices - Every night, as I try to sleep, I still think of these souls and how they weren't given the chances they deserved. I think of Fiona and Malachai and Kaiser and Menace and dozens of other young, dead pit bulls who might still be alive if someone had advocated on their behalf.

If Katy Jones had been doing the job THEN that she is doing now, those dogs would have made it out of San Francisco Animal Care and Control alive. What Katy Jones is doing for the shelter community has been huge. The role that was created for her has ensured that countless dogs have been given a chance at the "Forever Home" that we regularly talk about when we talk about Animal Rescue. She goes above and beyond, driving dogs hours when needed, to get them to suitable foster homes. I don't want to speak disparagingly of former employees at SFACC, but I'll say that the work Katy does, speaks for itself. If there is any doubt whatsoever that more dogs are leaving SFACC alive now than they were 5 years ago, pull the numbers.

Not all dogs are Good. In the years I worked at SFACC, there were only a couple of "Bad Dogs" that I met. But the thing about Bad Dogs, is that they're incredibly dangerous. They can kill people. They can kill children. They can kill other animals. I am confident in saying that if in 2020, a dog fails the multiple behavior evaluations done at SFACC, is not offered to a rescue and is euthanized, it is because that dog was dangerous. Considering my professional experience in this department, legally, I would be considered an "Expert Witness" and not a member of the public with an opinion.

I am submitting this in writing as I wanted to stay on topic and to not let my emotions about the work and the organization cloud my response. I will say that I currently have absolutely zero skin in this game. I now teach ESL to refugees and will soon be moving out of the country. SFACC is very much in my rearview mirror. There were plenty of grievances I had with the working environment and culture there, but what this current conversation is about, is not one of those grievances. The success of SFACC's Live Release Rate is something that should be applauded and the people doing the work there need to be

better recognized for what they do.

Susie Reichert-Wong

My name is Susie Reichert-Wong and I have been a volunteer at San Francisco animal care and control for 10 1/2 years.

I appreciate the work you are all doing on behalf of animal welfare in the city. I have worked at the Marin Humane Society and San Francisco SPCA and a veterinary hospital when I was younger and I have to say I've never worked with a more compassionate caring staff then those at our shelter. I am constantly amazed at what they are able to accomplish, they do so much with so little resources.

I know the subject of euthanasia is a very difficult one, and I would only like to see that whatever decision you make to bring to the supervisors that it would be a decision that would support the staff at the shelter. I know how much they labor over every animal that has to be put down, it is a gut wrenching difficult decision and no one ever wants to make it. I've witnessed over the years how hard the staff tries to do what's best for every animal that comes in, whether it be disabled, sick, hard to handle and undersocialized, they truly try their very best. Please take into account the hard job they all have to do on a daily basis and please support them in anyway you can.

I would also like to say that the newest policy around feral kittens seems to be very ill advised. I have fostered many litters of abandon kittens and they all found wonderful homes. These included bottle feeders, ones that were sick, and I know they did better off coming to a foster then they would've if they'd stayed in someone's backyard.

Please look at that policy, and see if it's making any sense to continue it.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, I appreciate it. I truly believe in the staff working at the shelter, they are all heroes to me, it is not an easy job.

Pauline Le

First, please allow me to thank you, Commissioners, for serving our community.

I would like to address the euthanasia policy on tomorrow's agenda because this policy seems well-intentioned but leaves room for accidents, some of which could unfortunately have grave consequences.

In regards to Part 2, #4: Entirely remove any reference to "Interested Persons" as it sets a very dangerous precedent. Responsible organizations have clear controls before releasing any animal, even a seemingly harmless puppy, to the public. ACC has an application process, interview process and, in some cases, conducts home inspections. By allowing "interested persons" to claim an animal, it means that anyone, capable or not, can take an animal that has exhibited serious behavioral or medical issues. Please leave these critical decisions with huge safety and liability implications to experts that actually

know and understand these individual animals.

In regards to Part 3, #4: Include “Injury” and not just “Severe Injury.” An animal may injure an adult who loses some blood but does not require stitching (“injury”), but please remember that that same adult “injury” inflicted on a small child or baby could still result in a very severe injury. These are important considerations that shelter staff have to remember before placing a potentially dangerous animal into the hands of our well-meaning community.

If this Commission is serious about recommending any policy, please simultaneously recommend a budget increase to concomitantly support the smooth execution of the policy. Part #2 alone seems to require a full-time staff person. Please do not put forth ideal policies that end up being operational nightmares for the already hardworking, underpaid staff. They are open to change but, unfortunately, this is not the right direction.

I overhear a lot when volunteering at ACC, such as when staff euthanize a dog that they had poured their expertise, heart and soul into saving, but ultimately could not. They then use their 10-minute break to cry only to return and try to refocus on saving the next one. Everyone wishes that the animals that entered ACC were not previously abused, traumatized or in pain, but some are. I am grateful for staff like Ariana Luchsinger, LT Taylor, Katy Jones and MANY more who go beyond their roles to successfully rehab animals that other rescues would not touch. Time and again, ACC staff are the ones taking home and fostering challenging animals (even when it means using their own personal time and money), in the hopes that these animals will be able to turn a corner and become adoptable to the general public. But, no matter how much love we give, a few sadly can't get there.

Commissioners, this policy might help 1% of the animals, but it would take away staff's time to help the other 99% succeed—given very limited shelter resources, especially with the planned budget cuts, this policy might actually hurt more animals than it helps.

Thank you for considering our perspectives.

Terri Matranga

My name is Terri Matranga and I have been a volunteer with SFACC for the past 10 years and am involved in the FETCH program and also transport for them.

Transporting for SFACC has provided me with the opportunity to meet and speak with many of the rescues that SFACC works so closely with in trying to place and find homes for these very precious dogs. I can tell you when transporting SFACC's dogs out of the shelter and to rescues, when meeting many of the people that run these rescues, they have said how much they appreciate all that SFACC does to get their dogs into rescue. They appreciate all of the forthcoming information they receive, they appreciate the dog-to-dog videos, they appreciate the behavior and medical evaluations, and they very much appreciate the partnership with SFACC. They have said that many of the other shelters do not provide all of these things when requesting that they take one of their dogs out of their shelters and how much they really need and depend on receiving as much info as possible before the dog arrives at their doorstep. Kathryn (Katy) Jones, who is the Partner Transfer Coordinator, works tirelessly with the rescues in

placing our dogs. Katy does an amazing job in this regard and I know spends many hours on emails, phone calls, etc., to try to find placement for these dogs who otherwise would not have a place to go. She has, on many occasions, when transport cannot be handled by a volunteer for whatever reason, jumped in the car herself and driven a particular dog to safety with a rescue. Under the care of Katy and others at SFACC in this regard, we are now able to do multi-state rescue placements which has really opened up the rescue pool and helped get many of our dogs out.

