

ANIMAL ISSUES MOVEMENT

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May 28, 2018

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City of Los Angeles
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Los Angeles City Council
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Planning and Land Use Management
City of Los Angeles
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OPPOSITION: CASE: CF 17-1237 Kennel / Delete Definition / Amendment and CPC-2017-4075-CA, ENV-2017-2076-EAF *Pet Shop Ordinance*; AND CF 17-1237-S1 Definition of Kennel / Business Purposes / Los Angeles Planning and Zoning Code / Amendment; INCLUDED ALSO ARE (CF 11-0754, 11-0754-S1, 11-0754-S2 AND 11-0754-S1)

Animal Issues Movement, a 501(c)3 animal protection organization, maintains its OPPOSITION to passage of the irresponsible, destructive and inhumane ordinance recommended in by the Planning Department and approved by the City Planning Commission on April 12, 2018.

Opposition Comments CASE: CPC-2017-4075-CA , ENV-2017-4076-EAF (OPPOSITION: CF 17-1237 Kennel / Delete Definition / Amendment on were submitted on April 10, 2018, and are hereby included in their entirety by reference.

This Ordinance will be available to any number of "retail-rescue pet stores/shops" Citywide, which will be legally allowed in C- zones adjacent to or across the street from residential zoning

The true definition of a "retail-rescue pet shop" is that and non-profit group which merely registers with any shelter or humane society in L.A. can sell animals obtained free from a shelter/humane society or purchased from puppy mills or other sources--as long as they are deemed "rescued"--for any price and with any amount of untaxed profit. There is no legal "adoption" of animals, and this is misstated in the Ordinance. Transfer of ownership for a prescribe price may be called a "fee," but it is a "sale." Any amount paid for an animal is also NOT a "donation," because it involves gaining "a good or service" for the exchange of money.

This proposed Ordinance is discriminatory. A training/boarding facility providing security and safety for owned pets while an owner is away, and disposing of the same amount of waste under strict laws, and with probably LESS noise and barking because the public is not allowed to constantly enter and stimulate the dogs, cannot exist in the same C- zones without a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) . Therefore, the City is granting a "favor" to a certain class of businesses (retail-rescue pet shops/stores.)

In Appendix B / Page 2, the Planning Department found that there "is no substantial evidence that the proposed ordinance (Appendix A) will have a negative effect on the environment." This is the urine and fecal matter of up to 40 dogs of any size or 40 cats kept in a totally indoor store--with no requirements by for air exchange or fresh air under established guidelines. And such voluminous toxic waste is to be deposited in the sewage system of a shopping/residential community and then flow into the CA waterways.

This ordinance allows up to 40 dogs of any age/breed/size/health condition/behavioral challenge (i.e., aggressive and/or dangerous) "rescued" or purchased from any source inside or outside Los Angeles, to be maintained under conditions that are inhumane and would not be permitted under LAMC animal codes nor under State PC Sec. 597.

Allowing the unlimited caging of a large dog in a kennel of only 40-45 square feet (5' x 10' or 5' x 8') does not allow sufficient space for the dog to move freely or even--with very large dogs--stretch out and sleep comfortably. For high-energy dogs (and it is assumed most of the "rescues" will be Pit Bulls, since they constitute 70% of L.A. shelters' population), it is tortuous to be maintained in such confinement and with no outside areas for sun and fresh air. It will cause the dog to deteriorate physically (diseases cannot be controlled and will be recycled) and psychologically.

Up to three dogs may be walked through local communities and by businesses by one volunteer or "caretaker," but limited to the number that can be safely controlled. **Who is to make this determination?** One aggressive dog that is stimulated can become uncontrollable instantly and maim or kill another animal or a human. Now this will be with the blessing of the City.

Odor and noise control, sound-proofing and/or air-filtration systems will be determined by the Department of Animal Services, which has NO legal authority to set such standards nor enforce anything other than a barking-dog complaint.

Attached is an article which proves that puppy mills are merely establishing highly profitable non-profit entities to sell their puppies as "rescues," and can cut out the middleman (former pet shops.) They can also sell more profitably over the Internet without the competition of pet shops, which were highly regulated under CA state laws (Locker-Planck-Farr Act.)

Some of the most sacred safeguards of investment are planning and zoning codes, which guarantee that the value of property and intrinsic availability of customers (for businesses) and safety and services (for homeowners and consumers) will be destroyed.

