

Annual Internal Review

**This report covers the time period of 7/1/2020 to 6/30/2021
Animal Advisory Commission**

The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) **is:** *The purpose of the board is to advise the City Council and the Travis County Commissioners Court on Compliance with Texas Health and and Safety Code Chapter 823 (Animal Shelters); advise the City Council on animal welfare policies and on budget priorities identified by the commission and the community, except on issues related to the administration of the Animal Services Department; advise the Travis County Commissioners Court on animal welfare policies; promote the collaboration between the City, private institutions, and agencies interested in or conducting activities relating to animal welfare in the City; identify proactive, creative approaches to engage and facilitate communication within the animal welfare community; and foster and assist the development of animal welfare programs in the community. The commission may study, advise, and report on policy recommendations it deems effective to promote animal welfare outcomes consistent with City goals and objectives as outlined by City Council and the City Manager.*

Describe the board's actions supporting their mission during the previous calendar year. Address all elements of the boards mission statement as provided in the relevant sections of the City Code.

- Received quarterly reports from staff (and APA) on issues directly related to Chapter 823 compliance at the Austin Animal Center and TLAC.
- Received monthly Animal Services reports.
- Received monthly Austin Animal Center reports.
- Provided a forum for public comment and discourse.

The Commission created or carried over the following Work Groups to study and possibly recommend action on these issues:

- Budget Priorities Work Group (2020)
- SNR (Shelter-Neuter-Release) Program (for cats) Work Group
- Code Revision Work Group
- Human Animal Support Services (HASS) Work Group
- Off-Leash Dogs Work Group
- How to Increase Microchipping in the City of Austin Work Group

Actions taken by the Commission during the year:

- Recommend to City Council that all currently budgeted but unstaffed and frozen APO positions be filled immediately, and not labelled as “temporary”
- Recommended that the City send to Committee consideration for the Human Animal Support Services (HASS) program
- Recommended that Travis County Commissioners Court review Austin’s Ordinance §-3-2-3, Commerce in Live Animals, and incorporate the portions allowed under State statutes into a County ordinance
- Recommended that the City of Austin’s Intergovernmental Relations Office (IGRO) add wildlife funding (as proposed in a bill to be filed by Texas State Senator Sarah Eckhardt) to the City’s 2021 Legislative Agenda
- Recommended changes to the the City of Austin’s Vicious Dog Ordinance
- Recommended that the City of Austin’s Intergovernmental Relations Office (IGRO) support a Texas Senate bill (SB 197) that would exempt rescue groups from paying a sales tax on animal adoptions
- Recommend that the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve Committee (an interlocal committee between the City and the County) reach out to the Lakewood neighborhood to advise them of the dangers of feral hogs when neighbors cut the fence between the neighborhood and the preserve

Submitted 7/30/21 by Dr. Craig Nazor, Chair, Animal Advisory Commission