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with the Animal Services Center continuing to face both staff and volunteer shortages and reduction in services to the community; and

WHEREAS, despite the laudable efforts of Animal Services Department staff, animal advocacy groups, and volunteers to alleviate the strain, the Animal Services Office (ASO) has released multiple media advisories and memos reporting on a severe shelter space crisis, and in one case in 2021, warned of the possible use of euthanasia; and

WHEREAS, in response, the Commission committed to appoint a Shelter Space Issues Working Group to review available data and craft strategies to improve the flow of shelter operations and forestall any need to resort to euthanasia to resolve capacity issues, and work to increase public access to the facility; and

WHEREAS, the most recent audit of the department from 2015 reviewed state compliance issues and acknowledged ongoing challenges such as insufficient facilities and resources; and

WHEREAS, the focus of the findings in the most recent audit addressed many questions of compliance, but Council recognizes the need to broaden the scope of a future audit to review effectiveness and outline specific strategies and recommendations provided by the City Auditor, who would benefit not only from collaboration with City staff but also from external animal sheltering industry experts knowledgeable in No Kill policies and practices; and

WHEREAS, Council also acknowledges the role of the Commission, which must navigate disparate community voices and which, as a state-required advisory board, is tasked to provide expert guidance to Council; and

46 **WHEREAS**, as they have through other challenging points in the shelter's
47 history, the Commission has issued recommendations to Council that support the
48 city's No Kill policy; and

49 **WHEREAS**, Council acknowledges Commission Recommendation No.
50 2022613-004 regarding the resolution of No Confidence in reference to department
51 leadership, and Council acknowledges the ongoing concerns being heard from
52 volunteers, City staff, and community groups about the state of the shelter and
53 condition of the animals; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

54 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

55 The City Auditor is directed to perform an audit of Animal Services Office
56 effectiveness (effectiveness audit) and to identify an external animal sheltering
57 expert knowledgeable in No Kill policies and practices to assist in identifying
58 strategies and recommendations for improved flow of operations, quality care for
59 animals, and a successful, sustainable No Kill shelter. The following directions
60 assume City Auditor collaboration with an external expert.

61 The City Auditor is directed to pursue the effectiveness audit and consider
62 areas to review that include, but are not limited to, the following, and make
63 recommendations in alignment with No Kill practices:

- 64 ● Causes of recent kennel space shortages that have occurred alongside
65 decreases in animal intake between 2020-2022, and identify necessary
66 improvements;
- 67 ● The flow of operations to provide faster availability of pets to new
68 owners;

- 69 ● Availability of services to the public for stray animal intake,
70 spay/neuter programs, Pet Resource Center services, animal
71 protection, and adoption services; and identify areas that need
72 improvement and strategies to implement;
- 73 ● Current staffing levels and recommendations for any necessary
74 increased staffing;
- 75 ● Optimal medical procedures and care to best serve the health needs of
76 the animals and the capacity of the facility;
- 77 ● Alignment of the Transport Program, which transports animals to
78 other shelters and rescue organizations, with national best practices
79 and the City's No Kill policies;
- 80 ● Current Ordinance No. 20191017-025 reporting requirements for
81 potential updates and recommend any changes for optimal public
82 transparency;
- 83 ● Current reporting of data for compliance with ordinance requirements;
- 84 ● Provision of behavior services to shelter animals by professionals
85 dedicated to humane training, in alignment with No Kill policies;
- 86 ● History and status of ASO partnerships with animal advocacy, rescue
87 partners, and volunteer and community groups, and recommend
88 strategies to improve those partnerships;
- 89 ● Staffing need for ASO community liaison personnel to secure healthy,
90 collaborative relationships with key community partners and
91 volunteers;

- Additional resources through local community partners that may be available to ASO;
- Existing shelter facility design/usage to meet the needs of the animals and the community; and
- Use of satellite locations for adoptions in City facilities or in partnership with community groups.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The Council directs the City Auditor to review the following Commission strategies to improve shelter operations and to achieve compliance with City Code and Council policies, and identify recommendations that should be implemented based on the completed audit:

- Commission Recommendation No. 20210809-3f as developed by the Shelter Space Issues Working Group to address the ongoing space crises at the shelter.
- Commission Recommendation No. 20220610-001 regarding the necessity for the department to follow City Code Section 3-1-25, Subsections (C), (I), and (J) in the disposition of an impounded animal.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to expedite the hiring process for candidates applying for Animal Service Department vacancies as soon as possible to help address the existing staff and volunteer shortages as well as to improve the living conditions for the animals, working conditions for staff and volunteers, and in

115 recognition of the public service that is provided by this department as essential to
116 public health and safety.

117 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

118 The City Manager is directed to explore adding the Animal Services
119 Department to the Strategic Direction update with the appropriate metrics attached.

120 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

121 The City Auditor is directed to prioritize the effectiveness audit given
122 current workload, identify an external expert at the earliest opportunity, and offer
123 details on progress and a timeline for the project at the September 21, 2022 Audit
124 and Finance Council Committee meeting.

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126 **ADOPTED:** _____, 2022 **ATTEST:** _____
127 Myrna Rios
128 City Clerk
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