

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC PROPERTY AND
PUBLIC WORKS AND APPROPRIATIONS

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, April 24, 2017
1:45 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON, CO-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ,
CO-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILMAN WILLIAM K. GREENLEE
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL
COUNCILWOMAN CHERELLE L. PARKER
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

RESOLUTION 170149 - Resolution authorizing
City Council's Committees on Public Property
and Public Works & Appropriations to hold
hearings investigating the quality of
resources and funding levels of the
Philadelphia Animal Care and Control Team and
explore the need for any additional resources
to meet the City of Philadelphia's needs.

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1
2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Good
3 afternoon, everybody. Thank you all for
4 being here. We will now convene with a
5 joint hearing with Public Property and
6 Appropriations.

7 To my right I want to recognize
8 the Chairperson of the Appropriation
9 Committee, and Councilman Squilla to my
10 left, Councilman Greenlee and Councilman
11 Domb.

12 Clerk, would you please read
13 the title of the resolution.

14 THE CLERK: Resolution 170149,
15 a resolution authorizing City Council's
16 Committees on Public Property and Public
17 Works & Appropriations to hold hearings
18 investigating the quality of resources
19 and funding levels of the Philadelphia
20 Animal Care and Control Team and explore
21 the need for additional resources to meet
22 the City of Philadelphia's needs.

23 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
24 Clerk.

25 Before we get things started, I

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2 want to make a statement and, again, I
3 want to thank you all for being here and
4 thank my Committee members and Committee
5 members for Appropriations.

6 Today's hearing is designed to
7 shed a light on the issues and challenges
8 faced by the Animal Care and Control Team
9 of Philadelphia. In particular, we are
10 interested in assessing and evaluating
11 issues related to the facility and its
12 funding, but before we begin, I want to
13 make clear for the record that I believe
14 that ACCT Philly, its staff are working
15 very hard and they're working hard with
16 the limited resources and the substandard
17 facilities that they have to operate
18 every single day.

19 Some of the volunteers and the
20 animal advocates have suggested that ACCT
21 Philly is in some way failing
22 Philadelphia's animal population. It is
23 my belief that those claims are
24 misguided.

25 The vast majority of the

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2 challenges that ACCT Philly faces are a
3 result of the City of Philadelphia's
4 failure to adequately fund and support
5 the operations of ACCT Philly, and
6 Philadelphia has a responsibility to fix
7 this problem by investing and renovating
8 the ACCT facilities and increasing the
9 operation budget of ACCT Philly to a
10 level that meets the national best
11 practices.

12 After all the programming is
13 appropriately funded and the facility is
14 up to national standards, we can have
15 conversations about specific concerns
16 related to the actual operation of ACCT.

17 City Council is faced with
18 millions of dollars of requests for
19 funding and support every spring, but by
20 the way we treat Philadelphia's animal
21 population is an indicator of who we are
22 and how we operate as a city. And our
23 failure to fund and support ACCT Philly
24 does not just have an impact on animals,
25 it has an impact on the health and

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2 welfare of every resident in the City of
3 Philadelphia.

4 We have two panels today and a
5 list of individuals who wish to make
6 public comment. The members of these
7 Committees have a prepared list of
8 questions for each of the panelists. We
9 are going to get through this and ask as
10 many questions and get the answers as
11 much as we can here today. So I would
12 like the responses for all of these
13 questions that we prepared in writing by
14 the end of the day this Friday. I will
15 post the responses on my website and I
16 will make them available to the public.

17 We are going to be
18 respectfully -- we are going to
19 respectfully ask that those who have
20 prepared written testimony to summarize
21 your testimony in the interest of time so
22 that we can get answers to as many
23 questions as we can in a prepared and
24 organized manner.

25 Finally, for those who are here

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2 today to raise concerns about issues
3 related to volunteering with ACCT Philly
4 or about specific experiences related to
5 specific animals or specific staff, you
6 will be happy to know that the
7 Administration has committed to
8 reinstating and reengaging the Animal
9 Advisory Committee, which will serve as a
10 structured forum for raising concerns
11 related to animals' well-being and
12 welfare in Philadelphia. Once that
13 committee is back and up and running, I
14 will ask them to have a specific
15 committee meeting dedicated to hearing
16 your ACCT Philly concerns.

17 With that said, this is not an
18 appropriate forum for raising specific
19 animal or ACCT Philly concerns,
20 specifically when it comes to staff and
21 volunteer concerns. The purpose of
22 today's hearing is facilities and the
23 funding issues.

24 Before we get started, I want
25 to ask any members of this Committee if

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2 they wish to make any statements.

3 (No response.)

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: With that
5 being none, Clerk, would you please read
6 our first panel and we can begin with our
7 public testimony.

8 THE CLERK: Marsha Perelman,
9 Inga Fricke, and Melissa Levy.

10 (Witnesses approached witness
11 table.)

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: Good
13 afternoon. You may state your name for
14 the record and proceed with your
15 testimony.

16 MS. PERELMAN: Thank you,
17 Councilman. I'm Marsha Perelman. I have
18 been a resident of the Philadelphia area
19 for over 40 years and I have been
20 involved in animal welfare for most of
21 that time. Since serving as Acting
22 President and CEO of the Philadelphia
23 Zoo, I have been a member of the Boards
24 of two largest animal welfare
25 organizations in the United States, the

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2 ASPCA, where I served as Chairman of the
3 Board, and currently I'm a member of the
4 Board of HSUS, the Humane Society of the
5 United States. I also work with Saved
6 Me, one of ACCT's largest rescue
7 partners, and I am a member of the
8 Pennsylvania Dog Law Advisory Board.

9 Let me begin by confirming
10 everything that Councilman Henon has said
11 in his opening statement. Most
12 importantly, the Councilman stated that
13 the vast majority of the challenges that
14 ACCT Philly faces are a result of the
15 City of Philadelphia's failure to
16 adequately fund and support ACCT's
17 operations. The problem is not simply
18 that ACCT Philly is underresourced. It
19 is in fact the single most poorly funded
20 municipal animal shelter among the ten
21 cities closest to the United States --
22 closest to Philadelphia in the United
23 States.

24 You can see from the chart over
25 here Philadelphia is dead last among

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2 cities with populations of between
3 850,000 and 2.2 million. The average
4 number of dollars that are given per
5 capita in the United States to shelters
6 is approximately \$7 per animal brought up
7 per capita. Philadelphia funds less than
8 \$2.60. So our funding for a city of this
9 size to our animal control facility is
10 well under half the average of comparably
11 sized cities in the United States.

12 Could you move to the next
13 slide.

14 Secondly, in looking at how
15 cities fund their animal control
16 operations, what's equally important is
17 how much money is funded per animal that
18 is turned in to Animal Control. Again,
19 Philadelphia is dead last among the ten
20 cities that are comparably sized.
21 Philadelphia spends \$182 per animal that
22 is brought in to the ACCT facility. The
23 median in Philadelphia is close to
24 almost -- outside of Philadelphia is
25 close to almost \$500.

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2 While the management of ACCT
3 accomplishes -- what it accomplishes at
4 the level of funding that it receives is
5 extraordinary, but it's operating with a
6 fraction of the financial resources it
7 needs. However -- and this is really
8 important -- what is an even bigger
9 constraint for ACCT is the space it's
10 allocated in its building at Hunting Park
11 Avenue, and the amount of space which it
12 has to operate is critical to its
13 performance. Let me explain why.

14 The single most important
15 measure of an animal control shelter's
16 performance is its live release rate.
17 The goal of ACCT and what is needed if
18 Philadelphia is to be considered a
19 no-kill city is to release live to
20 adopters and rescue partners all of the
21 healthy or treatable adoptable animals
22 that it takes in without being forced to
23 euthanize those animals for lack of
24 space. ACCT's live release rate was an
25 appalling 62 percent when it was formed

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2 in 2011, and to achieve even that low
3 rate, it practiced some of the worst
4 policies that we can imagine today.
5 Animals were left with almost no
6 oversight as to whom they were being
7 given to and they were left with almost
8 no evaluation of the condition they were
9 in, either in terms of their physical
10 health or their disposition.

