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For Immediate Release
TUESDAY January 12th, 2017 ROSENBERG, TEXAS

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 3RD, 2017. CITY OF ROSENBERG CITY COUNCIL
OBSCURELY UNSEATS A DEDICATED MEMBER OF THE ANIMAL ADVISORY
BOARD.**

New Year New Resolution is not the case in City of Rosenberg! City of Rosenberg continues to remove compassionate and animal loving employee and volunteers from the Animal Shelter. They tried to encourage change at the shelter. The City of Rosenberg bans volunteers from the facility who have spoken out about the practices there.

Advocates and volunteers were hopeful that the Rosenberg Animal Shelter was moving toward achieving its published updated mission statement of "taking proactive measures to place stray and abandoned animals in adoptive homes while operating and maintaining a shelter for those in need," the City of Rosenberg, its interim shelter director, and police department, jointly, dismissed an extraordinary volunteer, who also served on the Animal Advisory Board. Laura Knizner was removed from the city's volunteer program immediately, as of the January 3rd, 2017, City Council Meeting. Executive session was held to make this determination, and Laura Knizner was not offered the chance to provide comment regarding the nebulous accusations that were the basis of her removal.

Laura Knizner has given countless hours of her time and considerable monetary donations to facilitate lifesaving programs that offered sheltered pets at Rosenberg Animal Shelter to adoptive homes, be returned to their owners, and tagged by rescue organizations.

Laura was the driving force to ensure the Rosenberg Animal Advisory Board complied with the mandate to meet at least three times per year. Though city population of Rosenberg does not meet the size requirement for it to have an animal advisory board, precedent of having one in the past supports the intent to serve the taxpayers by acting in good faith and with transparency. The meetings have been called sporadically, and board members did not hold proper credentials to serve in their capacity. Laura raised awareness of these deficiencies, and pushed for regular meetings when she assumed her duties on the board in 2016. One major accomplishment that Laura pursued during her term was lifting the ban on adopting out pit bulls.

She has developed a sizeable network of volunteers who organized and attended adoption and fundraising events, giving the sheltered animals exposure that increased their chances for leaving the shelter alive. She recruited a professional photographer who took beautiful and effective photos for marketing pets.

It is widely known that in any community expressing interest in saving lives of sheltered pets, volunteerism is essential, and has played a major role in supporting efforts of shelter staff. In this case, it was clear that the percentage of animals saved has grown, but, unfortunately, so has the status quo embraced by the entire city staff.

Contrary to their claims of "making great progress," its recent decision to dismiss Laura Knizner would indicate otherwise. Despite many written inquiries to the council asking why Laura Knizner was removed as both Animal Advisory Board member and volunteer, only vague answers have been given.

The government of Rosenberg sends a strong message that it holds the conventional mindset of simply operating a catch and kill shelter.

The Rosenberg Animal Shelter staff and the City of Rosenberg mayor, chief of police, and city council, sadly short changed themselves and their constituents by failing to embrace improvement and change. Volunteers are free resources that save taxpayers money. Volunteers who are as dedicated as Laura Knizner are rare indeed.

About Fort Bend County Pets Alive! FORT BEND PETS ALIVE! is a non-profit, 501(C)3 organization, dedicated to help make Fort Bend a no kill community through programs such as adoptions, education and community outreach, low cost spay and neuter surgeries, fostering, Positive Alternatives to Shelter Surrender (PASS), and promote rescuing from euthanasia list.

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