The people at SFACC are completely dedicated to these dogs and doing all that they can for them to try to get them into rescue. Although I am not privy to the behind-the-scenes workings of SFACC administration, I do know that placing these dogs into a rescue that can give them the best chance at succeeding in continued growth and eventually finding that perfect fit and forever home consists of many factors that need to be considered. You cannot just give one of these dogs to someone just because they found them or because they want them. If such placements were made, there is a very high probability that the dog would not succeed because it may not have been a good fit, a fit that is only possible when all aspects are looked at for the dog and its adopter.

I know and have witnessed, first hand, the heart and soul and unwavering dedication that all of the people who work with these dogs at SFACC, as well as my fellow volunteers, have placed and continue to place into the care, enrichment, and overall well-being of these dogs.

To suggest otherwise, is a travesty.

Mike Clausen

My name is Mike Clausen and I am a board member and dog evaluator for Golden State German Shepherd Rescue. I have been working with SF ACC and Kathryn Jones (Dog Transfer Coordinator) and her team for a little over 2 years now. I wanted to bring to light my experience in working with the shelter and the team. Kathryn and her team work extremely hard at finding placement for adoptable animals as well as finding rescues to help take the dogs that aren't readily available for adoption. As an evaluator for Golden State, Kathryn knows which dogs are a likely fit for our rescue as well as always personally invites me to come and do evaluations for the shepherds, so that even if my rescue cannot take the dog due to our criteria (under socialized, uncomfortable with handling, don't get along with my test dog), we work to figure out what other rescues to reach out in our network, that will take that type of dog. Since I've been working with SF ACC and Kathryn, I have seen her network of rescuers and transporters grow (in and out of state) and she has a very high success rate of placing dogs that my rescue cannot/will not take.

Every time I am at the shelter, the staff & volunteers are extremely helpful, as well as it is obvious that the animals are well taken care of. The difference from being at SF ACC compared to other shelters is staggering. The kennels are always cleaned, dogs have toys, always being fed and volunteers walking the dogs (that are safe to walk), and the public is meeting the adoptable animals. I will add that there are times I'm slow to respond back to Kathryn, and then I will get emails from Tim asking me the status of a certain dog, and if we will take them. The team works tirelessly to exhaust all their options, even going beyond the review dates for dogs to help them get placed into a rescue. There are times when I am able to take a dog into GSGSR's program, but unable to take on the eval day, SF ACC will wait for us to find a foster to be able to pull, even if it extends the due out date.

The sad reality of rescue and shelter work is that not all dogs that are dumped at shelters are adoptable

and those dogs become a liability. Golden State is very conservative in the dogs we pull, because we know of the inherent risks of taking on a dog that has been mistreated, under socialized or one that is petrified. These are animals that have a tendency to bite or cause harm. These are also dogs that in my opinion should not be considered for or made available to the general public. We have a very thorough evaluation process, that most adopters don't realize rescues and shelters complete. It pains me that I'm not able to take certain dogs, but that's not as painful as adopting out a dog that in turns bites a child or kills another dog. That type of dog is then brought back into the shelter environment (where it's already scared, and based on laws will have to wait out a longer quarantine period, effectively stressing that dog out more. The physical and mental stress for these types of dogs is so severe, that prolonging their stay in the shelter environment is inhumane. I have 100% confidence in SF ACC's team of evaluators and rescue coordinators to show proper evaluations documentation as well as showing when a dog is considered dangerous/un-adoptable. It's this confidence in the SF ACC team that makes Golden State want to work with them to help find placement for dogs needing rescue.

I know that euthanizing animals is an extremely emotional and distressing situation for anyone to have to deal with. I know in my heart of hearts that the team at SF ACC does not take this lightly. We have to have confidence in our team at SF ACC to make this decision where it is warranted. I know that they have my utmost respect and backing.

Thank you for your time.

Carolyn Lucas

I have been a volunteer at San Francisco Animal Care and Control for almost 15 years. During my time there I have come to know what a dedicated and knowledgeable staff we have at ACC. For the people that work there this is not just a job - it is a calling. They constantly go above and beyond to help the thousands of animals that come through our doors. Due to the efforts of these fine people we have a live release rate of 90%+ - which is amazing for a municipal shelter.

I understand that Commissioner Tenofsky is making a proposal that would mandate that SFACC put out a notice to the public on social media 48 hours before a euthanization is to occur. While I am sure Commissioner Tenofsky is doing this out of concern for our animals, I believe his plan will have many unintended consequences that will adversely affect ACC. For example, putting out a notice like that will inevitably result in well meaning individuals calling the shelter and offering to take the animal scheduled for euthanasia. Staff members will have to be assigned to deal with such requests, which will take time away from their regular duties. And our staff is, in my opinion, over loaded with work already. These staff members will have to screen this individual thoroughly to make sure they know what they are getting into and are capable of properly taking care of the animal in question. Then, I would assume, the City Attorney's office would have to review the matter to see what liability the City would have by permitting the animal to be released out into the community. There may be several requests for the same animal and each would have to be screened and reviewed in this manner. And while all that goes on the animal sits in a cage suffering.

In addition, the assigned staff members would have to field calls from concerned members of the public who would be distressed by the notice on social media and, while not offering to take the animal, would want to complain, question, etc. The staff members would have to spend time explaining to such callers

the entire situation and why the euthanasia decision was made. They would have to do a lot of educating in these phone contacts to help people understand the issues faced by an open admission municipal shelter.

Members of the public who read these notices on social media might even start calling private rescue groups, who are already overloaded themselves, and demand that they step up and take the animal scheduled for euthanasia. These rescue groups don't need that pressure.

Social media is a very powerful tool and soon after this policy went into effect some staff members would have to be tasked with developing wide reaching programs for education and outreach to explain to the community the necessity at times of euthanasia at an open admission municipal shelter. I have often been asked by friends if ACC is a no-kill shelter. I tell them we aren't, but then I explain to them why at times it is necessary to euthanize. I also explain to them what excellent measures we take to avoid having to do that and what success we have had with increasing our live release rate. But that is a one on one conversation. You start posting scheduled euthanizations on social media and we are going to need to have that conversation with thousands of people. Hence there would be a need for a program of community outreach and education that staff members would have to develop. - Not something that can be designed and implemented quickly and easily.

And that brings me to the overall issue of staffing at ACC. Everyone who works there has more work than they can handle right now. How do you expect our staff members to suddenly take on new and time consuming tasks? Should the City increase our staffing? Well that would be lovely, but because of the state of our economy I have heard the Mayor is going to be forced to cut - not expand - the already tight budgets of City departments this fiscal year.

In summary, please consider that this proposed policy of Commissioner Tenofsky's - while well-intentioned - will put a tremendous burden on the staff at ACC and even decrease the quality of care we are able to give to the 90% of our animals that we are able to adopt out successfully.

Lisa Stanziano

As a long-time volunteer at San Francisco Animal Care and Control (SFACC), I want to respond to some issues that have been on your agenda for several months regarding these policies: use of the Contact Interested Party (CIP) policy; use of social media to promote animals for rescue; and volunteer fostering of feral mother cats with their litters.

1) I have personally used the CIP to help move more than one dog from SFACC to a partner rescue organization. Having at least a two-day window for communication is a critical safety net, even when the process is smooth and all factors--such as the rescue partner lining up a foster or arranging medical care-- fall into place. I support the continuance of a two-day CIP.

