



# **City Manager Report**

## **The City of OKLAHOMA CITY**

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**NO:** 752

**DATE:** JANUARY 12, 2016

**TO:** THE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

**SUBJECT:** ANIMAL WELFARE ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2015

In January of 2015 the Development Services Department hired Julie Bank as the new Animal Welfare Superintendent. Julie has almost 30 years of experience in animal welfare operations and is committed to upgrading Oklahoma City's Animal Welfare Services. Since she assumed the duties of Superintendent, three strategic goals have been emphasized.

- Increasing the shelters live release rate by increasing adoptions, ensuring more lost animals are returned home and more placement partnerships were created.
- Enhancing customer care for people and animals. This includes ensuring the 5 Freedoms for animals (Freedom from hunger and thirst, Freedom from discomfort, Freedom from pain, injury and disease, Freedom to express normal behaviors, Freedom from fear and distress); decreasing disease in the shelter; providing quality customer service interactions; providing quality and socially expected customer programs and services; and creating a culture that is equally animal and people centric.
- Focus on community education and engagement; educational outreach, creating opportunities to get involved; providing services to decrease animal intake; and creating a community of responsible pet owners. Increasing effective communication internally and externally.

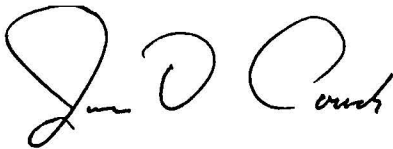
In conjunction with this emphasis on three strategic goals; The City invested \$750,000 into the health of the animals in our care in the form of new kennels, flooring and paint. The new kennels have plexi-glass fronts, and epoxy flooring which allows easier cleaning and disinfecting and controls the spread of disease. An upgraded cleaning solution that better controls disease and cuts down on the time it takes to clean a kennel was also purchased.

As a result of these changes staff is already seeing significant improvements in the health of the animals in our care and the services being provided to our citizens. Below is a brief description of some of the accomplishments.

- Calendar year 2015 ended with a live release rate of 70%. We had two weeks in December where we saw a respective 108% and 102% live release rate. The focus in this area was on increasing the visibility of the animals available for adoption through social media, and education, and highlighting the benefits of adopting a shelter pet.

- A donation of two years of free pet food was secured from a local company, The Shawnee Milling Company that allows us to feed a consistent diet to our pets keeping them healthier.
- A 35% decrease in upper respiratory infections has been achieved in the shelter since September, which we attribute to new kennels, new cleaning solution and new, consistent food.
- Community partnerships have been strengthened by transferring animals out of our care to other adoption programs. Central Oklahoma Humane Society and the Bella Foundation, who have collectively transferred 3,698 animals from Animal Welfare to their programs, have been key partners in our success. There are currently over 114 groups working with the shelter to meet our placement goals.
- A renewed emphasis was placed on Community Programs in 2015. The goals of the community programs are to encourage responsible pet ownership and to decrease the number of animals coming into the shelter. There is also a goal of increasing community engagement in an effort to provide citizens an opportunity to get involved with making a difference at the shelter.
- Creation of a new volunteer program that includes job descriptions, on-line training and an on-line volunteer management system in effort to increase volunteerism and volunteer retention. Creation of new volunteer opportunities including a youth program for kids under 18 called Kids for OKC Animals
- Focus on social media highlighting the work we do and animals in the community. There is an increase in likes on Facebook of over 7,000 individuals and over 1,200 individuals on Twitter.
- Entering into an MOU with a newly formed non-profit called Patrons for OKC Animal Shelter whose goal is to raise funds and community support to further enhance the mission of OKC Animal Welfare.

Staff will be available for questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James D. Couch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "C".

James D. Couch  
City Manager