11 ACCT was physically so
12 overwhelmed by the City's stray and
13 surrendered animals that these animals
14 were constantly becoming sick, primarily
15 with respiratory illnesses, and rescues
16 were forced to reduce the number of
17 animals that they would pull from ACCT
18 because they couldn't afford the medical
19 care that ACCT animals required.

20 Over the last few years through
21 the institution of improved management
22 practices and limited modifications to
23 the building and because of the
24 continuing critical support of many
25 dedicated rescue organizations, many of

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2 whom are here today, the live release
3 rate is now in the 80 percent range, but
4 this is still lower than the national
5 average, and the space constraints in the
6 building make it impossible for ACCT to
7 continue to improve its lifesaving work.

8 Over 22,000 animals are brought
9 in to ACCT each year, some as strays
10 picked up as a result of the calls it
11 receives 24 hours a day and some by owner
12 surrenders of residents who can no longer
13 care for their animals. ACCT doesn't
14 have the space to care for these animals
15 properly, and all staff, with the
16 exception of HR, is sharing office spaces
17 with at least two and sometimes as many
18 as 13 people in a single office. Animal
19 Control workers have no space in which to
20 fill out their reports and complete their
21 work.

22 Because closets were converted
23 to hold animals, there is no space at
24 ACCT for any storage in the building.
25 Most importantly, members of the public

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2 who are seeking to adopt an animal must
3 occupy areas in which animals are being
4 brought in by the public, with no history
5 of vaccinations or of current disease.
6 The work that ACCT needs to do to keep
7 animals in minimum quality conditions,
8 conditions which do not breed disease
9 among animals, which keep the animals
10 safe, which keep the staff safe and, most
11 importantly, which keep members of the
12 public safe in their shelter every day,
13 simply cannot be carried out in the space
14 that ACCT has been allocated at this
15 point.

16 As I believe all of you know,
17 ACCT shares its building on Hunting Park
18 Avenue with Vector Control. As such, it
19 is the only major animal shelter in the
20 country that does not have its own
21 dedicated building. ACCT needs all of
22 the additional space that is currently
23 occupied by Vector in order to perform
24 its function properly. The addition of
25 one or two or three of the offices that

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2 Vector now holds will not come close to
3 solving the problems that ACCT faces.
4 While there is a one-time cost to move
5 the Vector offices to another building,
6 this move needs to happen. The
7 management and staff of ACCT are doing
8 everything they possibly can with
9 Philadelphia's stray and abandoned animal
10 populations, but they cannot do their
11 work properly within the current square
12 footage.

13 This is a situation that each
14 of you has the ability to easily fix, and
15 until the situation is addressed,
16 thousands of Philadelphia's animals will
17 continue to be put to death needlessly
18 every single year.

19 To speak more specifically
20 about some of these concerns, I would
21 like to introduce my colleague Inga
22 Fricke, Director of Pet Retention
23 Programs at the Humane Society of the
24 United States. Inga serves on the Board
25 of the Shelter Animal Count, a non-profit

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2 organization formed to create and share a
3 national database of sheltered animal
4 statistics. She has spent her career
5 working on animal sheltering and is a
6 nationally respected authority on best
7 practices in animal shelter operations.

8 Inga.

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

10 State your name for the record
11 and then --

12 MS. FRICKE: Inga Fricke.

13 Thank you all so much for giving me this
14 opportunity to speak to you today
15 regarding Philadelphia's animal control
16 services.

17 As Ms. Perelman mentioned, I
18 have spent over 15 years working in the
19 field of animal sheltering, both in
20 private shelters, public shelters, and
21 for the last seven years with the Humane
22 Society of the United States serving as a
23 shelter expert, advising shelters and
24 rescue groups of all sizes and types
25 around the country.

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2 I should note that HSUS is not
3 just speaking today from a national
4 perspective. We have a significant
5 vested interest in the City of
6 Philadelphia. I hope that most of you
7 know that HSUS has a program called Pets
8 for Life that is operating and currently
9 serving almost 20,000 citizens of
10 Philadelphia.

11 HSUS has invested considerable
12 amounts of funding, staffing, and other
13 resources to help the citizens of
14 Philadelphia, and that certainly gives us
15 a unique perspective in terms of what the
16 City actually needs to provide services
17 and care for both people and animals
18 here.

19 On a national level, the field
20 of animal sheltering has evolved
21 considerably from the days when a
22 municipal pound was simply located hidden
23 next to the landfill and considered an
24 afterthought when it came to budgeting or
25 resources. Today's modern animal care

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2 and control facility should, and in most
3 municipalities around the nation do,
4 reflect the value that the citizenry
5 places on their pets. We know firsthand
6 from the Pets for Life program in
7 Philadelphia how much Philadelphia
8 citizens love and value their pets. Even
9 the poorest of our nation's citizens
10 cherish the bond they have with animals,
11 and for many, their pets are their most
12 important possessions. Increasing
13 resources allocated to caring for
14 communities' homeless pets does not
15 elevate the status of pets over people.
16 It simply recognizes that pets are a
17 necessary part of any happy, healthy
18 community.

19 Animal control agencies were
20 created to preserve the safety of the
21 citizenry, and they still serve that
22 vital function today. But protecting
23 public safety requires that staff be
24 provided adequate resources to perform
25 their work, resources like sufficient

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2 staff to cover shifts and answer
3 citizenry calls, equipment that is safe
4 and in good working order, and even the
5 workspaces necessary to complete and file
6 paperwork efficiently. Without adequate
7 resources, officers cannot be expected to
8 protect the public to the best of their
9 ability.

10 The same can be said for staff
11 working within the shelter itself. If
12 they're not provided necessary resources,
13 not only do programs suffer and
14 opportunities for expansion are
15 squandered, but the safety of that staff,
16 the animals, and members of the public is
17 compromised.

18 Regarding the current ACCT
19 facility, I can say without hesitation
20 that in its current state, it is not able
21 to meet modern sheltering standards.
22 Sheltering has truly become a profession,
23 as any other, with studies, research,
24 data done and compiled to ensure that
25 quality animal care is provided at the

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2 highest levels.

3 One of the most important
4 resources and tools that we use to
5 evaluate animal care has been published
6 in -- was published in 2010 by the
7 Association of Shelter Veterinarians
8 called the Guidelines for Standards of
9 Care in Animal Shelters. That document
10 truly sets the minimum standards for
11 animal welfare facilities.

12 Unfortunately, ACCT's current facility
13 does not able it to meet most of the
14 minimum standards set forth in the ASV
15 guidelines in terms of housing, disease
16 prevention, and other basic necessities.

17 For example, the lack of a
18 dedicated quarantine area for dogs that
19 have bitten members of the public is
20 incredibly concerning. These are animals
21 that have already demonstrated a
22 propensity to bite. Staff and others
23 should be protected from them, and right
24 now there's no space to do that.

25 A good quality modern shelter

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2 should have isolation areas that are able
3 to separate animals that are healthy from
4 animals that have either been exposed to
5 disease or could potentially succumb to
6 disease. In its current configuration,
7 ACCT is not able to successfully isolate
8 suspect populations of animals.

9 Even if they did have that
10 space, as the shelter current exists with
11 unsealed floors, for example, staff would
12 be hard-pressed to truly battle disease
13 within that shelter based on the current
14 floor plan, cross contamination, that
15 lack of basic sealing of the floors and
16 having an environment that's actually
17 disinfectible. As hard as the staff
18 tries, they will never be able to win the
19 battle against disease that comes to that
20 shelter every single day.

21 People who are surrendering and
22 adopting also don't have adequate space
23 to either share information that could be
24 lifesaving about the animals they have to
25 give up or to learn vital information

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2 about how to make their bond with their
3 new pet as strong as possible.