2) Social media is widely used by animal shelters to extend their outreach. Selectively posting specific "rescue-org alerts" regarding high-priority unavailable animals is worth trying, in my opinion. Facebook posts and email aliases are two ways that can widen the opportunity for an animal. To the argument that rescue groups prefer not to receive a deluge of emails, an online survey or poll to partners can determine this preference. Or the rescue can simply opt out receiving them. SFACC can also use one

alias (group of rescues) per animal type (dogs, cats, smalls).

SFACC has social media platforms with many followers, and integration with shelter software. Using software automation can save time for staff, if done efficiently. I support exploring these ways. SF is the city of technology! Where is the IT assistance from the city on this? Another benefit is transparency: Posting animals that have medical or behavioral needs beyond what ACC can provide educates the public about the difficult work that the shelter does, in my opinion. Sharing the hard cases as well as the success stories inspires trust, appreciation, and assistance.

3) Regarding a policy for foster mother cats and their litters, I support the many comments from the May meeting--an overwhelming number--of experienced volunteers who have spoken to successful work of Toni's Kitty Rescue and SFACC staff and volunteers to help reduce the number of feral cats by caring for the litters safely in foster homes. This policy should be guided by evidence of a method that works in our city, and the shelter has statistics on the reduction of feral cats and kittens over recent years. What evidence is driving the change in policy (outside of the SIP order, which at this point is not an issue)? If the primary factor is lack of resources, I urge SFACC to look to two valuable resources: volunteers and the program-supporting organization, the Friends of SFACC. SFACC must be a leader in its mission to help all animals; not turn away and risk the lives of these mother cats and kittens.

I appreciate your thoroughness in examining these policies. They are complicated and their work has deep roots in the community. They warrant recommendations that will benefit the animals of San Francisco.

Mitchell Schoenbrun

I'm a concerned resident of San Francisco. I've been to many Animal Welfare Commission meetings in the last two years. You may know me as one of the individuals who have filmed the meetings and made the proceedings public on YouTube.

I am very concerned that a simple and reasonable protection for animals, a 48 hour notification period before euthanasia, seems to be in jeopardy of being implemented. The excuses from ACC I've heard are pathetic and suggest that ACC higher ups should be replaced with caring individuals who understand the department's mission.

Betsy Martinez

As a San Francisco and Bay Area native I have been following the legislation that would require San Francisco Animal Care and Control to notify animal rescue organizations and the public at least 48 hours in advance before any animal is euthanized.

As a San Franciscan I am pleading you vote YES and support this legislation as it would be a step towards making sure all animals receive the help they need rather than being immediately euthanized.

Rescue organizations and animal welfare advocates are unable to help these animals if they do not know

that the animals exist. So many animals are quietly put down and go unnoticed to the general public.

Public funded government agencies must be transparent when caring for the most vulnerable. This legislation would address two important issues that are still causing animals to be unnecessarily killed in our city shelter system.

Our animals in San Francisco deserve better and this is why I hope that you vote in favor of transparency and notification legislation.

Molly Schimke

I am writing in support of the proposal to give the public 48 hours notice when an animal at ACC will be euthanized.

I do understand that some animals may be deemed as dangerous and unsafe to have in public, and that seriously injured animals may need to be let go humanely. Those cases aren't the issue.

My concern is hospice animals that could have weeks or months to live out in a home with someone who understands that they'd be providing palliative end-of-life care and a happy ending in a loving home, as opposed to dying in the vet room at ACC because they assume that no one would want them. Plenty of people are open to taking animals like that, especially if they see their images on social media. And animal shelters all over the country already do this.

Look at Muttnville who has a highly successful hospice program and finds homes for hundreds of dogs each year this way. (I know because I'm actually on the wait list for one myself, but there are far more people waiting for a hospice dog than there are dying dogs right now!)

ACC sometimes claims to have a hospice program, but I have volunteered there with cats for almost 9 years and I have never once seen proof of it. The only hospice cats that have ever gone home from there were taken by rescue groups, either TKR or Give Me Shelter, and then ACC volunteers like myself take them home via the rescue group. Never once has it been facilitated through ACC, unless you count the fact that TKR is housed inside ACC.

I have witnessed plenty of old cats that have disappeared from the volunteer rooms over the years and we never know what happened to them, but most likely many were euthanized because the vets thought it was the better (easier) thing to do. I don't see how it could possibly hurt to give this a try in case it saves even a few lives. And if they're saying it will take too much staff to do it, I'm sure they could find many trusted volunteers who would do it for free.

Ana Keefe

After 4+ years of working at SFACC, I have witnessed each and every employee go above and beyond to save, salvage, and find homes for every animal that entered that building. Animals that other shelters

would not give a chance are loved, worked with, and each and every possible avenue is explored so long as they are not dangerous to the community or literally on the brink of death. I have not seen such commitment to animal welfare as I have there, and would not work for another animal control for that very reason. As a former employee I personally have done everything in my powers along with the support of coworkers from all departments to care for and home any animal that came our way, and I know that continues. It is the true and honest culture of SFACC and one that makes it special. Each individual and the facility as a whole have nothing but concern for the welfare of all animals and should be recognized for doing so. Having now seen from the perspective of a non-employee who still works with various animal control services, I can truly say that SFACC rises above and beyond in their knowledge, ability, and care for each soul that crosses their threshold. I wholeheartedly support SFACC with all I have and know they truly do the best by all creatures.

Jessica McEntee

My name is Jessica and I am a dog volunteer at ACC. I want to express my concerns about this proposal, particularly Part 2 Number 5 regarding social media posts. I volunteered about 800 hours in the shelter this past year, as well as the year prior. I volunteer with the available dogs for adoption, the Fetch program which works with all of the dog population, participate in playgroups, and provide the dogs with much-needed breaks from the shelter on field trips and sleepovers. What has struck me the most about ACC since joining a few years ago is the amount of compassion and dedication that the staff provides to these animals. This along with their expertise has resulted in a strong system of valuable relationships with trusted rescue partners. We are incredibly fortunate to have Dog Transfer Coordinator Katy Jones working tirelessly to strengthen and expand this network.

When I am not working at my job as an ICU nurse or volunteering in the shelter, I also transport dogs to rescues, driving some dogs that have extremely limited appropriate rescue options in California, to Arizona and Oregon. Katy has broadened this network across state lines to find the best possible placements with vetted rescue groups. ACC is committed to establishing partnerships with organizations that they can trust will do right by these dogs.

It may not be obvious, but this proposal could undermine this work that has been done thus far. I don't believe the commission intends to disrupt an effective system (one that has led to progress not just in numbers, but also in quality of placements) with this proposal, but unfortunately it could do just that. As stated in a previous meeting, ACC still has the final say on who can take an animal from the shelter; so in these particularly challenging cases, those partners that fit the criteria would have already been contacted. It is the rescue partners' right to decline those offers. These wide net posts causing the public to tag, DM, or email these rescues would once again lead to partners getting unnecessarily inundated with requests – it's a large step back. Additionally, there would be the time-consuming response staff would be responsible for regarding interest from unqualified individuals or organizations, regardless of sponsorship.

