



**PROPOSAL FOR ANIMAL SHELTER MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS FOR THE
CITY OF CONROE ANIMAL SHELTER**

WRITTEN BY:

DEANA SELLENS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND FOUNDER, TEXAS LITTER CONTROL

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LETTER OF TRANSMISSION

Thank you for taking the time to review our proposal. We look forward to working with the City of Conroe to make the Conroe Animal Shelter a premier shelter others will want to model after.

Texas Litter Control (TLC) is more than qualified to assume operations of the Conroe Animal Shelter. TLC currently runs a high quality, high volume spay/neuter clinic for dogs and cats and 3 adoption centers for cats. Dog adoptions were recently added to one adoption site, with plans to include them in the other two as well. Since opening in February of 2013 over 26,000 cat and dog sterilizations have been done.

Both the Montgomery County Animal Shelter and the City of Conroe Animal Shelter have seen significant decreases in the number of animals entering the shelters since the Texas Litter Control spay/neuter clinic opened in February of 2013. MCAS is reporting a drop of almost 600 animals per month and CAS has seen a 14% drop in intake between 2015 and 2016 which amounts to almost 700 animals. Studies by the Humane Society of the United States and Best Friends Animal Society show the link between shelter intake and high volume spay/neuter seen in our community.

TLC is a Texas Non Profit Corporation and 501c3 public charity that qualifies the organization for a wide variety of grants, both local and national.

TLC employs 4 veterinarians, maintains 2 licenses for controlled drugs as a part of our disaster recovery plan. Prior to her role as Chief Medical Officer at TLC, Dr. Karen Tatum, DVM served as the Chief of Veterinary Operations for Harris County Public Health animal shelter. The Harris County Animal Shelter handles almost 5 times the volume compared to the City of Conroe Animal Shelter, so Dr. Tatum would bring significant and noteworthy experience.

TLC has a staff of 26 and provides full benefits for full time employees. All appropriate insurance is already in place including Workers, Comp, Liability, Employment Practices Liability Insurance, and Directors and Officers Insurance. TLC has an established call center for the clinic which operates 6 days a week and a call line for adoptions which operates 7 day a week. TLC uses Animal Shelter Manager software and uploads all adoptable animals to Adopt A Pet and Petfinder. In addition, all microchips are electronically transferred to adopters via Shelter Manager through Found Animals.

Texas Litter Control has an excellent reputation in the community. With over 25,000 members of the community on our email list and over 4,000 followers on Facebook. TLC has a 4.5 star rating on Yelp and 4.8 stars on Google. TLC is vigilant in posting only positive information on all social media.

The Board of Directors and leadership at Texas Litter Control are dedicated to collaboration. No one group will solve the animal welfare issues in our community and we have been building strategic partnerships within the community to become more effective for many years. Some examples include but are not limited to:

- Rural Dog Rescue adoption collaboration with plans to focus on large dog adoptions.
- Free public surgery days with Texas Animal Society, Montgomery County Spay Neuter Project, Clipped Ear Cat Sanctuary and the Homeless Pet Placement League.
- A United Pet Rescuers of Montgomery County conference in 2017, created and coordinated by Maverick Pets Alive and TLC with the goals of enhancing communication and collaboration between animal welfare and rescue organizations.

Texas Litter Control Proposal for Animal Shelter Maintenance and Operations for the City of Conroe
Animal Shelter

Although TLC has not had the pleasure yet of working with the City of Conroe Animal Control, we have an excellent relationship with the ACOs in Montgomery County.

Texas Litter Control brings a vast array of experience, partnerships, a sound infrastructure, and a vision to make the Conroe Animal Shelter the best in the business!

I look forward to answering any of your questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Deana Sellens
President, Executive Director and Founder
Texas Litter Control

PROPOSAL

OBJECTIVES

Texas Litter Control's mission for the Conroe Animal Shelter is to achieve a 90% live release rate with a major focus on preventative measures to solve problems for and with constituents.

To serve as a resource in animal welfare for the citizens of Conroe for help in keeping pets in their homes.

To support the City of Conroe Animal Control team in aiding citizens with pet care and pet rehoming needs.