4 While Mr. Medley and his team
5 have made great strides in recent years
6 in terms of improving lifesaving and
7 certainly are doing what they can to
8 improve the quality of life for each and
9 every animal in their care, there's only
10 so much that they can do within the
11 existing facility. At a minimum, the
12 animals and the staff of ACCT need and
13 deserve more space.

14 Holding animals in crowded
15 conditions and spaces that were not
16 created as animal holding areas and that
17 are inadequate in terms of size is not
18 simply a welfare issue and it is
19 certainly not a luxury. Animals who are
20 kept in cramped and substandard
21 conditions experience greater stress.
22 The higher their stress, the higher their
23 susceptibility to disease. Diseased
24 animals must be provided medical care,
25 which can be expensive to provide, and

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2 they also stay longer in a shelter, which
3 means more care days per animal and more
4 money spent per animal in terms of costs
5 of care.

6 The bottom line is that not
7 being able to provide minimum standards
8 of care for the animals isn't just a
9 humane issue; it's a financial one. Poor
10 care results directly in wasted money,
11 and that's not only a cost to the
12 citizens of Philadelphia, it's also a
13 cost that's passed on then to the
14 wonderful rescue partners and adopters
15 that are trying to do the right thing by
16 taking in Philadelphia's homeless
17 animals.

18 Philadelphia is a city that is
19 made up of people who love pets, and it's
20 fortunate to have an animal control
21 director who is committed to improving
22 the welfare of animals. ACCT should be
23 provided the resources necessary to do
24 just that.

25 Thank you.

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2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
3 for your testimony.

4 Before I ask you to start, I
5 want to recognize that we are joined by
6 Councilwoman Blackwell and Councilman
7 O'Neill.

8 You may state your name for the
9 record and proceed with your testimony.
10 Thank you.

11 MS. LEVY: Hi. My name is
12 Melissa Levy. I'm the Executive Director
13 of PAWS, the Philadelphia Animal Welfare
14 Society. I'd like to begin by thanking
15 you, Councilman Henon, for holding this
16 hearing and for everything that you said
17 in your comments to begin the proceedings
18 today. They are greatly appreciated by
19 everyone at PAWS and everyone that is
20 invested in strengthening the resources
21 that Animal Control has to work with in
22 the City to benefit the pets and the
23 people who depend on it.

24 I would also like to thank
25 Marsha and Inga for all of their

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2 comments. I would echo every single one
3 of them. I think that they spelled out
4 the limitations and the commitment, the
5 needs that Animal Control has that are
6 just simply not being met and the
7 extraordinary accomplishments that Animal
8 Control is making in spite of them.

9 I would like to provide a
10 little bit of a historical perspective in
11 terms of the lifesaving culture and
12 efforts in Philadelphia that has been
13 created over the last ten years with
14 Animal Control at the heart of that and
15 kind of what has been accomplished over
16 that ten years and what really is needed
17 now in order to ensure that Animal
18 Control, in partnership with all of its
19 lifesaving partners, is able to do the
20 work that the people and the pets of
21 Philadelphia are depending on it to do.

22 PAWS began more than ten years
23 ago as a volunteer-driven, donor-funded
24 effort from within the City's Animal
25 Control shelter. We stepped out from

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2 under the umbrella of Animal Control and
3 became an independent organization in
4 2009, but our commitment to the animals
5 there and to serving as Animal Control's
6 leading partner has never wavered. We
7 have always based our success on Animal
8 Control's numbers. Everything we do is
9 aimed at reducing their intake and
10 increasing the number of animals that get
11 out of that building alive.

12 Our three facilities house two
13 shelters, two adoption centers, and two
14 high-volume, low-cost spay/neuter
15 wellness clinics that serve struggling
16 pet owners who cannot otherwise afford or
17 access veterinary care. Those clinics
18 enable Philadelphians living in or near
19 poverty to keep and care for their pets
20 and prevent them from having unwanted
21 litters.

22 We have rescued nearly 20,000
23 dogs and cats, served more than 120,000
24 disadvantaged pets in our clinics, and we
25 have performed more than 60,000

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2 spay/neuter surgeries.

3 Our ultimate goal with all of
4 these efforts has always been to make
5 Philadelphia a no-kill city, where only
6 animals who are unsavable due to medical
7 or behavioral issues are euthanized in
8 shelters.

9 As Animal Control's largest
10 rescue partner, we have worked closely
11 with every iteration of that agency for
12 more than a decade. We feel a profound
13 connection to what happens there and a
14 responsibility to facilitate its success,
15 however possible. What happens at Animal
16 Control, as you said earlier, is a
17 barometer of how the entire City of
18 Philadelphia cares for and protects its
19 animals and the people who value them or
20 come into contact with them. We believe
21 we will only become a truly humane
22 community when Animal Control functions
23 at its best. That means having a
24 suitable space to safely house animals,
25 receive the public, for staff to do their

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2 work, having a healthy building
3 environment with key systems operating
4 properly and the resources necessary to
5 meet at least the basic needs but ideally
6 more for the animals in its care.

7 PAWS was founded in 2006 in
8 response to dire conditions at Animal
9 Control. The conditions that Marsha
10 described that happened in 2012, as
11 difficult as they were, were light years
12 beyond what they were six or eight years
13 prior to that. More than 30,000 stray,
14 abandoned, unwanted animals entered that
15 shelter each year, and the vast majority,
16 close to 90 percent, were killed. New
17 leadership had just been brought in to
18 modernize operations. However, the City
19 contract did not include any funding
20 whatsoever for lifesaving. It was
21 concerned only with protecting public
22 health and reducing animal-related
23 disturbances in the community. It was
24 not concerned with valuing the animals
25 themselves or recognizing their

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2 importance to people's lives. As such,
3 funding was minimal, only \$2.6 million.
4 That is less than one-third of what was
5 considered appropriate by national
6 standards based on the demand on
7 services, the size of Philadelphia's
8 population, and the 30,000-plus animals
9 that poured in.

10 In addition, the shelter space
11 was and, as you've heard, still is a
12 retrofitted warehouse with inadequate
13 ventilation, drainage, and housing for
14 animals and antiquated medical
15 facilities.

16 Against the backdrop of all of
17 these obstacles, a true grassroots
18 lifesaving movement began and has been
19 growing ever since. In addition, with
20 steady improvement since 2012,
21 Philadelphia finally has in ACCT Philly
22 the efficient, consistent, and successful
23 animal control operation and leadership
24 it needs. What its progressive
25 leadership has accomplished in spite of

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2 their limited financial resources and
3 compromised physical plant is
4 extraordinary. ACCT Philly is not just
5 serving as the City's animal care and
6 control provider; they are playing a
7 major lifesaving role as well.

8 Philadelphia is now a place
9 where all of the essential ingredients
10 for a no-kill humane community exists.
11 The Animal Control shelter is operated
12 effectively and transparently based on
13 best practices and given the resources
14 that they currently have in the
15 conditions that they're operating in.
16 Shelter pet adoption and foster care are
17 widespread in the City. There is
18 awareness of the need for rescue and
19 foster care in a way that did not exist
20 ten years ago. Thousands of people
21 volunteer and donate funds to support
22 many worthy animal welfare organizations.
23 There is a robust and ever-growing
24 network of rescue groups that provide
25 crucial lifelines to animals.

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2 Significant private resources exist for
3 low-income pet owners to get the help
4 they need to keep and care for their
5 pets. And there is genuine cooperation
6 and support across the animal welfare
7 community in a way that has never existed
8 before. This enables all groups to
9 maximize their lifesaving work. These
10 factors have transformed Philadelphia for
11 the better.

12 Specifically, in 2016, the
13 number of animals entering the City
14 shelter was at an all-time low, more than
15 30 percent lower than when we all started
16 ten years ago, and lifesaving was at 80
17 percent, an all-time high. However,
18 despite record low intake and record high
19 lifesaving, more than 1,500 dogs and
20 2,300 cats were still euthanized. So
21 while we celebrate our tremendous
22 progress, we must stay sharply focused on
23 the work that still lies ahead until we
24 finally reach the point where all healthy
25 and treatable pets are safe.