I heard it mentioned that these posts would be "easy" given the use of social media already in place. I want to remind the commission that many of the posts are done by volunteers; it would be inappropriate to ask them to monitor posts relating to such delicate matters. It seems it would be prudent of those looking to help the animals to ask ACC what would in fact be helpful in order to continue making progress rather than undoing much of their hard work - particularly while facing a large budget cut. I think we can agree that just because someone, even a celebrity, posts something on Twitter doesn't necessarily deem the approach to be best practice.

I thank the commission for your diligent work. I hope these concerns are given careful consideration.

Luke Montgomery

My name is Luke Montgomery. I'm a co-founder of Adopt-A-Pet.com. As a resident of San Francisco [] I am writing to you to encourage you to support the introduction and passing of the notification legislation that would require SFACC to notify rescue groups and the public before euthanizing animals.

It's a pretty obvious way to save more animal lives and make sure that animals are not killed when they could have been saved. I have zero understanding how anybody could oppose this on a rational grounds.

A similar measure was passed in Austin, Texas. And even though Austin already intakes more animals - and has a higher save rate than SFACC does - it has worked great there. This is common sense policy that ensures no animal is killed unnecessarily and without being given a fair shot at a chance of rescue. Again, what silly bad-faith argument could be made against something so simple when lives are at stake? Furthermore, as SFACC is a public tax-supported agency we as citizens should have the right to know what is happening to our animals behind closed doors.

Please vote supporting this important legislation that will inevitably save lives.

Dale Tegtman

Commissioners,

I'm writing to you tonight to encourage you to adopt the proposed euthanasia alert protocol.

I've had the opportunity to sit in on a few meetings of the Animal Care and Control Commission this year. I have been impressed with the speed at which the Commissioners agreed to review both the oversight of last April's policy change and to introduce this change which will will save the lives of numerous animals.

None of us doubt that San Franciscans overall prefer outcomes where euthanasia is a last resort. The goal of ACC must be to use euthanasia after every reasonable means of saving an animal has failed. Alerting the public to the possibility of euthanasia is then both an opportunity to democratize and validate the decision making of the ACC.

While I respect that there are always budget issues attached to any new protocol, it seems here the cost of euthanizing animals is more significant than a few additional days of food and board. Also, as a former professional blogger, it seems to me that anyone who imagines taking a few photos and posting to social media daily has too high an opportunity cost is idealizing a social media strategy.

For a minority of animals, euthanasia will be the most compassionate choice. The public deserves the chance to receive the ACC's Hail Mary pass on those heartbreaking cases in which the choice to euthanize is not a necessary one.

Thank you for considering this proposal and continuing your good work on behalf of the many voiceless lives that populate San Francisco.

Kostadinou Goulas

I have been following with interest the push for the introduction and passage of legislation that would require San Francisco Animal Care & Control to notify animal rescue organizations and the public at least 48 hours in advance before killing any animal. This legislation would be an important step to making sure more animals get the help they need, rather than a death sentence. As a San Franciscan, I am asking you to vote yes in support of this legislation and to promote its introduction and passage by our Board of Supervisors.

Rescue organizations and caring people cannot step up to help animals if they do not know the animal exists. Government agencies who care for vulnerable populations need to be as transparent as possible. This legislation would address two important issues that are still causing animals to be unnecessarily killed in our city shelter system.

I hope you will make the compassionate and intelligent decision and vote in favor of this transparency and notification legislation. The animals of San Francisco deserve better than they are currently getting.

Tara Hess

I am writing to voice my support for the proposed legislation that would require SFACC to notify rescue groups, interested parties, and the public 48 hours prior to euthanizing an animal who is not irremediably suffering. I urge you to support this lifesaving legislation.

This legislation would prevent unnecessary killing by ensuring that the people and organizations who may be able to help animals at risk actually *know* about them. This type of transparency just makes sense. Instead of being content with their current live release rate, SFACC should look to other municipal open-admission shelters with higher live release rates and strive to achieve similar success. This legislation is a good start. The city of Austin, Texas passed similar legislation last year despite having both a higher intake rate and a higher live release rate.

Please support this vital legislation and promote its introduction and passage to the Board of Supervisors.

Mark O'Brien

I have been following with interest the push for the introduction and passage of legislation that would require San Francisco Animal Care & Control to notify animal rescue organizations and the public at least 48 hours in advance before killing any animal. This legislation would be an important step to making sure more animals get the help they need, rather than a death sentence. As a San Franciscan, I am asking you to vote yes in support of this legislation and to promote its introduction and passage by our Board of Supervisors.

Rescue organizations and caring people cannot step up to help animals if they do not know the animal exists. Government agencies who care for vulnerable populations need to be as transparent as possible. This legislation would address two important issues that are still causing animals to be unnecessarily killed in our city shelter system.

I hope you will make the compassionate and intelligent decision and vote in favor of this transparency and notification legislation. The animals of San Francisco deserve better than they are currently getting.

Susan Larsen

I am writing to you today to ask you to vote **yes** on proposed legislation that would require San Francisco Animal Care and Control (SFACC) to notify rescue groups, members of the public, and any other interested parties not less than 48 hours before an animal in their care is euthanized.

I have lived in San Francisco for 18 years and have always followed the work of SFACC. The citizens of San Francisco are fortunate to live in a city with a progressive and humane city shelter. My interactions with SFACC staff and my encounters with volunteers have highlighted the deep commitment that the SFACC community has to animals in need. However, when I attended a Commission of Animal Control and Welfare meeting this year I was shocked and disheartened to see SFACC and another commissioner (who is also a representative of local, well-known senior dog rescue) vehemently and aggressively oppose this proposed legislation that has the potential to save hundreds of lives.

The proposed system of notification can and should be implemented. Once in place, the notification process could easily be handled by volunteers. City shelters all over the country publicize the animals most at risk in their city shelters—and that transparency increases the number of foster homes, adopters and rescue organizations helping to get in-need animals out of the shelter and into good homes.

Change is always difficult, but it is never as hard as it would seem. SFACC does a great job re-homing animals, but I believe in working with other certified rescue groups and vetted individuals the euthanasia rate in San Francisco would be reduced. I have taken in animals and have worked with friends to foster and rehabilitate dogs that would have never been able to recover in a shelter environment. Please give the individual animals who need to recover outside of the shelter a fighting chance. We are a progressive and innovative city - we can and we must do this.

Victor Miranda

My name is Victor Miranda. I'm an animal lover and a resident of San Francisco. I am writing to you in support of the introduction and passing of the notification legislation that would require SFACC to notify rescue groups and the public before euthanizing animals.

This measure would minimize needless killings of animals and increase their chances of being homed.

A similar measure was passed in Austin, Texas. And even though Austin already intakes more animals - and has a higher save rate than SFACC does. Given that the SFACC is funded by our taxes, all we want is more transparency in the process, and a better chance at rescue for these animals.

Please support this legislature and save lives.

