

## **Commission on Animal Care and Control (ACC)**

### **2016 Budget Statement to the City Council Committee on Budget and Government Operations**

**Sandra Alfred, Executive Director**

Madame Chairman Austin, Vice-Chairman Ervin and the honorable members of the City Council. As Executive Director of the Commission on Animal Care and Control, I am privileged to be here today to highlight and discuss our budget, review our progress, and present our initiatives for the upcoming year.

The mission of the Commission on Animal Care and Control is to protect public safety and to ensure the humane care of animals through sheltering, pet placement, education and animal law enforcement. We achieve this by responsibly and humanely enforcing animal-related laws; providing a safe environment and medical treatment for unwanted, stray, abused and neglected animals; educating the public about responsible companion animal ownership; returning lost pets to their owners; and finding new owners for the adoptable animals at our shelter.

We have presented a budget for 2016 which will allow us to efficiently and effectively carry out our mission with the \$5,703,307 recommended appropriation provided through the City's Corporate Fund.

#### **Homeward Bound Transfer Program**

Despite the difficult financial climate, ACC has developed sustainable programs to ensure opportunities for more animals. Collaborative partnerships - from the staff, volunteers, as well as the dedication of over 158 active animal rescue transfer groups, and private supporters - furthers the mission of the department, increases outreach, and allows for service in the community where the City cannot fund. Through teamwork, 8,450 animals being reunited with an owner, adopted into a home, or transferred to a rescue agency during the first three quarters of 2015. Coupled with a decrease in animal impoundments, CACC has found opportunities for 72% of animals in 2015, an improvement from 2014 and every other year in our agency's history.

## **Operations and Service Delivery**

Training of Staff: To ensure staff follows best practices, CACC is being consulted and trained by national leading experts in the areas of: shelter medicine, animal isolation, dangerous dog handling, chemical immobilization, verbal judo, compassion fatigue, among others.

So far in 2015, CACC has received more than 36,800 requests for animal related services from Chicago residents. By the end of 2015, CACC will have received more than 50,000 requests for animal related services. We respond to a variety of different types of service requests through 311, including animal bite attacks, stray and vicious animals, injured animal assistance, inhumane treatment complaints, animal business complaints, dangerous dogs, wildlife in living quarters, and animal fighting complaints.

Investigations & Inspections: In the first three quarters of 2015, there were 1,385 animal bite reports submitted to CACC, a 4% decrease from the same time period in 2014. Each animal bite report received is investigated by Animal Control personnel. Animal Control Inspectors initiate Dangerous Dog Investigations to follow up on the most serious bite incidents. Animal Control inspectors are also responsible for ensuring that animal-related businesses comply with the Municipal Code.

Enforcement: So far in 2015, CACC has issued 2,504 Municipal Code violations, a 57% increase from 2014. CACC has increased our emphasis on dog license enforcement. Verifying dog licensure is typically the first step an animal control officer takes when making contact with an animal owner, whether it be in response to a call of an animal bite, dangerous dog, vicious animal, or any other field engagements. Through the first 3 quarters of 2015, CACC has issued 936 dog license citations more than doubling the number of dog licensing citations issued during the same time in 2014.

Compliance: CACC also encourages dog license compliance by requiring residents to obtain a dog license when receiving services through our low-cost vaccine clinics. Since 2011, CACC has processed a total of 3,616 paid dog license applications at clinic events, generating \$75,677 in revenue. In addition, all dogs adopted and redeemed to City residents from our shelter are licensed before leaving. In total, CACC has processed approximately 1350 dog license applications this year alone, through or clinics, redemptions and adoptions. CACC has passed out the City Clerk's dog license literature at 19 off-site adoption events and more than 12 community events in 2015.

## **Budget Efficiencies**

In an effort to maximize productivity flexibility and minimize costs, CACC has converted two full time positions into 4 part time union positions for 2016. Part time Animal Placement Coordinators and Animal Care Clerks will work closely with the public and community partners to: impound animals effectively, and reduce the length of time, and associated costs, of animals housed at CACC before being rescued. The flexible scheduling of these employees will guarantee more effective staff coverage at CACC.

