

Public statement to the Cook County Commissioners on Nov. 3, 2015, regarding Cook County's Animal and Rabies Control department and the Ollig audit and report of Aug. 21, 2015, delivered by Lydia Rypcinski, private citizen of the County of Cook and City of Chicago.

Thank you for granting time to speak before you today regarding Cook County's Animal and Rabies Control department.

Unfortunately, it may be the last day that some beloved pets will ever know in this world. They have become lost; their owners don't know where to find them within the labyrinth of animal control agencies that operate in Cook County; they have been given only a few days to either be claimed or adopted; and the municipal and private shelters contracted to house these animals are understaffed, under-resourced, and filled to overflowing.

So these lost pets will be killed in the name of operational expediency.

It does not have to be this way. While it is true that the mission of animal control historically has been to protect people first and animals second, much has changed in the way humans interact with what we now call "companion animals" since the passage of the Cook County Animal and Rabies Control Ordinance in 1977.

It is disheartening to see CCARC's administrator declare, "Pet reunification is not part of the department's core mission." She may be interpreting the letter of the law correctly while missing an essential truth in this new era: that people view their pets as extensions of their families and want – and expect – government attention and assistance when one of them is missing.

To ignore that change in the public's perception of the services a successful animal control operation should provide is to do a disservice to the very taxpayers that support the department and office.

I call your attention to this excerpted passage from a book by Stephen Aronson entitled, "Animal Control Management: A New Look at a Public Responsibility" (Purdue University, 2010):*

(OVER)

"Differences in opinion notwithstanding, animal control officials need to communicate with, cooperate to the extent possible, and garner support of those who have a perceived interest in the welfare of the animals in the community . . . [Animal control] must reach out to those it serves and work with those who want to offer their help to make the community a better place for people and animals to coexist."**

I do not believe this communication and outreach exist today, even within the department itself. When I hear Dr. Alexander state that the Animal Welfare League, which is contracted to house County strays, is in Chicago Heights when it is actually 20 miles north in Chicago Ridge and about a 15-minute drive from her headquarters in Bridgeview, I have to wonder if she has ever even visited it to see how County money is being spent. Is she aware that AWL's own stats reveal that every animal taken there by County animal control in 2014-15 had a better than 60 percent chance of leaving that facility in a garbage bag, headed for a landfill or crematory?

Surely County money can be spent more productively and rewardingly, to reunite these animals with their families, even if it isn't part of the department's "core mission."

In light of these observations, I urge the Commissioners to adopt and implement all the recommendations made in the Inspector General's Aug. 21, 2015 audit and report, to make Cook County Animal and Rabies Control more fully responsive to the changing needs of its community. I would like to point out that you have a wellspring of animal welfare professionals and volunteers available in this area, whose talents and resources could be tapped to help bring these changes about. Please avail yourselves of these people and organizations. Thank you.

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* Aronson is a former local and state government worker with experience in animal control operations.

**Chapter Nine, "Interacting with Public and Private Entities and the Citizenry," pp. 188-189.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Animal Health and Welfare
State Fairgrounds • PO Box 19281
Springfield, Illinois 62794-9281
(217) 782-6657


LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATION
(For period July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016)

254 ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE
ESTRADA, LINDA
10305 SOUTHWEST HIGHWAY
CHICAGO RIDGE IL 60415-1470
|||||

CHECK CURRENT LICENSE TYPE AS DEFINED BY THE ILLINOIS ANIMAL WELFARE ACT:

<input type="checkbox"/> Pet Shop Operator	<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Control Facility
<input type="checkbox"/> Cattery Operator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Animal Shelter
<input type="checkbox"/> Dog Dealer	<input type="checkbox"/> Horse Rescue
<input type="checkbox"/> Kennel Operator	<input type="checkbox"/> Guard Dog Service

(For Office Use Only)
Check #: 033663
Check Amount: 550.00
Date License Issued: 6/30/15
Revenue Code: 081/080 083/082 031/030 033/032 034/035 084/085 069/090 182/183

If this facility is no longer in business, , turn page over, sign, date, and return in envelope provided.

1. Are the name, address, and telephone number above correct? ☐ Yes ☒ No (If no, list any corrections below) 184

2. Normal Business Hours 8-9pm 3. Business Telephone 708.636-8586 4. Fax Number 708.636-9488 5. Business E-mail Address ~~linda.estrada@animalwelfareleague.org~~

Business information will be available to the public.

6. Has there been an ownership change during the past year not reported to the Bureau? ☐ Yes ☒ No

PLEASE NOTE: If yes, this form is VOID and business owner must request a new application; however, if the business has had a partnership change by adding or deleting a partner, changes can be noted on the line below.

7. Section 25.90 of the Rules and Regulations of the Animal Welfare Act requires that each licensee report to the Department at the time of license renewal the number of dogs, puppies, cats, kittens, and exotic or non-domesticated animals sold for the previous calendar year. If kennel license is for boarding only, check this box: ☐ (If checked, continue with question 9.)

Dogs sold _____ Puppies sold _____ Cats sold _____
Kittens sold _____ Exotic and non-domesticated animals sold* _____

*Exotic or non-domesticated animals include mammals, reptiles, and birds not native to North America and native mammals that are not domesticated and normally maintained as pets. Fish are excluded, as are the following animals born in the United States: hamsters, mice, gerbils, rats, and birds.

8. Shelters and Animal Control Facilities must report to the Department at the time of license renewal the total number of dogs, cats, and other animals received, adopted, euthanized, or reclaimed by the owner for the previous calendar year. (Jan. Dec.)

Beginning inventory 596	Beginning inventory 526	Beginning inventory 33
Dogs received 7094	Cats received 7293	Other animals received 2078
Dogs adopted 2375	Cats adopted 2246	Other animals adopted 10270 Wildlife Rescue
Dogs reclaimed 900	Cats reclaimed 211	Other animals reclaimed 11
Dogs euthanized 3126	Cats euthanized 4793	Other animals euthanized 820
Ending inventory 693	Ending inventory 43	Ending inventory 40