Shanti Zinzi

Just a public comment,
Yes please ALWAYS notify owner surrendered critters before euthanizing or anyone as well as public bringing an animal into shelter about euth policy.

Many assume an animal is a stray but in reality lives down the block.
They "steal" a cat bc it visits their garden-
Consequently, they surrender the animal to shelter but in reality the cat lives nearby and a few doors down.

The public assumes they are doing a service but in actuality legally would be considered "stealing" someone's "property"

I have seen this at times for the 15 yrs i volunteered w ACC and it is no fault of the truly amazing staff and volunteers

But it is a shadow and true disservice from policy makers.
I was working and/or in graduate school full time- when i volunteered

When i was able I would drive by the neighborhood the animal was picked up from and ring a few bells to inquire where the animal lived.

It wasn't hard, just took time. And i would find the owner.

Some were non English speaking, some senior, some disabled persons, none knew about ACC.

It's truly morally Reprehensible to sacrifice their family member bc some misinformed person from the public assumed stealing the cat from their property was a good samaritan act.

Most people have no idea.

And again, the people and employees are Truly stellar at the shelter and doing their best.

All of this info must be said at time of surrender.

As well as give notice and alert public when the animal is scheduled to die.

It is Time we all take responsibility to the mess of society including the disservice to animals and their guardians.

Perhaps the Person surrendering should sign a release that they are aware.

The shroud of secrecy is a disservice to the public and clearly the animal.

Citizens are still under the misconception of "no kill" city which it never was.

I support transparency.

And this new legislation.

Peter J McKosky

I hope you will be voting in favor of the notification legislation at this evenings meeting. While SFACC is misrepresenting what the notification legislation means to its staff and volunteers and trying to rally them around falsehoods, other volunteers fear being fired if they speak out in favor of the legislation. While it is no surprise why this desperate acting out by SFACC is happening. Transparency often leads to more accountability, more witnesses, more people in the know. These things often leads to change. This can feel threatening to leadership entrenched in antiquated ways of thinking and doing, but this is exactly what we owe vulnerable communities, including the animals who have been entrusted into SFACC's care.

The pandemic has highlighted why notification legislation is necessary. There haven't been any volunteers in the shelter for months and this means less critical and compassionate eyes in the shelter. Notification legislation would allow animal rescue organizations and the compassionate public to know what is going on in its shelter system, regardless of what is otherwise going on in the world.

We must also never forget that situations do not always improve with time. They can, and do get worse. Currently, rescue notification is left up to the whims of SFACC leadership who have had varying degrees of commitment to animal welfare, experience in animal sheltering, shifting priorities and beliefs about the value of animals. This shouldn't be the case. The lives of animals are too valuable to not enshrine into law a commitment that they have the best chance of getting out alive and to a good life. No animal should die an invisible, unnecessary death in a shelter when humane alternatives exist. Every possibility of protecting life and alleviating suffering should be exhausted.

SFACC has begun to refuse to supply me with open records (as you know this is illegal) in a timely manner. Part of this is because every time I get more records I find more animals who have been killed unnecessarily and take them to task for this. It also furthers my case on why this notification legislation is necessary to begin with.

While this notification legislation is not a panacea, it is a good, necessary and important step in improving the situation for animals in SF. I hope you will support this legislation and help make sure it is introduced by the Board of Supervisors and passed into law.

Thanks for all you do for the Commission and SF's animals.

Elizabeth Young

I am writing to ask that you please vote Yes in support of the proposed Euthanasia Alert legislation & to promote its introduction & passage by the Board of Supervisors.

Palomacy Pigeon & Dove Adoptions proudly traces its start to San Francisco Animal Care & Control (SFACC) where, in 2007, I, volunteering in the Smalls Department, first learned of the plight and potential of domestic, unreleasable pigeons and their unmet need for care. And so founded Palomacy.

Through these years, Palomacy has worked with SFACC staff and volunteers, community partners and rescue advocates to raise awareness about these amazing birds and to raise their standard of care towards parity with the other animals.

Having effectively created a rescue for animals that were deemed "unadoptable", Palomacy knows very well the power of information, the importance of community awareness for helping animals. And, inspired by Kristen Auerbach's 2019 transparency presentation at the American Pets Alive Conference and the fellow advocates currently speaking out on behalf of the invisible animals, we are writing this letter in support of increasing shelter transparency. We want to encourage and support SFACC in sharing more information about all the animals that they serve- those who live as well as those who do not.

As the City's only open admissions shelter, SFACC deserves and needs maximum community support to save the maximum number of animals.

Recently a letter marking SFACC's 30th anniversary was sent out sharing that "fewer than 10,000 animals" are now taken in per year and citing the 2018 outcomes of 6,025 animals placed alive. 1,613 were adopted, 2,548 were transferred to adoption partners, 1,288 reunited with their guardians and 576 returned to the wild. Palomacy celebrates each and every one of those animals and all of the incredible hard work and caring that goes into saving them. **And we ask, who are the animals not included amongst those 6,025?** How many animals were served in total? How many were euthanized and why? **Those are our animals in need of additional help.** And Palomacy, as a leader in pigeon rescue, is eager to partner in and support efforts to develop the additional help needed. To this end, Palomacy joins the rescues and advocates currently seeking amendments to City Codes in support of increased transparency, rescue, redemption and CIP before euthanasia.

Palomacy has seen tremendous progress in some ways- saving the lives of more than 1,000 unreleasable birds that would otherwise have been killed in the SF Bay Area, inspiring hundreds of volunteers, adopters, rescuers and shelters to join our life-saving, culture-changing efforts and assisting thousands of people and birds all across the country through our coaching, education and referral efforts. Yet so much more needs to be done.

How is this progress affecting pigeons in San Francisco, the birthplace of Palomacy? How can these highly intelligent, deeply emotional animals be best served? Based on data received through Freedom of Information Act requests, they are among the animals most frequently brought in to SFACC and still most frequently killed (even those with treatable conditions) yet there is no information shared publicly about the wild pigeons & little about the domestics. Not enough is being done to help them survive. We believe that more animals- including pigeons- would be helped if more information about them was made available, if more attention was focused on those intakes without live outcomes.

Palomacy thanks you and the SF Commission of Animal Control & Welfare for your commitment to helping all animals and is here to support your doing so.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. Also, if you or any of your colleagues would like to better understand pigeons, I would be honored to bring one to meet you. The pigeon would be unobtrusive, safely contained and very comfortable acting as an ambassador. Sadly, what most people think they know about pigeons is inaccurate. For example- they aren't dirty, dumb nor a health risk. Quite the opposite on all counts. We call them gateways to compassion. (See [What Is Palomacy?](#))

Michele Liapes

As a long-time native San Franciscan, I am writing to express my strong support for proposed legislation requiring SF Animal Care and Control to notify the public of any intent to put an animal to death at least 48 hours in advance--a more extensive time frame would be even better.

This city was designated as a sanctuary for animals with a philosophy in place that assured that no animal not irreversibly suffering and sick or vicious would be put to death. What happened to it? Now, apparently some 1200 creatures are put down every year, with a good 75% of them being salvageable--and therefore having the right to live in this City of St. Francis.

