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April 20, 2016

Honorable Paul Krekorian, Chair
Budget and Finance Committee
c/o Richard Williams, Office of the City Clerk
200 N. Spring Street, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

BY _____ DEPUTY
CITY CLERK
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CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
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RE: DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES PROPOSED 2016-17 BUDGET

The Department of Animal Services is pleased with the Mayor's proposed 2016-17 budget. The upcoming fiscal year will be rich with positive change as we implement a community-driven strategic plan and reach our goal of No Kill. The additional 12 officers added to the regular authorities will help to ensure our presence in the community and enhanced compliance of licensing, spay/neuter, and prevention or prosecution of animal cruelty cases. Last year these same 12 positions were placed in the Unappropriated Balance. It was the intent of the Department to fill these positions during the current fiscal year, however, we have had multiple delays with the examination and background processes. To date, there are 113 eligible candidates on the civil service list with more than half of them in some stage of the background process. While the Personnel Department has tried to meet our needs, it appears that the process itself is arduous and their resources are limited. The Department of Animal Services is relieved that the Mayor stands behind us and has proposed these 12 positions as a part of the 2016-17 budget. We will continue to work with the Personnel Department to fill all of the positions by the early part of next fiscal year.

Likewise, the Department is grateful for the funds proposed in support of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The injunction against the City of Los Angeles prohibiting the spay/neuter of feral cats negatively impacts the community in a variety of ways. Not only does it increase breeding, it increases the number of unweaned kittens being brought into the shelter system annually. The Department has already begun working with the Bureau of Engineering using funds from this year that were set aside for this effort. The balance of the funds necessary to complete the report is in the Mayor's proposed budget and it is a critical piece toward getting the injunction removed that is preventing the Department from spaying and neutering neighborhood cats and even having discussions in our community rooms at the shelters about nationally

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proven methods to reduce the stray cat population or any animal related topic including bird protection.

An important budgetary issue that we would like to discuss is the shortage of administrative staff. As programs and services increase to the levels expected and demanded by the citizens of Los Angeles, so does the need for appropriately classified administrative staff. To that end, the Department respectfully requests that two unfunded positions be added to the Proposed Budget for FY 2016-17.

1. VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR - The Volunteer Program is a critical part of the Department's success. So much so that its growth and success has been identified by the Mayor as a specific goal for the General Manager. The Department shares the Mayor's prioritization of the program. It must continue to grow and thrive in order to best serve the animals as well as the community. Currently the responsibilities are being handled by an Animal Care Technician Supervisor. While an adequate resolution for the day-to-day operation of the program, in order to grow and fully develop the Volunteer Program, a professional level employee should be recruited and hired to allow the Department to have the healthiest and most productive program possible. The Department knows that a professional Volunteer Coordinator's success would be easy to demonstrate through program metrics. As such, the Department is prepared to ask the Board of Animal Services Commissioners to fund the position for one year. In that time it is anticipated that a future budget request for the position would be supported by statistics proving the value and benefit of the investment.
2. EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT II – The Department's proposed budget contained requests for a Commission Executive Assistant I and an Executive Administrative Assistant II. These positions support the activities of the Board of Animal Services Commissioners and the administrative needs of the Department's two Assistant General Managers. The Board of Animal Services Commissioners is a managing Board. As such, they are heavily involved with the direction of the Department as it relates to policy, priorities, and practices. They are a very active Board that meets twice a month with seven of those meetings held in the community during evening hours. To support their efforts a full time staff person is required. In past years, the Department had an Executive Administrative Assistant assigned to provide support to the Commission as well as the Assistant General Managers. The position was eliminated during the City's financial crisis and the workload of the Commission was absorbed by existing staff. Currently, the Commission support duties are being handled by a Management Analyst. Supporting the Board keeps this analyst from handling the contractual and procurement duties for which she is sorely needed as well as meeting legal timelines required for California Public Records requests. It would be more appropriate for the Commission support duties to be handled by a professional executive assistant and allow the existing Management Analyst to meet the existing workload demands associated with procurement, contract management, and public records requests. . The annual cost of funding this position is \$78,008. Having this unfunded position approved in the budget would give the Department an opportunity to look for outside funding or to use salary or other savings in our 2016-17 budget.

Report to the Budget and Finance Committee

SUBJECT: Department of Animal Services Proposed 2016-17 Budget

Lastly, the Department is concerned that the As-Needed Account 1070 has been reduced from \$587,976 to \$300,376. These funds are needed for Licensing Canvassers and Clerks to keep the shelters open on weekends. Without these positions, licensing, canvassing and adoptions will be severely impacted.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter on behalf of the Department of Animal Services. We look forward to the upcoming fiscal year and realizing the goals set forth in our budget plan.

Respectfully submitted,



BRENDA F. BARNETTE
General Manager
Los Angeles Animal Services