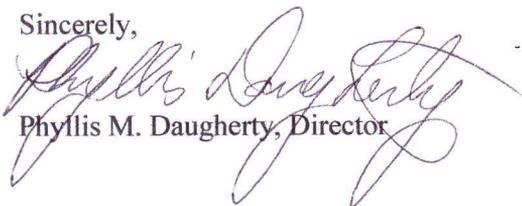
The negative impacts and lack of regulation in this ordinance threaten the values of countless properties--business and residential--citywide; and the lives and well-being of countless animals, because there is no monitoring of the health/welfare of the animals offered for sale nor are there any legal standards, permits, experience requirements, licenses to become a "rescuer" nor is County animal-health code compliance even considered.

This can result in animals being brought into the city from foreign countries or other states. Even with recent rabies vaccinations, there is no guarantee that these animals are not already harboring serious and contagious diseases; and they will be placed without restrictions in the midst of densely populated areas (by both pets and people.)

The problem is that L.A.'s elected officials they will not see the suffering nor pay for the lawsuits that ensue, as businesses are destroyed and local residents injured either directly or by the damage to their community-- but taxpayers will pay repeatedly.

Any City official who cares about the City's animals or humans must vote "No" on this ordinance.

Sincerely,

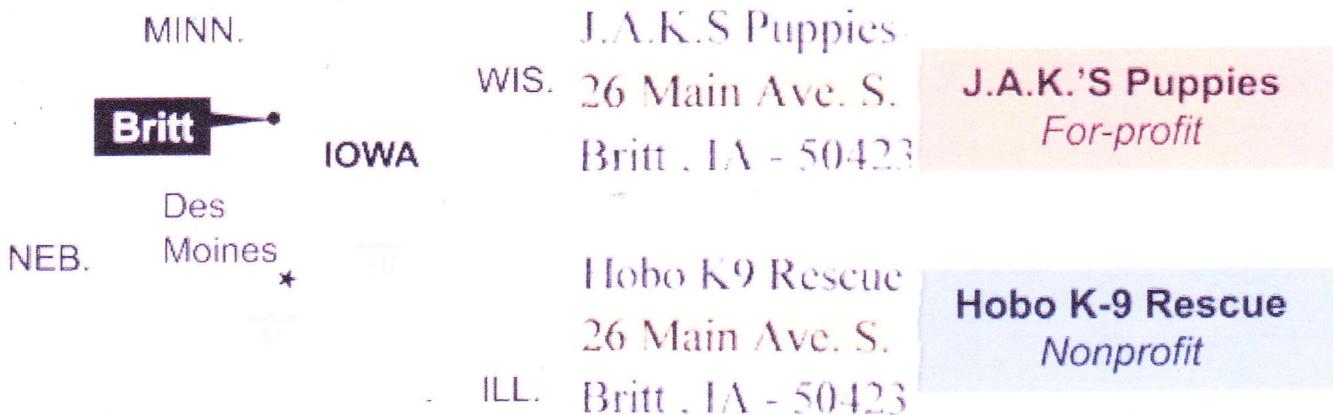


Phyllis M. Daugherty, Director

Designer and Purebred Puppies from other States Sold as Rescue Dogs in Chicago, Outsmarting City Ordinance

[Stacy St. Clair and Christy Gutowski](#) [Contact Reporters](#)

On Sept. 1, 2016, a Britt, Iowa, provider of dogs to pet shops creates a nonprofit rescue — housed at the same address as its for-profit business.



The three Siberian huskies were born Sept. 4, 2017.

They were housed together in a large, metal warehouse in this small farming community that is home to one of north-central Iowa's most prolific canine dealers

When the puppies were 59 days old, the local veterinarian inspected the trio and cleared them for travel across state lines. Four days later, the huskies were fed at 3 a.m, packed in a vehicle and driven to Illinois, where records show the dogs' fates diverged.

One puppy was delivered to a suburban pet shop with her pedigree papers.

The other two — confirmed littermates — were declared “rescue dogs” and sold to a pet shop in Chicago. With that rescue label firmly attached to their cages, the store could sell the dogs for more than \$1,000 apiece and still be in compliance with a city ordinance that bans shops from offering commercially bred pets.