If this assurance cannot be put in place, I suggest that it's time to defund Animal Care and Control (along with the Police), and divert that funding to more responsible animal protection and welfare organizations..

Michael Madison

I am writing today to urge you to support the passage of proposed legislation requiring a minimum 48 hour advance notification to local rescue organizations before any animal can be euthanized by the city shelter. This is an important, straightforward, humane and just legislative effort that deserves your support. It has I believe overwhelming support of the people of San Francisco.

As you know the name "San Francisco" is a nod to St. Francis. It is a fitting update to the legacy of that name that the city takes this approach to the humane care of vulnerable animals, especially when such a community-supported, collaborative approach is within reach today.

Thank you for your attention and hard work on reviewing carefully this common sense legislation; please vote "yes". I look forward to hearing good news of your support for passage to the Board of Supervisors.

Janine

I've been involved obliquely in animal rescue for years. As a compassionate person, I always find my way into situations where an animal may need my help, as a human, and I've tried to not fail them.

I think back to one experience with ACC and my heart stops. I watched a young man overdose on drugs at a BART station. I only noticed that he was turning blue and completely unresponsive, because his dog

companion, a very young and nervous pit bull, had been barking uncontrollably and jumping at him. I alerted the BART attendants and a small crowd gathered. We knew he was overdosing; they already had seen this batch of fentanyl laced heroin take the lives of two people earlier that week, and people frantically called for both paramedics and friends who might be carrying narcan in the area.

Eventually the police showed up, and even longer after that, the paramedics. We slapped this poor man and one woman attempted mouth to mouth, until the paramedics revived him miraculously. So many of us had to also calm his dog, myself included, and though his human was alive, police informed us they would take this sweet soul to ACC to await his release from the hospital.

I knew this stay wouldn't be free, so I called almost daily and offered to pay his lodging. No one was sure what became of his guardian, who was houseless and certainly could not afford these fees. I asked that he be relinquished to be if he became adoptable, and it appeared there were other people who had been vouching for this hero dog and calling in as well. We all witnessed his temperament and could only expect that he was terribly scared, but not vicious; when another dog walked by during the fiasco, he lay down passively and wagged his tail. He barked at a skateboard and hid. These are not signs of an aggressive animal.

On the day before he was going to be up for adoption, he was euthanized. A volunteer had said he tried to bite another dog while on a walk. After weeks in solitary confinement, this small transgression cost him his life, and with no altering any of his advocates who, in this complicated situation, tried to hold space for him.

I saw so clearly those final weeks for him. I put myself in his situation and recognized how unfair this system is; how could a judgement call be made for a terrified animal, who was someone's pet, and deserved more than a week of deciding if he lived or died, especially when I offered to step in with a rescue group? This dog was a pit bull. I do not doubt that had he been any other breed, he'd be alive today. When ACC does not give notice to rescue groups and trained advocates to step in, they pander to the same mental bias that allows humans to be considered unredeemable by society and thrown away. They pander to breed bias that would be unacceptable in any other format.

If SF is a progressive city at the forefront of the movement for human rights, it needs to step up for all of the sentient beings in its jurisdiction. Please pass this legislation being introduced today that prevents these death penalties against animals with no jury.

Please remember this dog who saved a life, and it cost him his. We have to make sure to protect those that protect us.

Joanne Filipone

I'm writing you to vote Yes on the proposed Animal Care & Control Euthanasia Alert Legislation to notify the public before killing any animals in their custody.

I was shocked to learn San Francisco does not have a simple notification method - e.g. public media, website, Twitter, etc - to notify the public prior to euthanizing an animal taken under AC&C's protection. That simple step which other cities have implemented, with minimal administrative burden, has helped saved countless lives.

Again, I encourage you to vote Yes & continue the process to the Board of Supervisors so this legislation may be passed.

Noa Olson

I was born and raised in a city named after St. Francis, and I find it strange that there isn't ALREADY legislation that requires our local animal shelter (SF/ACC), to inform the public about animals ACC is planning to kill so that those animals are given an opportunity to be rescued or adopted. Even the best animal shelters can be terrifying places, and animals often get sick and do not behave normally there.

Corinne Dowling

My name is Corinne Dowling and I would like to comment on the proposed legislation to require SFACC to post an animal publicly for 48 hours prior to euthanasia.

I founded an environmental enrichment program, Give a Dog a Bone, for dogs in legal custody and medically necessary isolation in the year 2000, and ran it for 10 years. During that time, I worked hand-in-hand with SFACC staff. I also worked with many dangerous dogs.

What I can say about the shelter workers, the people who care daily for the animals that are brought in, the people who routinely deal with the consequences of ignorance, cruelty, and disregard toward animals, is that they are the very life of SFACC. The shelter workers whom I know are compassionate, knowledgeable, skilled, and committed to caring for the animals who arrive at SFACC with love and respect. Most of them have adopted animals that have been surrendered to SFACC.

Hard decisions have to be made at a municipal open-admissions shelter, and the hardest of those decisions is the decision to euthanize an animal. The reasons are many: for instance, an animal suffering

from deadly injuries or illness, or an animal posing a risk to our community.

Decision making about which animals are to be euthanized are made with much thoughtful, careful deliberation by a few select trained and educated staffers with sound integrity. I was privy to some of those decisions and we all agonized over those losses. But we understood as well, that we were releasing an animal from great suffering, either behaviorally or medically.

If unsafe or sick or injured animals are publicly posted, not only do they suffer needlessly for another two days, but the risks are tremendous if they are released, especially with an animal who has been deemed too dangerous to public safety by knowledgeable, trained experts in their field, animal welfare. There are many good hearted folks or charitable animal rescues who believe that those animals will be able to change. They can't; our species has somehow, accidentally or deliberately, ruined them to the point of no return. Many people don't understand the impossibility of caring for a dangerous animal. Nor do people want an aggressive, dangerous animal living next door, or next door to their elderly parents, nor encounter a dangerous dog while walking down the block with their toddler.

Too many animals to count have been damaged by our species. We are responsible for those damaged animals, and too often, they have been damaged to the point where they are no longer safe to be around us.

We have to leave euthanasia decisions to the people who are most equipped to make them.

It is the responsible, moral thing to do.

Elizabeth Mandel

I am writing **in support of AGENDA ITEM 6A: Euthanasia Protocol at SF Animal Care and Control**. I DO NOT think any animal should be euthanized unless the animal is irredeemably suffering as documented by a licensed veterinarian. I would like to see San Francisco become a NO KILL city.

Terri Ludden

As a long term volunteer (10+years) at the ACC I would like to voice my support for the 48 hour waiting period. From my experience I have seen many animals come into the shelter terrified. Given their state of anxiety it is not possible to adequately determine whether the animal is adoptable within 48 hours. It is also not always possible to find a potential rescue group within 48 hours. It is also not always possible to determine their physical state because they are so shutdown within 48 hours. When it comes to saving an animal's life, I strongly believe we must take the time and not rush the judgment.