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2 We, ACCT Philly, PAWS, the
3 Pennsylvania SPCA, and many, many other
4 groups are collaborating to expand
5 existing programs and create new ones to
6 zero in on specific lifesaving
7 opportunities. Pet retention, intake
8 diversion, and specialized care for the
9 animals most at risk of being killed in
10 shelters are just a few needs we are
11 addressing. But to make the most of
12 these plans and to put the private
13 support we are garnering to best use,
14 ACCT must finally have adequate
15 facilities and resources. Additional
16 funding and building space would enable
17 them to save more of the animals with the
18 least chance of leaving the shelter
19 alive. Only the City can provide those
20 tools, making this a true public-private
21 partnership at last. With your support,
22 we will have the crucial remaining
23 elements needed to finally make
24 Philadelphia a humane, no-kill community.

25 Thank you for this opportunity

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2 to testify and for your concern for the
3 people and pets of Philadelphia.

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: Well, thank
5 you all for your testimony. I have a few
6 questions, and decide who is appropriate
7 on the panel to answer them, and then
8 I'll open it up for questions from this
9 Committee up here.

10 So what are the factors that
11 impact a shelter's intake numbers?

12 MS. PERELMAN: In
13 Philadelphia -- and I wish I had prepared
14 for you the sheet that shows how
15 Philadelphia looks relative to New York.
16 In Philadelphia, the biggest problem is
17 that for so many years, there have been
18 so many dogs and cats out on the street
19 who have never been spayed and neutered.

20 Speaking primarily about dogs,
21 this problem increases any time that
22 strays are not being pulled off the
23 street, and it decreases any time that
24 strays are being collected by ACCT and
25 that low-cost spay/neuter services are

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2 being provided either by ACCT or by other
3 organizations in the City.

4 To give you an idea of the
5 impact that this can have, New York City
6 brings in 30,000 animals. New York City
7 has nine million people. We bring in
8 22,000 animals, and we have one and a
9 half million people. The primary reason
10 for that difference is because New York
11 City has invested for years in an
12 extensive low-cost spay/neuter program.
13 So there simply aren't stray dogs running
14 around the five boroughs, creating new
15 puppies every single year.

16 The problem for cats is equally
17 as difficult. ACCT Philly has received
18 funding from outside organizations to
19 help get under control the cat population
20 in Philadelphia, and there has been some
21 success with that, but the funding, I
22 believe, is going to run out shortly and
23 I'm not sure what is on the books for
24 further control -- for further trap,
25 spay/neuter, and release programs in the

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2 City.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: This is a
4 square footage question. I don't know if
5 you would have the answer or not. How
6 many square feet of space should
7 Philadelphia have with an intake rate of
8 23,000 animals per year?

9 MS. FRICKE: What I can say I
10 would love to be able to give you a
11 formula that works nationally. When
12 we're looking at square footage, we're
13 really looking at how the space is to be
14 utilized. There are definite standards
15 with respect to how much square footage
16 each animal should be provided. For
17 example, cats should have at least two
18 feet of triangulated space within their
19 cages. Dogs need to have, at a minimum,
20 sufficient space to stand up, turn
21 around, lie down, extend their limbs
22 fully. That space requirement varies
23 depending on the size of the dog, whether
24 it's a Chihuahua versus Great Dane. So
25 there are no hard and fast numbers on

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2 that.

3 So it's a function of adding up
4 the space requirements for the number of
5 animals that are anticipated to be coming
6 in, but then also adding up the other
7 elements that really should be provided
8 in a modern animal care center, things
9 like space for behavioral assessment,
10 separate isolation areas for different
11 populations of animals, quarantine areas,
12 separate entrances for people coming in
13 to surrender animals so that they don't
14 cross paths with people who are coming in
15 to adopt. Those are disease-prevention
16 principles in addition to space
17 principles.

18 So there's no necessarily -- I
19 can't give you a specific number that
20 says for 20,000 animals, you need X
21 square feet of space. It really is a
22 function of does the facility as it
23 exists have all of the hallmarks of a
24 quality, modern animal sheltering
25 facility, and unfortunately at the

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2 moment, ACCT does not.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: In your
4 opinion, is our shelter too small for our
5 intake rate?

6 MS. FRICKE: Absolutely.

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: So based on
8 our intake rate, how much capacity should
9 we maintain?

10 MS. FRICKE: That's --

11 COUNCILMAN HENON: You don't
12 have to answer. I understand. It's a
13 problem.

14 MS. FRICKE: It definitely is a
15 problem.

16 COUNCILMAN HENON: Do you know
17 the staffing levels at our current
18 facility?

19 MS. FRICKE: Others are
20 probably more familiar with the specific
21 staffing levels than I am.

22 COUNCILMAN HENON: I'm going to
23 ask the Administration when they come up.
24 If anybody is familiar with the staffing
25 levels on our current facility based on

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2 the intake rate, should we have more
3 staff?

4 MS. FRICKE: Well, the one
5 thing regarding staffing I can speak to
6 is that nationally the standard is each
7 animal should be provided a minimum of 15
8 minutes of care per day. That is simply
9 for feeding or cleaning. That's not for
10 grooming, that's not for training, that's
11 not for counseling of adopters, that's
12 not for exercise, that's not for
13 enrichment, that's not for anything. So
14 an animal caretaker should only within
15 their -- if they're working -- you're
16 going to make me do math, and this is
17 terrible. Fifteen minutes per animal per
18 day means they should typically only be
19 caring for four animals per hour. So
20 over the course of an eight-hour workday,
21 that's 32 animals that should be assigned
22 per animal caretaker. Again, that's not
23 including all of the other things that
24 have to go into making sure that animal
25 is healthy and that it finds a new home.

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2 Most agencies around the
3 country really struggle to meet that
4 number in terms of animal caretaking, and
5 that, again, doesn't account for all of
6 the people that have to be involved in
7 these lifesaving partnerships, that have
8 to be involved in surrender counseling
9 and surrender prevention programs, that
10 are involved in addressing the public
11 safety needs outside of the shelter.

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: And based on
13 our intake rate and the size of the
14 City's population, how much should we be
15 allocating for the operation of ACCT, the
16 ACCT shelter and our animal services?

17 MS. FRICKE: I would say at a
18 minimum, the numbers that were provided
19 show that the current allocation is
20 woefully inadequate.

21 COUNCILMAN HENON: We're tenth
22 out of ten.

23 MS. FRICKE: Yeah.

24 MS. PERELMAN: In order to get
25 to the national average, the amount that

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2 should be allocated to ACCT rather than
3 the 4 million that's currently being
4 allocated should be at least \$8 million.
5 That would bring Philadelphia to still
6 the lower half of the amount per animal
7 for comparably sized cities and still the
8 lower half of the amount per resident of
9 comparably sized cities.

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: With that --

11 MS. PERELMAN: So \$8 million
12 would be a bare minimum that would take
13 us to roughly the middle of the pack, not
14 the top.

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: Any other
16 members got some questions for the
17 panelists?

18 The Chair recognizes Councilman
19 Greenlee.

20 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.
21 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 Maybe you can tell. I see the
23 numbers you're talking about, but as far
24 as a well-designed facility or if you
25 were going to say this is the best

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2 facility out there, would there be one or
3 two that you would particularly point to
4 around the country that would be a model
5 for that?

6 MS. FRICKE: There are
7 definitely facilities that exemplify best
8 practices. As you go around the country,
9 you will find entities that --

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: A little
11 closer to the microphone, please.