The ordinance, which went into effect in 2015 to prevent Chicago businesses from sourcing dogs from puppy mills, limits pet shops to selling dogs obtained primarily from government pounds, humane societies and shelters. At the time of its passage, pet shop owners criticized the law and said that typical rescue groups could never provide the kind of high-end, purebred and designer mix puppies customers wanted.

As it turns out, local stores are still able to sell those upmarket dogs. They just don't come from typical rescue groups. A Tribune investigation found that a loophole in the city ordinance allows three Chicago pet stores to sell puppies supplied by rescues that are closely linked to longtime commercial dealers. In an arrangement that is not an express violation of the ordinance but runs counter to the spirit of the ban, records show these rescues provide city shops each year with hundreds of purebred and designer-mix puppies — all of which come through kennels and properties owned by for-profit businesses or dealers.

By exploiting that opening in the law, critics say the businesses hinder the ordinance's goal to reduce the number of shelter dogs euthanized in the city each year. The practice also raises questions about whether customers could be misled into believing their pricey pet was an unwanted rescue puppy in need of a good home.

After reviewing more than 10,000 pages of inspection reports, tax forms, veterinary records and other public documents, the Tribune identified two dealers who opened nonprofit rescues after the ordinance's passage and began supplying puppies to the three Chicago pet stores. In the past two years, Hobo K-9 Rescue in Britt, Iowa, and Missouri-based Dog Mother Rescue Society have sent more than 1,200 dogs to the city stores but nowhere else in Illinois, according to records released by their states' agriculture departments.

Meanwhile, the commercial businesses owned by the rescuers — Iowa's J.A.K.'S Puppies and Missouri's Lonewolf Kennels — send their Illinois-bound pets to stores outside the city limits, where shops can legally sell puppies provided by large-scale breeders. The Tribune has identified more than two dozen instances over the past year when puppies of the same breed and birthdate arrived in Illinois on the same day with one tagged as a commercially bred dog and the other a rescue.



“Without a doubt, that completely breaks the spirit of what we were trying to get passed. I think what we were trying to get passed couldn't have been clearer,” said Illinois Comptroller [Susana Mendoza](#), who championed the ordinance when she was city clerk.

Neither J.A.K.'S nor Lonewolf nor the three pet store owners would discuss the arrangement in detail. But none denied the for-profit businesses pass the puppies through the nonprofit rescues so they're eligible to be sold in Chicago.

"If everything is legal and legitimate, what would be the (issue)?" said Jim Sparks Jr., co-owner of Park Pet Shop in the Mount Greenwood neighborhood. "Part of this is semantics."

Three pet stores survive

The three Siberian husky puppies were housed on property owned by J.A.K.'S, a business that provides dogs to pet shops across the country. The 1,600-square-foot kennel, which has surveillance cameras mounted on the outside and signs forbidding people from entering the building, is run by co-owner Jolyn Noethe, a well-known dealer whose parents had been in the puppy industry for decades and had a troubled history before closing their business a few years ago.

After Chicago passed its anti-puppy mill ordinance, records show Noethe and her business partner, Kimberly Dolphin, formed Hobo K-9 Rescue, a nonprofit business that would be allowed to provide dogs to Chicago pet shops under the new law. Federal law does not require the rescue to be regulated by the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#), but it is inspected by state regulators.

In keeping with the dual business model, the two Siberian puppies exported to Chicago last fall entered the state as Hobo K-9 Rescue dogs, while the one sent to the northwest suburbs was listed as a J.A.K.'S puppy, according to agriculture records. However, there is little distinction between Hobo and J.A.K.'S, according to public records.

Both entities use the same storefront along Britt's Main Street as their business address on veterinary inspection certificates, though a sign on the door identifies it only as the J.A.K.'S office. The rescue puppies are fed at the same time, examined by the same veterinarians and often transported on the same day as the commercial ones sold to suburban pet shops, state records show. The vast majority come to the Chicago area at 8 weeks old — the earliest a puppy can be separated from its mother under Illinois law.

J.A.K.'S exported 805 dogs to Illinois between January 2015 and November 2017, according to certificates of veterinary inspection filed with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. The records show 71 percent of the puppies were purebred, while the remaining 29 percent were considered designer mixes. The J.A.K.'S puppies had a median age of 61 days at the time of their inspections, which typically occurred a few days before transport.

Hobo K-9 Rescue, which was formed in September 2016, exported 512 dogs between its inception and December 2017, according to the inspection certificates. About 73 percent of the puppies were pure breeds, while 27 percent were designer mixes.

