

Mayor and City Council Candidate Survey
City of Stafford, Texas Municipal Election 2017

**Candidates' views on
Stafford's future animal sheltering system**

Fort Bend Pets Alive!

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Introduction

Fort Bend Pets Alive! has initiatives to increase the Save Rate of companion animals at City of Stafford's taxpayer funded animal control facility/shelter that will be built in the near future. The purpose of this survey is to understand the stances and intentions of the candidates running for mayoral and city council positions regarding animal welfare issues generally and related to City of Stafford becoming a No Kill community.

Definition of a No Kill community:

A No Kill community is a community in which all healthy and treatable shelter pets are saved, including at Open Admission facilities like the animal shelter that will be built in City of Stafford. The only animals euthanized are those who are irremediably sick or injured and suffering or who pose a genuine danger to the public. The benchmark to be recognized as a No Kill community is the ability to save all healthy and treatable pets (generally 90% to 98% of all animals). There are currently hundreds of shelters/communities who are saving 90% or more of all shelter pets.

For instance:

- Roughly 1,000,000 people live in communities saving between 98% and 99% of dogs and cats in their shelters.
- About 9,000,000 people live in communities saving between 90% and 99% of dogs and cats in their shelters.
- Over 40,000,000 people live in communities saving at least 80% of dogs and cats in their shelters. (See Saving90.org)

Those No Kill communities have very little in common other than a commitment to save the lives of shelter pets, while saving money in the process. These communities have achieved their life saving successes by rigorously implementing the No Kill Equation, which is a suite of fiscally-responsible, humane, 21st century animal sheltering programs that have been proven to work. The programs of the No Kill Equation or No Kill model of sheltering are:

- Rescue Partnerships
- Volunteers
- Foster Care
- Trap, Neuter, Return
- Pet Retention
- Comprehensive Adoption Program
- Public Relations/Community Involvement
- Medical & Behavior Prevention & Rehabilitation
- High-Volume, Low-Cost Spay & Neuter
- Proactive Redemption
- **Hard-working, Compassionate Shelter Director**

Every candidate is being asked to complete this survey. Candidates' responses will be compiled as part of a voting guide that will be distributed to City of Stafford voters in preparation for the May 2017 election.

As part of an awareness campaign by Fort Bend Pets Alive!, candidates' responses will also be rated, and then released to the media and posted on some or all of our websites and social media sites. **Responses, as well as non-responses, will be reported.**

Thank you for your participation in this opportunity for the voters to get to know you better.

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The survey is composed of 11 questions. Candidates are encouraged to respond in writing with enough detail to adequately represent the candidates' view of the current state of the ordinance that mandates the animal shelter to be built in the future, and his or her views on how the animal shelter should operate in coming years.

Survey Questions

1. Do you see animal welfare as an issue the municipal government should care about?
If elected or re-elected to City of Stafford city council, are you committed to supporting/enforcing the No Kill Implementation plan recommended by Fort Bend Pets Alive! ?

Response: Yes

No

I am supportive of the idea of the no kill plan but I think that it has to be on a broader area than just the City of Stafford. I would be more supportive of a program that would be County wide and have all cities involved by an inter-local agreement. I do not know what is recommended by the Fort Bend Pets Alive organization. Animals that roam the city are not just from the city limits, many come from areas outside the city.

2. If the animal welfare issue were to come before you, would you commit to making "No Kill" the official policy of City of Stafford and support any laws or policy changes necessary to allow provisions of life saving programs and appropriate funding to implement no kill initiatives in City of Stafford ?

Response: Yes

No

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3. If elected or re-elected to City of Stafford city council, would you support the animal shelter taking proactive measures to ensure the shelter adoption program would have adopter friendly hours such as open on Saturday or Sunday (extended hours) and staying open till 7:00pm during the week?

Response: **Yes**

No

I am not aware of what has been discussed and will have to get better informed on what is being proposed. I would be supportive of friendly hours to make it convenient for the citizens.

4. People frequently surrender animals to shelters when they perceive they cannot feed, train or medically care for them.

If elected or re-elected to City of Stafford city council, would you support programs which have been proven to keep pets in their homes and out of shelters, such as surrender counseling, a pet food bank, pet behavior assistance, and distribution of heartworm preventative?

Response: **Yes**

No

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- 5 If elected or re-elected to City of Stafford city council, would you support an progressive programs such as "Return to Owner" program? The quicker an animal is reunited with owner, the less the cost of care will be incurred.

Response: Yes

No

6. Many dog breeds are being banned in many of the rental housing markets in Fort Bend County. This makes finding appropriate housing very difficult for owners of these dogs, despite high levels of owner responsibility and great dog temperaments and training. This slows adoptions of these breeds and forces many owners to surrender their pets to shelters or abandon them.

If elected or re-elected to City of Stafford city council, would you take proactive action to find lasting solutions to this problem, in working with the apartment associations and property managers in Stafford ?

Response: Yes

No

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7. If elected or re-elected to City of Stafford city council, would you support the implementation of performance standards that measure for the city shelter leadership's performance, particularly with regard to the number of live releases, to salary increments or continued employment at the city shelter? If not, please explain why not.

Response: **Yes**

No

As long as it complies with the City's Personnel Policy and hiring practices and laws that govern the City.

8. If elected, or re-elected, would you form an Animal Advisory Board? What do you envision as the role of Fort Bend Pets Alive! in providing oversight for the city shelter that maybe built in the future?

What kind of person will you appoint to the Committee?

Would you consider appointing No Kill advocates as members to provide an alternative viewpoint to the committee?

Response: **Yes**

No

I am in favor of forming an Animal Board and having informed persons on that board.

I would be in favor of appointing persons that are knowledgeable on the well care of animals and the operation of an animal shelter and have the best interest of the animals.

I would consider appointing persons to the board that are very knowledgeable about the operations of the animal shelter and have the best interest of the City and the animals.

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9. If elected or re-elected to City of Stafford city council, would you support a city mandate that the animal shelter in Stafford to provide and publish statistics, on their websites, regarding the numbers and types of animals that the shelter takes in and euthanizes? (Note: some states, such as Colorado, already mandate that all shelters and rescue groups must provide their statistics to the state so that it is available to the public).

If so, why do you feel this important? If not, why not?

Response: Yes

No

I am very much in favor of keeping the public informed.

10. With so many community cats roaming in neighborhoods, do you believe and support Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) to be the only humane solution to control population of outdoor cats in City of Stafford? Would you support any laws or policy changes necessary to allow appropriate provisions and to provide funding to implement TNR in City of Stafford?

Response: Yes

No

I would be in favor of a system that works and has the best interest of the animals. I am not informed enough at this time to know what is the best solution.

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11. Do you agree with the saying "Helping people help pets" will make the community a better place?

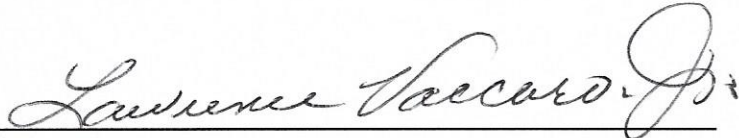
Response: **Yes**

No

Thank you for responding to this survey. **Please make sure your response is returned to Fort Bend Pets Alive! by Friday April 7th, 2017.** If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact info@FortBendPetsAlive.org

You may email your completed survey form to:
info@FortBendPetsAlive.org

Name: Lawrence Vaccaro, Jr.
Please print

Signature: 

Date: April 5, 2017