SCOPE OF WORK

A. Shelter Services

Basic Services

Texas Litter Control will provide food, water and healthcare to animals entering the CAS sheltering system.

Stray Intake Procedures

Animal is scanned for micro-chip and compared to any lost pet alerts in the area.

Animal demographics including location found and photograph is entered into sheltering system.

Visual exam done by intake specialist to determine if there are any obvious signs of illness and alert a staff veterinarian when needed.

Provide preventive care on intake including vaccines, dewormer and flea prevention.

Offer supplies for Good Samaritan to foster and provide spay/neuter services when old enough or stray hold period done.

Owner Surrender Policies and Fee Schedule

Intake staff will question owner in an effort to assist, intervene and prevent the pet from entering the shelter system either by enabling the owner to keep their pet or help place their pet outside of the shelter system.

After presenting a state issued photo ID showing the person is a resident of the City of Conroe, pet would be scanned for a micro-chip and a release signed by the owner. An intake fee will be charged to owners surrendering their pets, *however, fees can be waived with a supervisor's approval if proof of financial need is presented.*

Altered with Current Medical Records	\$25
Unaltered or Altered but No Medical Records	\$50
1 st Litter of Kittens or Puppies*	\$100
2 nd Litter of Kittens or Puppies	\$150

We will refund \$50 of the litter surrender fee if the owner shows proof the mother dog or cat is fixed within 30 days of surrendering the litter. We will issue the owner a voucher for a free spay mother.

Visual exam done by intake specialist – to determine if there are any obvious signs of illness and alert a staff veterinarian when needed.

Provide preventive care on intake that includes vaccines, dewormer and flea prevention.

Behavior Evaluation Process

Dogs and cats will be evaluated for behavior issues upon intake. Pets acting aggressively will be allowed to acclimate to the shelter and be re-evaluated daily.

B. Standards of Care

Texas Litter Control agrees to follow the animal care guidelines set by the Texas Health and Safety Code and the Association of Shelter Veterinarians Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters.

C. Minimum Hours of Operation

Adoption Hours of Operation

The RFP states the shelter must be open to the public at a minimum from 9 to 5 Tuesday through Sunday. In an effort to achieve our life saving goals and provide animal services for the community, adoption hours are below. In addition, the shelter will be open for adoption on all holidays except for New Years, Thanksgiving and Christmas days.

Proposed Adoption Hours

Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays: 10am – 7pm

Tuesdays, Fridays: 10am – 8pm

Saturdays, Sundays: 9am – 5pm

Intake Hours of Operation

Owner Surrenders will be taken by appointment only with the goal of providing assistance to keep the pet in the home (called Managed Intake or Safety Net). If that is not possible, assistance will be offered to help the pet owner find their pet another home outside of the shelter system so the shelter is the last option.

Strays will be accepted during all business hours.

People trapping cats will be encouraged to take the animals to the spay/neuter clinic instead of leaving them at the shelter. TLC will spay/neuter any cats diverted by a citizen of Conroe. They will receive a voucher for free services. We will abide by all laws set forth by the city so we will not be engaging in Trap-Neuter-Return independently unless the ordinance is updated.

D. After-Hours, Temporary Shelter Facility

Evenings, nights and weekends should be reserved for emergency cases such as dangerous dogs, police assists, confiscations or injured animals, so that the ACOs can focus on true public and animal safety. ACOs would have access to the shelter at all times.

- TLC will not be staffing “on call Veterinarians.” Injured animals need to be taken to the closest emergency animal hospital at the city’s expense. The animal will be transferred to TLC during regular business hours.
- If the ACOs are dropping off animals outside of regular business hours, the ACOs must provide food, water, bed or towel and signing them into the shelter system.
- Space will be set aside for overnight calls.

E. Condition of Animal Shelter

TLC will provide an exceptional customer experience for the residents of the City of Conroe. The facility will be kept as clean as possible by following Best Practices protocols established by the Association of Shelter Veterinarians *Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters*. TLC is committed to creating a positive environment for both pets and people.

Cat cages will be spot cleaned during the cats’ stay. Food and water bowls will be changed daily, cats offered dry food at all times and canned food twice daily. Disposable litter boxes will be discarded daily and once the cat leaves the enclosure permanently, an effective disinfectant such as Rescue/Accel will be used.