The median age for the Hobo rescue puppies was 61 days at the time of inspection, just like the dogs that J.A.K.'S sold to suburban pet stores.

Hobo sent all 512 puppies labeled as rescues to Pet Luv Pet Center just south of Midway International Airport, records show. None of the animals were older than 16 weeks or mutts, an unusual inventory for a rescue organization, according to industry experts.

"Rescue dogs don't look like this," said Cari Meyers, founder of Chicago-based The Puppy Mill Project, which pushed for the city ordinance. "In my nine years on the PAWS Chicago board, I don't remember ever having dogs that age."

Pet Luv owner Donald Groenewold did not respond to requests for comment.

Noethe referred questions to a spokeswoman, who did not know about Hobo's existence until Tribune reporters called. Initially, spokeswoman Mindy Patterson told the Tribune that the public should be wary of nonprofit dog rescues because they have no federal oversight and sometimes import diseased animals from other countries.

“The ones who you are wanting to investigate are those who consider themselves quote-unquote rescues,” said Patterson, who also is president of The Cavalry Group, a Missouri-based organization that advocates for animal-related businesses. “They are unregulated (entities) for providing these animals.”

Another Cavalry spokesperson later stated that Noethe and Dolphin opened Hobo K-9 Rescue in direct response to the Chicago ordinance, but he declined to say how the puppies come into the rescue’s possession. Like most canine dealers, J.A.K.’S purchases the puppies from breeders, has a local veterinarian clear them for interstate travel and then resells them to pet stores.

Neither J.A.K.’S nor Hobo has any violations, according to federal and state records.

In fact, the Iowa Department of Agriculture found no dogs at Hobo when an inspector visited J.A.K.’S property Dec. 12, records show. Only two days later, 18 rescue puppies — 14 purebred dogs and four designer mixes — were examined by a local vet and cleared for transport to Chicago, according to state records.

“Hobo K-9 gets their dogs from multiple sources in compliance with applicable federal, state and local laws and statutes,” Cavalry Group CEO Mark Patterson said in an email to the Tribune. “Like many other businesses they make best efforts to maximize their efficiency in delivering a product that is in demand from the public.”

Hobo’s existence reflects the high stakes surrounding Chicago’s puppy mill ban. Sixteen pet shops sold puppies before the city’s ordinance. The city says it does not keep records on pet store closings. But activists and store owners agree only three family-run stores are left.

And each of the survivors has turned to nontraditional rescues for its inventory, an arrangement that runs counter to what city officials envisioned when Chicago became one of the first cities in the nation to pass a so-called anti-puppy mill ordinance in 2014. At last count, nearly 260 communities across the country have enacted similar puppy retail bans, and statewide prohibitions have passed in California and Maryland.

The Chicago ordinance essentially blocks pet stores from selling dogs, cats and rabbits sourced from commercial breeding facilities, where some operations have been derided by animal rights activists for inhumane conditions.

Instead, the shops must offer only those animals that come from shelters, nonprofit rescues and nonprofit humane societies. Internet pet sales or those by small residential breeders and veterinarians are exempted from the ordinance. The city’s ban is much stricter than state law, which allows for the sale of dogs raised by commercial breeders as long as the breeders are federally licensed and without citations for two years.

Supporters argued the tougher ordinance would help reduce the burden in city shelters. Chicago Animal Care and Control, for example, euthanized about 3,000 of the more than 10,000 dogs it took in the year the ordinance passed, according to 2014 statistics. Last year, the city euthanized nearly 1,300 of the more than 7,000 dogs it took in, a reduction that officials attribute to a variety of programs and community outreach initiatives.

The ordinance, which carries a fine of up to \$1,000 per offense and misdemeanor charges for repeat offenders, went into effect in late 2015. But by that time, a loophole had been found.

‘They’re full of baloney’

In August 2015, canine dealer Allison Hedgpeth — owner of Lonewolf Kennels — formed Dog Mother Rescue Society, using the same address as her for-profit kennel in Iberia, Mo., on state and federal records. During that same month, Little Paw Rescue was launched and sought nonprofit status with the [Internal Revenue Service](#).

Months later, Dog Mother began sending puppies to Chicago. Veterinary inspection records show Dog Mother sent 596 puppies to Pocket Puppies or Little Paw, which share the same address in the city’s Lincoln Park community, between April 2016 and June 2017.