Lynda Hirose

I am writing today to support the proposal of a 48 hour notice period for euthanasia at S.F. Animal Care and Control. I am a long time cat volunteer on the Orange Team, and work with the unavailable cats and kittens, primarily with the undersocialized or so-called behavior cats.

Several months ago when I heard that the CIP protocols had been discontinued, I was concerned that there was no option for rescues or others to save cats who they felt were redeemable. Certainly the judgment call regarding whether or not an animal can be given another chance at life, is just that: a judgment call that might differ, depending on the person's point of view, and the options that may or may not be available to the animal. There are many examples which I believe others have spoken to, where other options were available for the cat who was euthanized before those options were known or considered. As a Volunteer, I have witnessed the lack of transparency at Acc, especially regarding euthanasia, which has led to much whispering and conversations behind closed doors, as well as distrust between volunteers and staff. I realized early on, that the only way to find out what "happened" to a cat, was to surreptitiously walk around and ask. I definitely felt it was not a question to be asked openly.

To discontinue the CIP adds a veil of opacity to an agency that needs to move towards more transparency. With the shrinking budget as they are, I would think that Acc would want to take advantage of as many resources as is available to them, to give the animals in their care another chance at life. Please support the CIP protocols to this end.

Please support the proposal.

Kathy Hentges

I'm writing in support of SFACC's current approach to the difficult decision to euthanize an animal. I've been a volunteer with ACC for about ten years. In my volunteer role I work with the dogs, I train new dog volunteers, I interview and help potential adopters and I'm on the social media team. Over the years I've come to know ACC staff members well. I've watched the difficult conditions they work under, the hostility directed at them simply for being the imperfect safety net when the public fails animals, and I admire their professionalism. I am concerned that not enough weight is being given to the professional knowledge of ACC staff in this decision to force a poorly thought out ordinance on the agency. We all (rightfully so) get to have a say in how a public agency is run, but at the end of the day when the professionals who actually do the work say this ordinance will create a myriad of unintentional consequences those concerns must be given the weight they deserve.

I understand mandatory posting of animals on the euthanasia list on ACC's social media is part of this ordinance. Our social media is run by one part-time staff member and a fluctuating number of volunteers, usually one to three. As it is now we have a difficult time posting available animals and responding to public requests and comments. Public requests and comments are particularly challenging; we do the best we can but; with the exception of the part-time staff member, we are not onsite and don't have access to current information. It would be impossible for volunteers to implement this proposed ordinance and would divert the part-time staff member away from current duties that do result in animals leaving the shelter. To make any type of social media mandatory will require a full-time staff position at a time when the agency is forced to cut 15% from its budget. Diverting money to an idea with no data validating its usefulness will divert scarce money from proven programs.

This ordinance is a terrible idea and I oppose it.

Nadine May

I was born and raised in San Francisco and have lived most of my life here. I have always been proud of San Francisco. That is why I am writing to strongly urge you to SUPPORT the proposed legislation which would require San Francisco Animal Care and Control to notify the public 48 hours before an animal is to be killed at ACC. It is obvious that this would exclude any animals who are suffering or vicious.

San Francisco Animal Care control has a 90% save rate. The reason it is so high is because of all their rescue Partners who take animals from ACC. These low-budget all volunteer organizations rescue adoptable animals who would otherwise be killed at ACC, which means if the rescue groups weren't there, ACC's save rate would dramatically plummet.

We want to save every single animal that can be saved in San Francisco, including Wildlife, cats, dogs, birds, small animals . . . ALL savable animals.

This legislation has already been passed in quite a few cities. Is San Francisco going to remain behind such cities as Austin Texas in our concern for animals?

Thank you for your attention to this extremely important matter.

Morgan Roth

I am writing today to support the proposal of a 48-hour notice period for euthanasia at the San Francisco Animal Care and Control.

I am a cat volunteer on the Orange Team, and work with the unavailable cats and kittens, and cats deemed undersocialized or 'behavior' cats.

I heard and witnessed several stories illustrating the lack of transparency of ACC regarding their euthanasia practice. There were cats promised to rescue groups being euthanized without warning or

evaluating other options. The last in date was during a normal dental procedure which was not life threatening but was suddenly deemed too complex.

I know that people at ACC have good intentions and that these decisions are hard since in my line of work I had to euthanize animals myself. But I have the impression that sometimes these decisions are guided by time constraints and easiness rather than reason and empathy, both important aspects of shelter guidance.

The proposal of a 48-hour notice period will give rescue groups time to evaluate better options for the animals.

Gloria Hong

I am writing to you to voice my support for the proposed legislation that would require SFACC to notify rescue groups, and the public 48 hrs prior to euthanizing an animal. This is a policy that has been enacted in NYC, and I urge you to support this life saving legislation.

This legislation would demand transparency, and allow organizations who might be able to help animals at risk to step in. Please support this legislation, and promote its introduction and passage to the Board Supervisors,

Heni Martin

I support the 48 Hours Notification Legislation. I strongly urge you to vote in favor of this legislation. Having this legislation in place will save more adoptable lives.

SFACC is refusing to accept stray domestic cats and kittens into their system during this pandemic. Virginia Donahue believes cats are “free roaming” and can fend for themselves. This is cruel for a domestic cat to wander the streets of SF, lost and in search of food.

SF is now in the reopening stage. When will SFACC open it’s doors for lost domestic cats and kittens? Please encourage SFACC to open their doors to all animals.

Joan Chin

I am a San Francisco resident and I support legislation to require SF Animal Care and Control to give 48 hours public notice before any animal is killed.

Thank you for your time.

Bianca Molgora

Hello. I am an ACC volunteer with the Orange team. We work, as you know, with under socialized, feral and behaviorally challenged cats and kittens.

I am adding my voice to support the 48 hours waiting period pre euthanasia.

Other experienced volunteers have eloquently expressed views on the subject that I wholeheartedly agree with.

Many animals could be saved if ACC would quickly disclose any issue and ask for our help in finding placement for cats in danger of being euthanized.

I heard too many volunteers’ heartbreaking stories of cats that could have been saved.

PLEASE support the 48 hours waiting period!

Thank you for your consideration.

Shane Ebbert

Please let it be known that I would like an alert of euthanasia be posted on social media.

Posting will most def be a catalyst for rescue,

By all means broaden the bandwidth out there and let the public know that there are these animals that need to be rescued. It will also WAKE people up to the need and responsibility to neuter and spay animals.

Oleg Tomillo

<https://www.sfexaminer.com/news/advocates-want-more-public-notice-before-sf-euthanizes-an-animal/>

Susan Reichert Wong

Dear commissioners, I'm listening to the meeting now, I'm a person who already sent a letter and the entire issue wasn't clear to me.

Every year the euthanasia numbers have gone down, this staff works so hard in this ramshackle building with very little resources. They do such a good job, please support the staff at San Francisco animal care and control, don't burden them any further with this resolution, it's a very bad idea. The commission should just support them.

