



Press Release

**Fort Bend County
Health & Human Services**

**4520 Reading Road - Suite A - Rosenberg, TX 77471
M. desVignes-Kendrick, M.D., Director
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For immediate release

Contact:

Yaneth Calderon

P: 281-238-3551

yaneth.calderon@fortbendcountytexas.gov

Animal Services Takes Steps Toward “No Kill” Status

The Fort Bend County Animal Services shelter has received the results of a 2017 assessment that included several acknowledgements as well as recommendations to further assist the shelter in moving toward “no-kill” status.

Brent Toellner, Regional Director, Great Plains and South Central Regions for Best Friends Animal Society, performed the assessment, commending the staff and leadership at Animal Services. Toellner’s report states, “the single most important element in building a successful life-saving organization is having compassionate leadership that is dedicated to providing safe and positive outcomes for the pets in the community.”

Other positive comments referenced the staff’s willingness to try new things, learn better practices and work outside normal business hours to provide adoption opportunities. The recent addition of a staff veterinarian highlights County Judge and Commissioners Court support for the work at the shelter and allows animals arriving at the facility to receive immediate medical evaluation.

“We are thrilled that the external assessment highlighted the hard work that our staff does for the pets that arrive at our shelter. Our goal is to keep progressing toward ‘no-kill’ status,” said Rene Vasquez, Director of Animal Services. “We could not have come this far without the amazing support of volunteers, rescue groups, fosters, elected officials and those who donate supplies and funds. Helping us find permanent homes for as many animals as possible will continue to take a community effort.”

The Best Friends report provided Animal Services with several recommendations to maintain the change toward “no kill”. One of the recommendations, which will be implemented first, calls for more transparency and public awareness of the number of animal intakes, adoptions, rescues, redemptions to owners and of those euthanized. Animal Services plans to publish this data monthly on the County website and on social media. Animal Services is also researching guidance on Trap Neuter Return (TNR) and Shelter Neuter Return (SNR) programs, including the steps that would be necessary to implement pilot programs.

Additional goals include developing a managed intake program, improving infection control for very young animals in the shelter – especially litters of puppies – improving shelter volunteer communication and strengthening the foster program.

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