Central Illinois residents Michael Schwartz and his girlfriend ended up at Pocket Puppies earlier this year after spending months searching for a Pomeranian puppy in shelters, adoption centers and Facebook groups. The couple, whose beloved Pomeranian died last winter, were looking to add a new pet of a similar breed and color but had trouble finding one.

They eventually turned to the Lincoln Park store, making the trek earlier this year to purchase their new dog, Miya. Schwartz, who said he spent his tax return on the puppy, said Dog Mother is listed as the store's "placement partner" on the paperwork.

"We are not activists that are up to date on current laws/ordinances, so we did not know there was a big beef between legislation and pet sales," Schwartz told the Tribune. "I will admit that I was initially stunned when I saw that I was paying premium dollars and signing paperwork that had the puppy source stated as a rescue and I looked all over online for many months for dog rescues for the particular breed/age I was targeting and found nothing."

Schwartz, who was so happy with this "picture-perfect" puppy that he later sent an email to Pocket Puppies to offer his thanks, said he's not concerned with the circumstances surrounding Miya's birth. Whatever they were, he said, she was a dog who needed a loving home and they gave her one.

"Her background did not matter then, and it does not matter now," he said.

Records show about 65 percent of the store's puppies have been purebred, an inventory that Pocket Puppies owner Lane Boron himself swore was highly improbable in court documents connected to an unsuccessful legal challenge to the ordinance.

"Purebred dogs are relatively rare and purebred puppies are virtually nonexistent in random-source facilities," Boron said in a sworn court statement.

Boron did not respond to requests for comment. After the Tribune began investigating the ordinance's impact, Pocket Puppies — where the puppies sell for about \$1,200 apiece and customers include celebrities and local politicians — changed its website to also include pictures of older rescue dogs.

In a phone interview, Hedgpeth denied any ties to Dog Mother Rescue Society and declined an opportunity to review the public records establishing her connection. She insisted she ran a transport company and had nothing to do with dogs, but she is a licensed canine dealer with the USDA and IRS documents name her as principal officer of Dog Mother Rescue Society.

Hedgpeth is listed as the rescue's manager, and her signature appears on state registration forms. She also signed copies of two Dog Mother inspection reports last year filed by the Missouri Department of Agriculture.

The rescue on official paperwork uses both the address for Lonewolf Kennels and a Hedgpeth-owned property next door, according to public records.

"They're full of baloney," Hedgpeth said. "I'm not a nonprofit. I'm not Dog Mother. That's an independent corporation. Their records are wrong. I'm a transport company. Period."

Hedgpeth deferred all questions to Mindy Patterson, the spokeswoman for Hobo K-9 Rescue in Iowa. Patterson told the Tribune that she does not represent Dog Mother Rescue and does not know Hedgpeth.



When Tribune reporters traveled to Hedgpeth's facility in the Missouri Ozarks this spring, at least four bulldogs could be seen outside in kennels. Hedgpeth declined to speak with the Tribune and threatened to call the police if the reporters stepped on her property. A man in a Lonewolf T-shirt later chased the journalists down a country road, before cutting them off with his truck and demanding that they leave town.

Just like Hobo, Dog Mother had no rescue dogs on the premises when inspectors visited in 2016 and 2017.

Hedgpeth's various Lonewolf entities have had no violations in recent years, a USDA spokesman said. But the federal agency gave one of her businesses, Lonewolf Pets, an "official warning" in September 2012 after two puppies died in transit, records show. State inspectors in Missouri also have cited her business for minor infractions, which were corrected before the follow-up inspection.

Dog Mother has sent more than 700 dogs labeled rescues to three Chicago pet stores — Pet Luv south of Midway, Pocket Puppies in Lincoln Park and Mount Greenwood's Park Pet Shop — since 2016, according to the Missouri Department of Agriculture. Although records show Dog Mother occasionally sent older dogs and unknown mixes to the pet shops, less than 5 percent of the 700 dogs were older than 1 year and only 4 percent were mutts.

The median age for Dog Mother puppies was 8 weeks at the time of transit just like the 100 dogs that Hedgpeth's Lonewolf Kennels provided to suburban pet stores. More than 95 percent of the Dog Mother puppies were pure breeds or designer mixes, making the rescue's inventory unlike other Missouri rescues.