12 MS. FRICKE: Sorry.

13 There are some entities that
14 are kind of very high end, kind of Taj
15 Mahal, if you will, but that's not
16 necessarily what's required. What's
17 really required to reflect a good,
18 modern, professional animal welfare
19 facility is attention to the spaces that
20 have already been mentioned, ensuring
21 that staff have the resources they need
22 to handle animal safely, ensuring that
23 populations of animals can be separated,
24 managing the floor plan of the shelter to
25 ensure that there's no cross

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2 contamination or cross pollination, where
3 there's a potential for animals that
4 might have disease to cross paths with
5 animals that don't, and there are many,
6 many facilities around the country that
7 really exemplify good, modern standards,
8 both municipal and private.

9 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Is there
10 a couple you can just say this would be
11 the ones?

12 MS. FRICKE: There are --

13 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: If not,
14 that's okay.

15 MS. PERELMAN: There are a ton.
16 Asheville, for example, has a great
17 partnership. I'm trying to think of the
18 facilities that are not kind of the most
19 high end. They actually have a
20 wonderful -- actually, a campus set up
21 between animal control and the private
22 entity, and it is not an exorbitant
23 facility, but it was certainly
24 constructed with all of these
25 considerations in mind.

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2 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.

3 Thanks.

4 Ms. Levy, maybe you're best to
5 answer this. When it comes to rescue
6 partners, you talked about partnering.
7 Could you give examples of the kind of
8 things you have done working with ACCT
9 and maybe others have done that have
10 improved things and maybe things that you
11 still need to do given hopefully there
12 will be more money and more space?

13 MS. LEVY: Absolutely. So PAWS
14 was founded originally from within the
15 Animal Control shelter where our only
16 effort was just getting animals out alive
17 any way we could. It was a time -- it
18 was such a chaotic time and things were
19 so desperate that it was just get every
20 animal out any way we can. It's better
21 than having them killed in the building.
22 And things have changed so much over the
23 years, we now operate, as I said earlier,
24 from outside the shelter now, going into
25 Animal Control almost daily to select

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2 animals that we have space to pull out
3 and rescue, much like many other rescue
4 organizations, and we all pull animals
5 based on our own resources, our own
6 space, our own kind of profiles of
7 animals that we're able to commit to.
8 But over the years as Animal Control's
9 lifesaving efforts have improved and
10 grown and they have move -- they do more
11 adoptions, they're able to place more
12 animals into foster care, the population
13 of animals that truly need rescue the
14 most is becoming much more specialized.
15 So the behavioral profiles, the medical
16 profiles of those animals has gotten much
17 more specific and their needs have
18 increased. And so now we're looking --
19 now that the lifesaving kind of safety
20 net in Philadelphia has grown to the
21 point that it has, we are working in
22 concert with Animal Control all the time
23 to identify the animals who are least
24 likely to get out another way and to
25 provide the medical resources in

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2 particular, but also the behavioral
3 assistance that those animals need to get
4 out alive.

5 So it's been an evolving
6 process, and every rescue organization
7 that works with Animal Control has their
8 own mission and their own just kind of
9 variety of animals that they are choosing
10 to focus on, able to focus on, but it's a
11 constant back-and-forth process of
12 understanding what Animal Control needs
13 the most help with. We want to be
14 helpful. We don't want to pull out
15 animals that they could easily get out
16 another way. So that's truly what a
17 large part of that partnership is, is
18 identifying how those needs are changing
19 over time.

20 If I may, I just wanted to go
21 back and mention one other component of
22 the animals that are entering the shelter
23 in the first place. I think it's
24 important to recognize that Animal
25 Control is operating in Philadelphia,

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2 much like every other agency, against a
3 backdrop of extreme poverty, and when you
4 have more than a quarter of the
5 population of Philadelphia living in
6 poverty, you have pet owners who don't
7 have the resources they need to properly
8 care for their animals, to provide the
9 veterinary care, the behavioral
10 assistance, sometimes just the food,
11 sometimes just a leash. And so a lot of
12 what we see and the profile of animals
13 that are being surrendered by their
14 owners, many are coming in as stray, but
15 in the case of dogs, half of them come in
16 as owner surrenders, and the majority of
17 those animals who are surrendered are
18 surrendered by owners who just don't have
19 what it takes anymore to properly house
20 and care for their pet. And they're
21 heartbroken. They don't want to part
22 with their pet, which is why we are all
23 working in our own ways to look at how we
24 can provide those owners with what they
25 need so that they never get to that

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2 point.

3 But that -- and so what that
4 means is that those animals are less
5 likely as they're entering the shelter to
6 have received veterinary care in the
7 past. They're more likely to have
8 behavioral issues that are challenging,
9 because they were in homes that were
10 struggling to survive in the first place.

11 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Finally,
12 if I may, Mr. Chairman, just one -- the
13 whole issue of no kill I know has been
14 brought up for many years. I remember
15 former Councilman Kelly talking about
16 that years ago.

17 Given the facility's design
18 right now, is it possible and what key
19 things would have to be done to really
20 make Philadelphia no kill? I know 80
21 percent sounds great, but then when you
22 say 1,500 dogs and 2,300 cats, that
23 doesn't sound that good.

24 MS. LEVY: Right. Eighty
25 percent is a long way from where we

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2 began. And so there has been tremendous
3 progress, and I don't think that anyone
4 inside or outside Animal Control is
5 willing to say it's impossible. We've
6 all been doing this work by refusing to
7 acknowledge that it might be impossible.
8 So one way or the other, we'll make it
9 happen. The question is, you know,
10 against what odds and how steep is the
11 mountain going to be. And the obstacles
12 that exist within Animal Control and the
13 inability even of Animal Control to use
14 the resources that it is garnering
15 privately, we're working together to
16 develop new approaches for fundraising
17 and for grant-writing and to develop
18 programs, and the question is, if we get
19 this funding, where will Animal Control
20 even perform the programs that we are
21 talking about developing for them.

22 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: That's
23 why I bring up the facility issue.

24 MS. LEVY: Right. And so
25 that's the wall that we come up against.

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2 Without the proper space at a minimum to
3 even engage in the programs that are
4 essential in order to reach that goal of
5 no kill, it's going to be very difficult.

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.

7 Thank you for all the work that you do.

8 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
10 Councilman.

11 The Chair would like to
12 recognize that we were joined by
13 Councilwoman Helen Gym and also recognize
14 Councilwoman Blackwell for a question.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
16 you.

17 Is it PAWS who goes around the
18 neighborhoods and spays cats and dogs
19 too, I guess?

20 MS. LEVY: Well, PAWS operates
21 two low-cost spay/neuter and wellness
22 clinics that are open to the public and
23 meant to serve pet owners who aren't able
24 to afford care elsewhere. We don't
25 physically go out into communities, but

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2 we work very closely with community trap,
3 neuter, release groups and other groups
4 that are trapping stray cats, bringing
5 them to us to be spayed and neutered, and
6 then returned to their community so that
7 they're no longer reproducing. We also
8 work with lots of other rescue
9 organizations who need more affordable
10 vet care in order to rescue more pets.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Some
12 group, I assumed it was you all, did,
13 because somebody would call me. I was
14 terrified, but the cats were fine. You
15 wouldn't have known. It affected them
16 all.

17 And also when they tell you
18 cats have AIDS or TB and all kinds of
19 things and they suggest that they be
20 killed. Is that right? They said --

21 MS. LEVY: Stray cats? No.
22 Cats that are brought in -- that are
23 trapped -- that are stray, trapped, and
24 brought into clinics to be spayed and
25 neutered and returned typically are

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2 absolutely no threat to the public. They
3 are living -- they're self-sustaining and
4 they're not carrying disease. If they
5 have outward signs of disease, they will
6 be tested and other arrangements will be
7 made. So they won't be returned if they
8 are showing obvious signs of illness or
9 if they're suffering, of course, but the
10 vast, vast majority of cats that are
11 living as strays on the streets are
12 healthy, relatively able to exist in the
13 community without any threat to the
14 public.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: So
16 what if they are? If you take them in
17 and they are told they have diseases,
18 other cats could catch them, you know,
19 you have to make a decision whether you
20 let them go or whether you take them
21 back, but you could cause diseases for
22 other animals. What should you do?

