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Advocacy Group Challenges Huntsville City Leaders to Adopt “No Kill” Model

Huntsville, Alabama (July 5, 2016) - No Kill Huntsville, an animal welfare advocacy coalition created by local animal welfare advocates, has challenged the City of Huntsville to make a public declaration of intent to make Huntsville a “no kill community” and join the ranks of other progressive communities across the country.

No Kill Huntsville is a Huntsville-based animal welfare advocacy coalition formed in January of 2012 to seek greater accountability for the manner in which the municipal animal shelter operates using tax dollars. At that time, the “live release rate” at Huntsville Animals was 34%; approximately 2 out of every 3 animals entering the shelter building were destroyed. No Kill Huntsville took this issue to the public in a very visible way in July of 2013 when it held a free public workshop after which a series of meetings has been held with city and county officials. The live release rate has since improved dramatically and is ordinarily around 90% each month.

In a June 20, 2016, letter to city officials, No Kill Huntsville acknowledged the tremendous progress made over the last two years to balance public safety with animal welfare. The letter went on to state, “we write to you today to respectfully ask that you consider making the final push to make Huntsville a true no kill community by making a public declaration of intent that the city will no longer destroy healthy and treatable animals in our shelter *under any circumstances*. Doing so empowers people who live and work here to become personally invested in how the shelter functions and it also becomes a selling point to encourage people to move here or do business here because ours is an ‘animal friendly’ community. We think the city is in the best possible position to take this next logical step in the wake of recent progress.”

No Kill Huntsville further asked City officials to consider adopting a Companion Animal Protection Act so that certain shelter standards are codified and to ensure the progress is sustained long-term regardless of who manages the animal shelter operation or who leads the city. Similar legislation has been passed in cities across the country and has been enacted in some states. The advocacy group also encouraged the city to develop a Shelter Disaster Plan to both care for and place animals in the event of a puppy mill seizure, hoarder/collector seizure or seizure from a dog fighting operation in order to ensure it can maintain “no kill” status even when there is a mass-intake event at the shelter.

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