## **Collaboration and Coordination**

Through collaboration, the City maximizes efficiency, including working with CDPH and the Illinois Department of Public Health monitoring bat rabies by submitting species for testing for rabies and providing City residents rabies information when affected. As of September 23, 2015, CACC has submitted 453 specimens to the health department for rabies testing this year, including 150 bats with 7 confirmed rabies positive bats.

CACC assists CPD's Animal Crimes Unit, to respond to reports of dog fighting and animal cruelty. Since 2012, CACC has provided animal handling training to CPD's SWAT units. In 2015, CACC collaborated with CPD and OEMC to develop an active database of declared dangerous animals in Chicago. Now when a police officer, fireman, or other emergency responder visits an address where a dangerous animal is believed to reside, they will receive a caution alert from their dispatcher.

In 2010, we began offering Low Cost Vaccination Clinics to the public. In 2015, we have continued to partner with other community agencies to help meet the demand for low cost spay/neuter services and offer other opportunities including food pantry services and spay/neuter vouchers. The Vaccine Clinics have raised more than \$175,000 since the program began in December of 2010.

In 2015, 331 active volunteers have visited CACC's facility and attended offsite events to provide support. The Guest Volunteer Program enables us to bring in volunteer groups from DePaul University, Northwestern Law, Grainger, Lush Cosmetics, Chicago Spurs, and Deloitte, among others.

CACC has and will continue to attend multiple community events in various wards to engage citizens on the most pressing issues in each neighborhood. CACC will continue to attend community meetings, and provide support and enforcement throughout the City, with particular focus on areas with high incidences of priority service requests.

Collaborating to Overcome Canine Influenza Virus in Chicago: In 2015, Chicago experienced community wide cases of Canine Influenza Virus which is a virus that impacted animals across the country. CACC collaborated with local and national experts to share accurate information about the virus with the community. CACC medical staff worked diligently to treat and monitor all dogs in our facility. Partnerships with our Homeward Bound transfer partners allowed CACC to divert the number of dogs entering our facility, while finding adoption and transfer opportunities for dogs affected by the virus.

CACC is continuing to leverage private support in all areas of departmental operations. In September of 2013, CACC received a promise of two million dollars in grant funds from the Donald Levin Family Foundation for the purpose of renovating interior spaces at the City's sole animal shelter. Combined with more than 5.2 million dollars in City TIF funds, will replace the shelter's roof and HVAC system, while improving sanitation, and animal housing in 4 of 7 dog pavilions – the first full scale renovation to the City shelter since it was built more than 30 years ago. The redesigned cages increase living space for many of the dogs. The project also constructs an improved waste drainage system in key animal housing areas, improving sanitation and quality of life for the animals at the shelter, while making the facility a more inviting and welcoming place for area residents searching for their lost pets, potential pet adopters, and all other visitors.

In 2015, CACC and FCACC partnered to launch the Microchip Chicago 2015 campaign. FCACC developed flyers, digital billboard ad, and high quality public service announcement videos (valued at more than \$250,000 but received at no cost to city) to help CACC spread the message to microchip your pet.

In 2015, CACC also hosted the National Animal Control Association for the purposes of developing an aggressive animal handling video to be used in training of law enforcement and animal control officers across the nation. CACC has also partnered with City TV, Realtors to the Rescue, and Treehouse Humane Society to create an inspirational and informative video on the Kitten on Board program aimed at saving the most vulnerable animals in our shelter, neonate kittens.

Our goal in 2016 is to continue to diligently respond to service requests to ensure a better quality of life in all neighborhoods. While prioritizing animal bites and vicious animal reports, we will work with organizations to reach pet owners to reduce the number of animals given away and ease the transition for animals entering the shelter where the owner has no other choice. CACC will remain committed to building community partnerships that promote the best interests of Chicago's animal. While redeeming, transferring and adopting as many animals from our shelter as possible.



**Commission on Animal Care and Control  
2015 Organization Chart**