23 MS. LEVY: A member of the
24 public? You're saying if you bring in a
25 stray cat and you find that it's --

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And
3 you take the stray cats in and they tell
4 you these cats -- they don't look sick,
5 but they tell you they are and that they
6 will hurt other animals because they have
7 catching diseases and such.

8 MS. LEVY: There are numerous
9 programs in the City that work to re-home
10 or find alternate placement for cats who
11 are found to have a disease that would
12 make it unsafe for them to return to
13 their community. But it's really --
14 that's kind of a process and a decision
15 that's made on a very individual basis.
16 It's relatively unusual. And so it
17 really is -- that's where working to kind
18 of educate the animal-loving community
19 who does take the initiative to go out
20 and trap and try to bring in animals to
21 clinics to get the care that they need
22 and relying on them to play a role in the
23 steps that are followed from there is
24 crucial.

25 This is a community issue, and

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2 so there is some level of reliance on the
3 individuals who bring those cats in to
4 take some sense of ownership and to kind
5 of see the cat through to the safe and
6 proper placement. In most cases that's
7 returning it to where they trapped it in
8 the first place.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: That's
10 not what they told us. They told us if
11 you take these cats back in the
12 community, then you will allow them to
13 have other cats catch AIDS, TB, and
14 several other diseases. That's what they
15 told us we should do.

16 MS. LEVY: Right. With
17 communicable diseases like you're talking
18 about, FIV and FeLV, feline AIDS and
19 feline leukemia, that's a different set
20 of challenges and considerations in the
21 placement of that cat, and there are
22 adoption programs and there are sanctuary
23 programs where groups will take ownership
24 of those cats and find safe placement for
25 them, with ultimately trying to avoid

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2 euthanizing that cat and finding a safe
3 place for that cat to live out its life,
4 without causing potential harm to other
5 cats.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Also,
7 they change foods. Like maybe you all
8 know, a science diet. Now all of the
9 sudden you can't get it anymore. So what
10 do you do in those kinds of -- you can't
11 get it. They've changed all the stuff
12 you used to get about a month ago. Now
13 there's something else. So what do you
14 do in that instance?

15 MS. LEVY: As far as what's
16 available in stores or through --

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yeah.
18 I mean, if you go in Rite Aid, you can
19 get Kitty Cat. They got -- sorry. I'm
20 just taking advantage. I know I am. But
21 I'm almost done.

22 Somebody told me somebody had a
23 cat back there. I sure want to see it.

24 So what do you do in that
25 instance? How do you know what's good?

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2 And is going into Rite Aid good or do you
3 really need to go in through a pet shop?

4 MS. LEVY: I mean, I think it
5 depends on the situation and on the
6 community of cats that you're feeding. I
7 think for most cats that are living on
8 the street, if you're making an effort to
9 feed them, some food is better than no
10 food, and so if the best that you're able
11 to obtain is from a drug store --

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Well,
13 what's good?

14 MS. LEVY: Well, there are so
15 many brands on the market and --

16 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Name
17 three. Give me three.

18 MS. LEVY: I think it just
19 depends on how much of an investment
20 you'd like to make. I mean --

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I'm
22 telling you, I keep my TV on and all this
23 stuff. My light is on for my cat. But I
24 need some advice.

25 Okay. I'll catch you after.

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2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 MS. FRICKE: If I could just
4 follow up.

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
6 Councilwoman.

7 On our next panel we're going
8 to have Vince Medley, the Executive
9 Director with ACCT, and we have --

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: You
11 can come up on my desk. You know how you
12 have a picture of your husband? I have a
13 picture of my cat on my desk. Come see
14 it.

15 MS. FRICKE: If I could just
16 follow up very briefly. With respect to
17 your first question, the HSUS Pets for
18 Life program is one of the programs in
19 the City that does go to door to door.
20 They have very specific zip codes, and
21 they work in those neighborhoods every
22 single day, providing services, including
23 cat food and other things for people in
24 that community. As I understand it,
25 SPCA --

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2 MS. PERELMAN: The PSPCA also
3 provides low-cost spay/neuter services,
4 as does HSUS, and there are a number of
5 cat-related trap, neuter, release
6 organizations that do so as well.

7 MS. FRICKE: And the science --
8 just like the science of sheltering, the
9 science of disease is progressing also,
10 whereas even just a few years ago, there
11 was widespread concern regarding the
12 transmissibility of feline leukemia and
13 feline AIDS. Recent studies are showing
14 it's actually much, much harder to
15 transmit than it was before. So this is
16 all an ever-evolving field for the
17 benefit of the animals.

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
19 Councilwoman.

20 For the record, we are joined
21 by Councilwoman Parker. Thank you for
22 joining us here today.

23 And the Chair recognizes
24 Councilman Domb.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,

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2 Mr. Chairman. Thanks for bringing this
3 issue forward. For the record, I'm a big
4 animal lover. I want to put that on the
5 record for you.

6 But anyway, thank you for being
7 here today, and I have some questions I
8 wanted to ask. I actually have a
9 15-and-a-half-year-old Jack Russell still
10 alive. I'd like to say it's one of my
11 longest female relationships, other than
12 my mother. I don't care.

13 So here's a question for you.
14 I heard your testimony. You talked about
15 New York City and you said in New York
16 City, Ms. Perelman, that there is nine
17 million population and 30,000 pets, I
18 believe, and you said in Philadelphia
19 it's 1.5 million and 22,000 pets. And
20 you said -- and I'm thinking about this,
21 because what we're talking about here is
22 all corrective and what they did in New
23 York was preventive.

24 MS. PERELMAN: Exactly.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So this is a

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2 good thing to have, but how do we get to
3 the preventive mode in Philadelphia?

4 MS. PERELMAN: Dollars. It's
5 not rocket science. New York had the
6 advantage of the ASPCA helping the city,
7 because it's headquartered there, helping
8 the city to become a no-kill city or
9 close to a no-kill city, especially given
10 its size.

11 We have the PSPCA here which
12 provides such services. PAWS helps
13 provide such services. HSUS provides
14 such services on as large a scale as it
15 does to any city in the United States.
16 And ACCT could provide such services if
17 it had the funding. It is simple to do,
18 and it can either be done in a single
19 location or it can be done with mobile
20 units. And what most cities are doing
21 now is that they are allowing vans to go
22 out to different neighborhoods. The vans
23 pick up an animal in the morning, bring
24 it back to a central location where
25 there's an excellent hospital. Vets are

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2 becoming extremely expert on doing very
3 quick and very safe low-cost spay/neuter
4 services, and then those animals are
5 returned by vans to the block at which
6 they were picked up on that very morning.
7 So the processes are very well known and
8 simple to replicate if the money is
9 available.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Could I ask
11 your organizations to get to our Chair
12 maybe a program on how we could implement
13 something like that in Philadelphia.
14 Because that's really the long-term
15 solution. This is all corrective that
16 we're talking about.

17 MS. PERELMAN: It absolutely
18 is. This is -- low-cost spay/neuter
19 turns off the firehose. What we're all
20 doing here is trying to deal with the
21 water that's pouring out.

22 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I understand.

23 MS. PERELMAN: You're
24 absolutely right.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: My second

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2 question is, realizing that we have
3 financial issues in the City of
4 Philadelphia and realizing if in a
5 perfect world we could build a new
6 facility that would be state of the art
7 but we don't have the resources maybe for
8 that, is there an opportunity with some
9 of the closed schools that we have that
10 are pretty large, maybe 80,000, 100,000
11 square foot schools, for us to have a
12 school take over for the facility that
13 you're requesting? Is that an option?

14 MS. PERELMAN: Have -- I'm
15 sorry.

16 COUNCILMAN DOMB: In other
17 words, utilize a closed school as the
18 facility for ACCT instead of the current
19 facility you're in now.