The Tribune reviewed 471 records involving rescues unrelated to Dog Mother. Of those exported from Missouri to Illinois between March 2015 and September 2016, about 72 percent of the dogs were mutts and more than 28 percent were older than 1 year. All of them went to Illinois-based rescues, unlike Dog Mother, which sent all its puppies to Chicago pet stores and their associated charities.

Mount Greenwood's Park Pet Shop, for example, obtained 97 puppies from Dog Mother between August 2016 and June 2017, Missouri Department of Agriculture records show. During that time, many of the dogs were earmarked for The Cherished Pet, a rescue organization that store co-owner Sparks formed after the city ordinance passed.

More than half of the Dog Mother puppies sent to Park Pet were pure breeds, while only 1 percent were mutts, records show. In contrast, the majority of dogs at Paws Chicago — one of the area's biggest and best-known shelters — are of an unknown mix. Though the rescue group has a wide range of ages available for adoption, the average dog is between 7 to 8 months old, said PAWS founder and Chairwoman Paula Fasseas.

Fasseas, who backed the ordinance four years ago, described the Tribune's findings as "tragic." "We worked so hard to get this passed," she said. "It's sad to see it upended like this."

City response

Comptroller Mendoza and The Puppy Mill Project's Meyers told the Tribune that they raised questions with the city about the pet shops' post-ordinance inventory as far back as two years ago, but nothing ever happened. Records show the city inspected Park Pet Shop and Pocket Puppies several times since 2016 after receiving the complaints. In each instance, it found the shops were in compliance with the ordinance because the animals came from the Dog Mother Rescue Society.

"The (three) remaining family pet shops in Chicago source our dogs in compliance with the Mendoza ordinance," Sparks said in a statement to the Tribune. "The rescues we source from have actual facilities and are inspected by the state of Missouri. We use rescues who have actual housing for the dogs. ... We have passed dozens of city and state inspections unlike other rescues in the city that are not inspected for sourcing validity."

The Tribune shared its findings with the city's Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection, which said it does not have the power to investigate whether out-of-state businesses are rescue operations. As long as they are properly registered nonprofit organizations, they can provide dogs to Chicago pet shops, department spokeswoman Lilia Chacon said.

"BACP ... does not have the authority to reach out of state nonprofits," she said. "The animals being sold at the Pet Luv Pet Center, Pocket Puppies and Park Pet Shop ... were provided by two legally registered out-of-state nonprofits." Longtime supporters of the ordinance, however, criticize the city for not doing enough to address the issue.

"Even though the BACP does not have the authority to investigate out-of-state nonprofits, sufficient evidence shows these stores are violating the ... intent of the ordinance," said Marc Ayers, Illinois director for the Humane Society of the United States. "The BACP should do more to alert consumers."

Nearly a dozen other rescues in Missouri and Iowa all questioned the concept of the dealers-turned-rescuers, with most not even knowing the latest ventures existed.

"It's shocking," said Sarah Howard, manager of Loving Paws Adoption Center in Crocker, Mo., located south of Miller County where Dog Mother is based. "We get calls from there all the time (about strays and unwanted dogs) because they have nothing in Iberia to help."

In Britt, Iowa, police told the Tribune they've never taken a stray animal or rescue dog to Hobo K-9 and instead take unwanted dogs to a shelter in a town 10 miles away. At a Britt City Council meeting two years ago, Noethe told officials that she occasionally may have dogs at her Main Street business office but she had no intention of operating like a traditional shelter.

"We don't want the general public calling us about dogs," she said, according to the Britt News Tribune. Several Iowa-based animal welfare and rescue groups told the Tribune they had not heard of Hobo K-9 Rescue, but they were familiar with Noethe, whose family ran controversial dog breeding and wholesale businesses for years.

The Noethe family's Oleo Acres Kennels made headlines six years ago when two employees were charged with animal cruelty after police said they discovered 43 puppies packed three to six in a carrier in a van bound for stores in Chicago and New York. The animals were found in cramped, feces-filled containers without adequate food and water, according to prosecutors. The charges were later dropped, and the business has since closed.

By the time of the arrests, Jolyn Noethe had already quit her parents' business where she had worked for years. She started J.A.K.'S puppies in 2009, announcing her new endeavor in a letter to breeders and telling them that she left Oleo to avoid family "drama."