Dogs will be removed from their enclosures during the sanitation process each morning and fed a mixture of dry and canned twice daily. Dog areas will be spot cleaned throughout the day as needed.

TLC will work to ensure all cat and dog enclosures meet or exceed the minimum size for an acceptable standard of care. Toys and bedding will be provided for all shelter pets. Kennel staff will be readily accessible with name tags and vests for customers to easily identify them in the event they have with questions about the pets.

Many public open admission shelters are proving that a 90% live release rate is possible. Some examples include the City of Waco, Texas and the city of Jacksonville Animal Care and Protective Services in Jacksonville, Florida. With proactive programs productively helping pet owners called Managed Intake or Safety Net that ultimately will decrease shelter intake and a focus on reuniting pets with their rightful owners or finding them a new home. We are committed to getting animals out of the shelter quickly to their permanent placement. At the same time, we understand that there will be

medical cases too advanced or large aggressive dogs that we cannot safely rehabilitate that will be euthanized.

F. Exercise of Animals

Shelter Pet Care Standards and Animal Enrichment

Exercise is crucial for shelter dogs as it will prevent boredom, keep them healthier and decrease anxiety. A volunteer program will be created immediately and other programs, such as a dog walking club will be implemented. Toys will be provided to all cats and dogs.

Cats are less likely to enjoy exercise in the shelter but the crucial factor in the quest to keep them healthy is to provide ample space for them in their enclosure. A minimum of 12 square feet per cat is required. Community rooms for cats are recommended when cats will be housed together for more than 3 weeks and we anticipate a much lower length of stay to get them into their permanent homes.

G. Euthanasia of Animals

Texas Litter Control acknowledges that there will always be some level of euthanasia in open admission shelters for advanced medical cases and large dogs too aggressive to safely rehabilitate. But many shelters are proving that achieving a 90% live release is possible and in addition, euthanasia as population control is no longer acceptable in the United States. We believe this lifesaving can happen within the scope of animal control with the best interest of each animal's welfare in mind.

We will provide a Safety Net for pets and attempt to assist individuals so they may keep their pet with resources such as veterinary care, food, etc. Alternatively, helping people place their pets outside the shelter system will force them to use the shelter as the last option as opposed to the first. TLC has already proven that targeted spay/neuter decreases shelter intake and efforts will continue to provide desperately needed services. Asking Good Samaritans to foster pets they have found and offering them supplies is considered Best Practice in animal welfare today and those conversations will be part of the intake process. These programs *productively* decrease intake and thus the risk of euthanasia.

We will encourage citizens to trap/neuter/return community outside cats they are feeding to prevent colonies and decrease the number of cats outside and therefore possibly entering the shelter. We already offer this service to residents for \$40 per cat.

All stray animals will be scanned for micro-chips on intake and follow up with owners done immediately. Pictures will be posted in real time on a variety of search engines so that owners can search for their pets online and adopters/rescue groups can view them and the shelter will be open with convenient hours for the public. TLC will also maintain a running list of animals reported lost to us and animals being taken in will be compared to this list on intake.

A rounds team will do Population Management daily to ensure that each pet has a plan of action towards live outcome when appropriate. All animals will be readied for adoption as quickly as possible to ensure the shortest length of stay in the shelter.

TLC already has excellent working relationships with the rescue community and that program will be formalized and streamlined in an effort to move animals to live outcome as soon as possible. Animals with emergency medical needs including neonatal kittens and puppies will be published to rescues daily for medical pull and we will collect data on rescue groups specializing in specific breeds, species or special needs.

We will be networking for transport services to areas of the US who have a shortage of animals.

- Operations Pets Alive has agreed to continue their transport support toward CAS.
- Houston Area Rescue Team has also committed to helping transport animals north.
- Animal Shelter Volunteers of Texas will also continue to transport dogs to Iowa and Colorado.

TLC will have an open adoption philosophy, one supported by all the reputable animal welfare organizations (see the Humane Society of the United States *Adopters Welcome Guidelines* at animalsheltering.org). This consistently means being lesser focused on making the right match, having non-judgmental conversations, maintaining low adoption fees and liberal adoption policies in order to get as many adopted as possible.