20 MS. PERELMAN: Certainly would
21 be an option, but much more easy would be
22 to simply move ACCT. ACCT are offices --
23 I mean, I'm sorry, Vector. Vector simply
24 has offices that are vacant almost all
25 day long, because they are for officers

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2 who are supposed to be out in their
3 trucks all day long. So it would be very
4 simple, much simpler, to ask the people
5 who are driving trucks all day to come in
6 the morning to an abandoned school, each
7 get a space there, drive their truck,
8 come back, file their report, and go
9 home.

10 My understanding and from what
11 I've seen of Vector's use of that space,
12 it includes some non-work related
13 activities and it also includes parking,
14 and it seems to me that it should be
15 fairly simple for the City to identify
16 spaces around the City where parking and
17 a limited number of offices could be
18 provided. There's no infrastructure
19 needed.

20 COUNCILMAN DOMB: How many
21 square feet does Vector utilize right
22 now?

23 MS. PERELMAN: Pardon me?

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: How many
25 square feet does Vector Control utilize

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2 right now; do you know?

3 MS. PERELMAN: ACCT uses 19,000

4 square feet. I would guess -- and maybe

5 Vince could -- so it's 32,000 in total

6 and --

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So they're

8 using about 13,000.

9 MS. PERELMAN: They're using

10 13,000.

11 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So the simple

12 solution is to move Vector and then

13 you'll be okay?

14 MS. PERELMAN: Absolutely. And

15 what I want to point out is while it may

16 not be ideal, the minute that Vector is

17 able to leave that space, huge

18 improvements can be made, because

19 management would be able to move offices

20 into the existing Vector space. Those

21 offices then can easily be converted to

22 offices for behavior evaluators, for

23 quarantine spaces, for spaces for dogs

24 who had a dog bite history. The ability

25 to use it quickly and cheaply is huge.

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2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Thank
3 you. One last question -- or actually
4 two. Do you have any idea of what
5 percentage of people that -- pets that
6 you see come from homes that are having
7 financial issues?

8 MS. FRICKE: I'm sure that my
9 colleagues up here can provide more
10 Philadelphia specific, but certainly we
11 know without a doubt that finances
12 directly impact shelter intake. When
13 we've seen other communities that have
14 been hard hit by various economic
15 calamities, intake certainly goes up.
16 The kind of biggest example of that was
17 the BP oil spill when we saw, as a result
18 of those job losses, massive intakes of
19 animals into shelters surrounding those
20 areas.

21 People, regardless of their
22 income, they need access to spay/neuter.
23 They also, though, need other
24 opportunities to preserve their animals.
25 My colleague already spoke about how

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2 heartbreaking it is for most people to
3 surrender their animals. The number one
4 reason, aside from spay/neuter, that
5 animals are surrendered to shelters every
6 year is housing issues. It's moving,
7 landlord issues. And then from there, it
8 is definitely too many animals. It's
9 behavior issues. It's not having
10 funding. Aside from that housing issue,
11 the vast majority of those certainly
12 could be forestalled if the shelter were
13 providing those proactive services. I
14 know that the HSUS Pets for Life program
15 has certainly been speaking with ACCT
16 about integrating some of those services,
17 but without even a space to put an extra
18 body to talk to people coming in the
19 door, it's simply not a reality.

20 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Would you say
21 that 40 to 50 percent of the people are
22 having financial issues? Ball park.

23 MS. LEVY: Yeah, without a
24 doubt. I can give you a specific
25 breakdown after this. But, yes, it's

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2 difficult to put your finger on exactly
3 the numbers, because many pet owners when
4 they surrender a pet are not going to
5 say, I can't afford this pet. They're
6 going to say the pet is sick or I had to
7 move or, you know, the pet is behaving in
8 a certain way. These are reasons related
9 to not having enough money to do what
10 they need to do and they're describing it
11 in a way that is a little bit veiled.
12 But the vast majority of owners
13 surrendering their pets to the Animal
14 Control shelter are doing it for
15 financial-related reasons or reasons
16 related to not having the resources they
17 need.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So my next
19 question, because you teed it up
20 perfectly for me, is, are your people,
21 speaking to everybody, familiar with the
22 Earned Income Tax Credit?

23 MS. LEVY: I don't know the
24 answer to that. I know that the demands
25 on Animal Control staff in the moment as

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2 people are literally sometimes pouring
3 through the door with their animals is so
4 burdened that having that ability to
5 counsel and to kind of dive in deeply to
6 their issues is very limited.

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: But I would
8 say this. We're looking at different
9 points throughout the City where this
10 information can be shared. Schools is a
11 point and other places, but you're a
12 great point.

13 The Earned Income Tax Credit --
14 I have to sound like a broken record --
15 last year the City of Philadelphia,
16 40,000 people qualified, didn't get
17 checks. We left \$100 million. The
18 average refund is 2,400, get up to 6,000.
19 You can file back three additional years.
20 So someone coming into your place with a
21 dog or a cat and qualifies could walk out
22 with a check when they fill out the forms
23 of \$24,000. That makes a huge difference
24 for them and maybe they even keep their
25 pet.

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2 MS. LEVY: Absolutely. I think
3 it's developing the resources so that
4 there literally are bodies available to
5 have those conversations and to help
6 those pet owners connect with the
7 resources that are available to them.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So my goal is
9 to make sure that your organizations have
10 this information and give it out to
11 people when they come in so they keep
12 their pet.

13 MS. LEVY: Right.

14 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.
15 Thank you very much for your testimony.

16 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: And, again,
18 Councilman, on our next panel you'll have
19 the Executive Director and the ACCT team
20 that will be up, and you can -- perfect
21 line of question again for them and see
22 how they can incorporate it in their
23 intake process and just when they meet
24 the public as they come in.

25 The Chair recognizes Councilman

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2 Squilla.

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you,
4 Mr. Chairman. And I also want to thank
5 you for bringing this to light, and I
6 think you're going to find that most
7 Councilmembers are going to be very
8 supportive of an increase in revenue for
9 our friends for our animals.

10 But knowing that what we heard
11 today and we're going to hear from other
12 people who are going to testify and
13 beside the animal care and the care of
14 pets, we also have issues with wild
15 animals that are in the streets as far as
16 raccoons and possums and things like
17 that, and our resources don't even touch
18 that aspect of it.

19 How do we -- what would be your
20 recommendation, I should ask, of how to
21 handle that with our agencies and then
22 who would then be responsible and the
23 amount of resources necessary so that --
24 we have people putting rat poison out to
25 kill these animals and other things.

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2 What can we do to take them and relocate
3 them or do something? What's the best
4 way to handle, I guess, some of the
5 wildlife that really aren't pets that are
6 in the City? Anybody. I don't know if
7 there's an answer.

8 MS. PERELMAN: I can tell you
9 that in Delaware County, one service is
10 provided by an individual company that
11 did such a terrible job that it was
12 basically barred from doing that kind of
13 work in the county going into the future.
14 So it's a difficult thing to outsource.
15 I don't think Delaware is an aberration
16 in that regard. Probably this question
17 is best answered by Vincent, though,
18 because I think the three of us are
19 really very focused on companion animals
20 as opposed to wild animals, and wild
21 animals require their own care in a way
22 that is a -- no vehicle that is equipped
23 to pick up a dog can pick up a raccoon at
24 the same time. So it's a completely
25 separate process.

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2 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay.

3 MS. FRICKE: There definitely
4 are municipalities where animal control
5 also responds to wildlife calls. Those
6 tend to be calls, though, that are
7 limited to potential human interaction.
8 We actually have at HSUS an entire
9 wildlife division that's devoted to
10 helping communities and municipalities
11 understand that we don't need to go and
12 pick up every single raccoon or every
13 single animal that might be on somebody's
14 property. We can actually help arm
15 citizens with understanding how to avoid
16 having those negative interactions. Very
17 simple things like just not feeding your
18 cat outside is a wonderful way to
19 eliminate raccoon problems.