Noethe and Dolphin started Hobo K-9 Rescue in September 2016, a little over a year after the Chicago ordinance went into effect. According to Iowa secretary of state records, the rescue's board of directors includes local veterinarian Leslie Lancaster, who signed roughly 95 percent of the veterinary inspection certificates for both J.A.K.'S and Hobo puppies sent to Illinois.

The Tribune found more than three dozen instances in which veterinarians signed off on the inspection certificates for both Hobo and J.A.K.'S puppies on the same day, another example of how the rescue and the dealer work in concert. The veterinarians did not return calls seeking comment.

Noethe's spokesman acknowledged the two canine operations are intertwined, but he said it doesn't matter.

"It is not unusual for businesses to have multiple entities fulfilling multiple lines of business or for there to be connections in a supply chain," Mark Patterson said. "The entities are separate but may at times have an ownership relationship."

Husky for sale

The ordinance's critics say it's not surprising that such a sweeping measure would backfire. As long as the ban exists, they say, groups will want to exploit the loopholes.

"It's one of the unintended consequences of the ban that we tried to warn people about," said Mike Bober, president of the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council. "Bans just aren't effective. The city of Chicago could have been a leader on this, but it chose to bury its head in the sand."

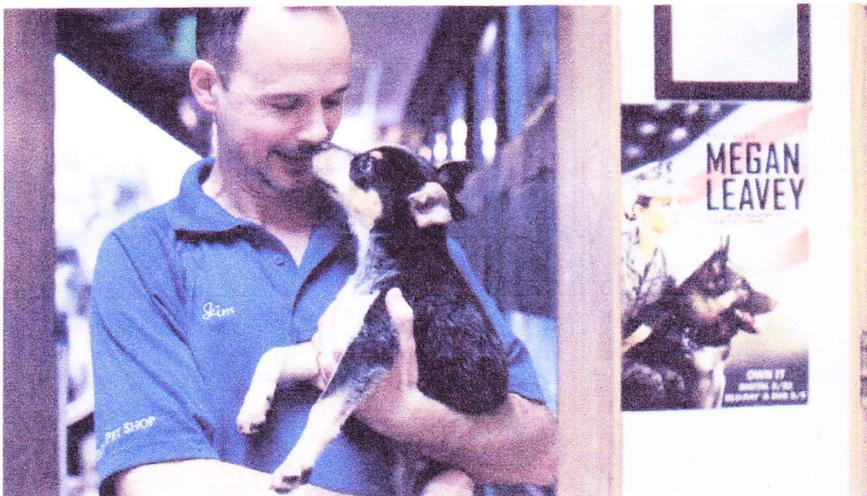
Indeed, years after its passage, the ordinance remains hotly debated and efforts to defeat it continue.

Last year, the pet store lobby pushed a microchipping measure in Springfield that included a paragraph saying communities — including Chicago — cannot "regulate the sourcing of dogs and cats sold by pet shop operators, dog dealers or cattery operators."

The owners of Park Pet Shop and Pocket Puppies appeared on witness slips in favor of the proposed legislation, which ultimately failed.

The Humane Society of the United States now plans to work with the City Council to revise the ordinance and close the loophole detailed in the Tribune's investigation. The newly worded measure would expressly prohibit stores from selling rescued animals connected to commercial breeders or dealers.

"They (the pet shops) need to either change their model or do business someplace else," Comptroller Mendoza said. "In Chicago ... we need to fix it to make sure these guys are no longer cheating the system."



Park Pet owner Sparks also intends to work with the City Council to change the ordinance. He prefers something similar to the state law, which allows stores to sell dogs provided by commercial breeders in good standing with the USDA.

“Currently the three remaining Chicago family-run pet shops ... have a petition, signed by over 7,000 Chicagoland pet store consumers, asking the City of Chicago to pass the sourcing standards,” Sparks said in an email to the Tribune. In the meantime, Pet Luv Pet Center has another Siberian husky awaiting a buyer. Priced at \$1,499, it is advertised as a rescue dog from Hobo K-9 Rescue in Britt, Iowa.

A sign above the dog's kennel promises a schnauzer, a Pomeranian and Rottweilers “Coming Soon.”
*This story was reported by Tribune journalists in Britt, Iowa; Iberia, Mo.; and Chicago.
Chicago Tribune's Jennifer Smith Richards contributed.*

RELATED: [Chicago aldermen pass anti-puppy mill ordinance 49-1 »](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-met-pet-store-rescue-puppies-20180430-story.html)
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