Posting on public notice leaves them open to all kinds of criticism and don't understand the workings of a city shelter, please don't make it harder on them, thank you so much

Commissioners for one more thought, I haven't called in because you asked me not to since I've been sending emails but I just wanted to say that posting an animal that may be euthanized on social media opens up a canna worms for the staff at the shelter that could be so devastating. I can see it all now someone coming in ranting and raving that you're going to put a dog a dog down you do this you do that it could be so harmful for the entire staff and actually it might be dangerous, please do not pass this resolution.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration

Haley Goldlist

I waited in the queue to speak tonight, but was never given the opportunity before the queue closed. Here are my comments below:

Helloi, my name is Haley Goldlist and I want to speak to my experience working with ACC in the capacity as a former coordinator for a local rescue, Wonderdog.

Working with ACC, in particular transfer coordinator Katy, I saw the staff go above and beyond - texting at all hours of the night, and pleading by email to find rescue placement and fosters. When euthanasia was decided, it wasn't because of a lack of effort in finding rescue partners, but because of humane decisions made with years of experience. The individuals at ACC are experienced professionals who's expertise in euthanasia decisions should be respected, not attacked based on incomplete data set that doesn't reflect the full story.

It is easy to vilify ACC when you see any data about euthanasia because as animal lovers, it naturally breaks our heart. However, just looking at numbers doesn't tell a full story - it doesn't tell you how many hours the staff at ACC spend painstakingly looking for rescue partners, fosters, or anything to give these animals a chance, or the issues these dogs have. It also doesn't show what I saw personally working with ACC - which is that the staff exhaust every possible option before considering euthanasia. Instead of rushing to pass legislation that does not come with accompanying data to prove that it will even be effective, I urge the public to recognize the great work the staff at ACC is doing and take the opportunity to learn from them what constraints are at play behind the scenes and work together to move forward.

Leslie King

hi,

I have been listening to the Animal Welfare Commission's discussion on the Euthanasia proposed legislation. I did push #3, but perhaps it did not go through.

When it was announced that no other callers were in the queue, I realized that I never was in it.

I know this is past the deadline, but I ask that you take my comments below into consideration. Thank you so much.

Leslie King

My name is Leslie and I have been a San Francisco resident for 30 years.

I have been a cat volunteer at ACC for 6.5 years and for the past 3 years have been a wildlife transport volunteer.

I want to start by saying that I believe everyone making comments tonight, regardless of where we stand on the proposed legislation, cares deeply about animals, myself included.

As a biologist, I am always making close observations about my environment and this includes the environment of ACC.

I want to share just a few of my many observations and experiences while volunteering there.

Every time I go to ACC, the staff's care for and concern for healthy and sick animals is evident and I see them giving animals the best day they can.

In the past two weeks alone, ACC staff have rescued and coordinated the transport of numerous pigeons, gulls, crows, hawks, hummingbirds, starlings, guinea pigs, and the list goes on. These animals have a chance for a good life because of ACC staff.

I have **heard** staff counsel a person considering adopting an FIV+ cat; the cat was adopted as a result of this guidance.

I have **heard** staff talk to and comfort animals while cleaning their kennels.

I have **seen** staff high five a person who came in to redeem her pet snake that had escaped her apartment.

I have **experienced** being asked by staff to work with undersocialized cats so they can be put up for adoption.

ACC staff have a collective concern for and deep regard for shelter animals' welfare and they make decisions informed by this concern and for some, by their collective years of training in veterinary medicine and behavior.

I ask you to consider my thoughts, along with the information presented by ACC, when making your decision regarding the proposed legislation.

Thank you.

Natali Hopkins

H there,

I was in the queue to speak but was just cut off in the meeting this evening. This is what I would have said. Thank you -

I know several employees of ACC involved in euthanasia and I know it is something they have **never** taken lightly. It is always treated with the respect and care that such a decision deserves; the responsibility carries enormous weight, as it should. ACC employees **do** try every realistic option for a safe placement, despite what is currently being circulated. The good work they do on a daily basis is generally unsung. They don't need the praise, but they do need to be able to encourage adopters, visitors, and the public to see them for what they really are - doing their best to give every animal a good day while they are there, regardless of outcome. The assumptions that drive this request cuts at the heart of what ACC does every day at the shelter. I do not believe this policy change for SFACC will increase animal welfare or reduce length of stay for the animals of San Francisco in any way. Thank you for your time.

M Rocket

count me in as a supporter of this euthanasia item and moving it forward.

Michael Madison

I am writing today to urge you to support the passage of proposed legislation requiring a minimum 48 hour advance notification to local rescue organizations before any animal can be euthanized by the city shelter. This is an important, straightforward, humane and just legislative effort that deserves your support. It has I believe overwhelming support of the people of San Francisco.

As you know the name "San Francisco" is a nod to St. Francis. It is a fitting update to the legacy of that name that the city takes this approach to the humane care of vulnerable animals, especially when such a community-supported, collaborative approach is within reach today.

Thank you for your attention and hard work on reviewing carefully this common sense legislation; please vote "yes". I look forward to hearing good news of your support for passage to the Board of Supervisors.

Mary Lynn Shimek

I support this legislation in order to save animals on Death Row in San Francisco.

Thank you.

ITEM 6B - San Francisco Live Animal Markets

Rocky Chau

My name is Rocky and I called in to make a public comment to the Animal Control and Welfare Thursday, May 21, 2020, Meeting but despite my calling in during the public comment of "San Francisco Live Markets" I was skipped over. I was going to make this comment before I was skipped over:

"Hello, Commissioners, I see one subset of animal exploitation being put under the microscope and as a Chinese Animal Rights Activist, I find this call to close JUST live animal markets to not only targeting one group unjustly but missing the over-arching issue and that is animal agriculture itself, especially, factory farms which forcibly breeds and kill billions of animals annually.

One of the commissioners, Van Horn, says that he visited live markets in San Francisco where he saw them in terrible condition and I don't doubt him. I, however, have visited both live markets and factory farms in person and I can tell you that although both are terrible, I disagree with his assessment that factory farms being "more humane". I saw here in California, immense cramming of animals in barns by the tens of thousands where they can't move, they live in their own feces, making them susceptible to viral/bacterial infections and are perfect breeding grounds for the next pandemic outbreak. I myself being at this hell on Earth facilities cannot even breathe the dense putrid air that permeates the air and certainly, the animals in those facilities aren't doing any better. The only difference is I can leave the facility, they can't and they are there 24/7 until they see their death at a slaughterhouse. I don't see anything humane about that. Animal rights groups like Direct Action Everywhere (DxE) have exposed dozens of these farms around the nation for filthy conditions causing the spread of disease and incredulous suffering for animals. In 2018, DxE exposed rampant antibiotic abuse at a Smithfield pig farm in North Carolina. The New York Times covered this investigation showcasing DxE's findings, including evidence of antibiotic-resistant staph infections in sick piglets. Zoonotic outbreaks such as the 1919 Flu, 2009 Swine Flu and Avian Flu has happened, it is currently happening, and it will guarantee to occur unless we cancel animal ag in its entirety. I urge you to target the true source of pandemics which are animal exploitation and not only target a specific ethnic group/specific market. Thank you."

Please let me know if you have any follow up questions or clarifications you want me to provide.