

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: What is missing from this motion is WHY there is a “staffing emergency.” According to the Controller’s website, 156 ACTs received a paycheck in 2019 when the total number of intakes was higher (56,575 animals), and so far this year 153 ACTs have received a check in 2023 when intakes are lower (YTD as of August 2023 are 29,708; the total intake YTD in August 2019 was 39,126). What is happening here? How has the compensatory time off system – which was implemented during Covid – affected operations? Out of all the people hired as ACTs and clerks in the last 12 months, how many are still with the department? Is there a turnover problem? I hope there will be further discussion about the hours, training and job responsibilities of part-time staff. I’ve heard the GM state that this would be through June, so it would be 8 months at most and then some or all of them will be laid off. Her plan is to hire current volunteers and reach out to rescue groups to find part-time staff. While some may be interested in working 6-10 hours a week, it may be difficult to find people to work 20+ hours a week as many volunteers already have full time jobs. Furthermore, what job assignments will they have? To have them all go through the full training an ACT receives may be impractical; since this is short-term it may be better to have these temp-hires limited to cleaning and perhaps helping the public with adoptions; having to train people to use Chameleon (database) to book in animals may result in several data input errors, restraining animals for medical treatment requires skill (and if you are not good at it either the ACT or the RVT could get bit), and it is possible that volunteers hired to perform this function will not want to participate in the euthanasia of animals (so this could be a deterrent to temp hiring). I have heard at Board of Animal Services Commission meetings that the department is not allowed to use donations from the Animal Welfare Trust Fund to pay staff, so I do not understand why it is being considered here. Even if it does not violate the City’s code to do so, using donations to pay staff salaries is not appropriate – it needs to come from the City’s General Fund.