Euthanasia will be an absolute last resort for our organization after exhaustive efforts to find the appropriate placement. Should an animal have to be euthanized for any reason, the animal will be fully sedated and then given an intravenous injection with Fatal Plus following the Humane Society of the United States euthanasia guidelines. All staff performing euthanasia will be appropriately trained and certified to ensure humane handling of all animals.

H. Un-Adopted Animals

Rescue organizations will be allowed to pull any animal at no charge. A “Length of Stay” list will be emailed out twice a week so that all rescue organizations know what animals have been in the shelter the longest and need the most help.

I. Veterinary Services

We agree to provide the necessary veterinary services for the animals within our care.

J. Return to Owner

Getting the pets back to their owners will be our highest priority. We will keep lost reports available and check them daily, all animals will be listed on our website along with a variety of search engines, with photos, and if a pet has a micro-chip or other identification, the owner will be contacted immediately.

The CARE contract states that boarding and return to owner fees must be paid to the City of Conroe, which can be collected by TLC staff. We would also recommend allowing TLC to provide an alternative to those fees that will include spay/neuter, vaccinations and micro-chip that will decrease the likelihood of the City of Conroe animal control dealing with that pet as a stray in the future.

K. Scanning for Micro-chips

All animals will be scanned for micro-chips on intake and the owners will be contacted immediately. The goal is to return pets to owners as quickly as possible.

L. Adoption Program

TLC will charge \$25 for cats and \$50 for dogs. We have found that we get the maximum number of adoptions at these price points. When an individual adopts a pet, there are a number of expenses involved including but not limited to food, dishes, toys, scratching posts, etc. so keeping fees low increases the likelihood of adoption. Adoption fees will be waived for any animal who is being considered for euthanasia for lack of space or time in the shelter. Specials will be run with lower adoption fees when the shelter is close to capacity.

No animal will be adopted out without being spayed/neutered. Potential adopters can enroll as a foster if they want to foster a kitten or puppy too small to spay/neuter, but they will be charged a \$50 deposit which will be returned when the kitten/puppy is brought back for spay/neuter. Kittens will be spayed/neutered at 2 pounds and puppies at 6 pounds. Small breed puppies will be at the discretion of the staff veterinarian.

TLC is a Petco and Petsmart partner. We will be passing out Petco cards for free merchandise with every adoption and basic supplies will be available at the shelter for purchase.

TLC occupies 3 adoption centers 24/7 at the Tomball Petsmart, the Cypress Petsmart, and the Willowbrook Petsmart. We are also working with some of the senior management at Petsmart to expand into more stores as they open in 2017, as we enjoy excellent working relationships with this company.

TLC has an open adoption policy. We do not require home visits or other intrusive adoption criteria. We give out 30 days of free pet insurance with every adoption so that if the pet becomes ill within the first month, the expense is covered.

M. Disposal of Animals

We understand we will be responsible for all labor costs associated with the disposal of animals. We understand stray animals not reclaimed by the owners will become property of Texas Litter Control. We agree to abide by all of the State and local laws.

N. Audit, Records, and Reports

All reporting requirements requested in the RFP will be met via standard shelter software, such as Chameleon or Animal Shelter Manager, yet to be determined.

O. Shelter Operating Costs

Texas Litter Control will be responsible for the operating costs. We will retain any adoption fees, intake fees, and revenue from public spay/neuter and wellness services to offset the difference between what is contracted with the City of Conroe and the actual costs. Texas Litter Control will also administer any grants awarded to our organization for helping the community and shelter pets.

P. Spay/Neuter Program

Spay/Neuter Services for Previously Adopted Animals

Texas Litter Control will spay/neuter cats for \$40 and dogs for \$80. If there are outstanding animals which need to be called on, TLC can make calls and send letters to try and get more of these animals in for surgery.

Other Services

TLC will also be providing public subsidized low cost spay/neuter 2 days a week. This process may start with a transport van from the Conroe Animal Shelter to the main TLC spay/neuter clinic until the volume is high enough to sustain the service.

Subsidized low cost wellness services will also be provided at least 1 day a week.