20 Again, there are a lot of
21 things that could be done. Under ACCT's
22 current level of staffing and funding,
23 those kind of enhanced services, I would
24 imagine, are certainly not achievable. I
25 don't want to speak for Mr. Medley, but I

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2 would say definitely not. But if that is
3 something that the City sees as a problem
4 and would like to see taken on, again,
5 that requires additional funding, that
6 requires space, that requires training
7 for officers. It's definitely doable to
8 make sure that Philadelphia is treating
9 its wildlife population as humanely as
10 its pet population, but, again, that is
11 another layer of resources that would be
12 necessary to do effectively.

13 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: And I
14 would agree, because after -- I mean, we
15 see the need for the pet population out
16 there and then we see what happens
17 sometimes to the wildlife population
18 that's out there, and you sort of feel
19 just as bad for them as you do for the
20 pets. So we have to come up with
21 something, and hopefully by the time
22 these hearings are done, we'll come up
23 with ways to decide how to move forward
24 with it, again, but they all do need
25 additional resources. And sometimes we

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2 look at our ACCTs and everybody to do
3 everything. We hear an animal, something
4 with an animal, let's call them and just
5 go after them. So maybe it is not only
6 educating the public, but educating us
7 here on Council and other folks on what
8 we need to do to access all these avenues
9 that our City residents are encountering.
10 So thank you.

11 MS. PERELMAN: And just so that
12 you know, Councilman, Schuylkill Valley
13 Wildlife Center just outside the City can
14 also come and help, not on a formal basis
15 in terms of any kind of relationship with
16 ACCT at this point, but that is maybe
17 something that you could deal with them
18 about in terms of developing a formal
19 relationship with the City to handle
20 animals here.

21 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Do they
22 have a relationship with any other
23 municipalities?

24 MS. PERELMAN: I don't believe
25 they do, but I can't say for sure.

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2 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All right.

3 Well, that's a good start.

4 MS. PERELMAN: It could be a
5 nice source of a little bit of revenue
6 for them, because they do have facilities
7 that are underutilized.

8 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Well,
9 that's good to know. Thank you.

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: Revenue
11 revenue, revenue, Councilman. I mean, it
12 seems like revenue and space is a
13 consistent concern and ongoing problem,
14 especially when we fall way short for
15 even the national average for a
16 first-class city as Philadelphia is.

17 We have to move on to our next
18 panel, but I do have two quick questions
19 for you. Does ACCT Philly, to your
20 knowledge, fundraise the same level as
21 any other facilities that are comparable
22 in size and resources?

23 MS. PERELMAN: I'd like to
24 answer by saying that ACCT Philly is
25 effectively a department of the City of

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2 Philadelphia. It may be organized as a
3 501(c)(3), but it is subject to the
4 employment rules for the City. It has
5 unionized workers who, I believe, work
6 for the City -- not for the City, but it
7 has unionized workers. The City owns the
8 facility, and the Board is chosen by a
9 City organization or a City department.
10 So it's very hard to fundraise. It's not
11 impossible. There is only one part of
12 the City that I think is somewhat
13 analogous, and that is Mural Arts in
14 which a separate organization was
15 created, Mural Arts Advocates, to help
16 fund Mural Arts department within Parks
17 and Rec, and they raise money. But other
18 than that, I don't know that anyone else
19 does in the City, and I'm not aware of
20 any other municipal shelters in the
21 country that have fundraising as a
22 significant part of their revenue.

23 COUNCILMAN HENON: It really
24 kind of puts them at a disadvantage.

25 MS. PERELMAN: Very much so,

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2 because I would imagine for most people
3 in the City, they believe they're paying
4 their taxes and this is something that
5 they would expect the City to take care
6 of. That doesn't mean, however, that in
7 special instances, it would be impossible
8 for ACCT to find donors who would like to
9 give to particular projects. That kind
10 of thing frequently could be done if it
11 were a sufficiently appealing project.

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: Has anybody
13 on this panel here visited the ACCT
14 facility? And if you have, I'd be
15 interested in the top five, three to
16 five, changes or suggestions that you
17 might think is best in your professional
18 experience to the physical infrastructure
19 to help improve the animal care, the
20 staff. Again, I'm excited about ACCT
21 coming up here, ACCT Philly, because I
22 want to say they do a tremendous job
23 under an enormous amount of stress,
24 severely underfunded, working incredible
25 hours with the intake as high as they do.

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2 So if you have any
3 suggestion -- well, first of all, has
4 anybody visited the facility? And could
5 you make, in your opinion, again, any
6 recommendations to the physical plant to
7 help the quality of care to the animals,
8 to the staff, and to the volunteers,
9 because the volunteers do -- ACCT
10 wouldn't -- it would be tough or
11 difficult for ACCT to survive without the
12 volunteers, so I do want to recognize
13 that, and we'll talk about that in a
14 little while. So your opinion and
15 suggestions on the visit.

16 MS. LEVY: Sure. I've been to
17 ACCT more times than I can count. I
18 would say really it all comes down to
19 having more space to spread out and to
20 utilize space in ways that are more
21 conducive to better animal care, better
22 ability to accommodate the public. I
23 think just off the top of my head, and
24 I'm sure that ACCT staff has given this
25 many countless hours of thought, but off

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2 the top of my head, I think that having
3 space to house different populations of
4 animals separately to accommodate
5 adopters and fosters so they are able to
6 interact with animals more effectively
7 without the noise and the stress of
8 everything else going on around them, so
9 that they're better able to make matches
10 and leave the building safely with their
11 pets; having a separate way for animals
12 who are being brought in either by the
13 police as injured strays or by the public
14 as owner surrenders or found strays so
15 that they are not crossing paths and
16 potentially exposing the existing
17 population to disease or to other
18 dangers; being able to provide counseling
19 to owners who are potentially
20 surrendering their pets. There are
21 endless uses for the space, but that's
22 really what it all boils down to.

23 COUNCILMAN HENON: Could we
24 accomplish all of that on its current --
25 in its current facility?

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2 MS. LEVY: I believe so. If
3 Animal Control had the full use of that
4 building, I think that its ability --
5 and, of course, the resources to staff up
6 to utilize that space effectively, I
7 believe that many of these kind of
8 bottlenecks and challenges that come with
9 the constraints that they're existing
10 under now would be eliminated.

11 COUNCILMAN HENON: Well, thank
12 you all. I really do appreciate you
13 taking the time. I know we got a lot
14 into the details, but I think it's
15 important publicly to talk about this. I
16 think it's long overdue, and I appreciate
17 your time and expertise to come in here
18 and letting the public know what we do,
19 what you do, and what are our challenges
20 and where we need to be just to be -- to
21 provide the care I think that the animals
22 of the City of Philadelphia deserve and
23 the health and well-being of all the
24 citizens of the City of Philadelphia. So
25 thank you so much for being here.

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2 (Thank you.)

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: Clerk, could
4 you read our next panel, please.

5 THE CLERK: Vincent Medley,
6 Hillary Herendeen, and Audra Houghton.

7 (Witnesses approached witness
8 table.)

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: Just for an
10 announcement, I'd like to make
11 immediately following this hearing, this
12 public hearing on this resolution, we
13 will start a Public Property and Public
14 Works Committee on Bills 170108, 170139,
15 170142, 170168, 170288, 170309, and
16 Resolution 170048. The Public Property
17 and Public Works public hearing and
18 meeting will start immediately at the end
19 of this public hearing. So thank you.

20 Welcome our next panel. Thank
21 you for being here. Thank you for your
22 time. Would you, if you would, please
23 state your name for the record and you
24 all may proceed with your testimony.
25 Thank you.

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2 MR. MEDLEY: My name is Vincent
3 Medley. I'm the Executive Director of
4 the Animal Care and Control Team of
5 Philadelphia.

6 MS. HOUGHTON: My name is Audra
7 Houghton. I am the Director of
8 Operations at the Animal Care and Control
9 Team of Philadelphia.

10 DR. HERENDEEN: Good afternoon.
11 I am Dr. Hillary Herendeen and I am the
12 Medical Director for your City shelter.

13 COUNCILMAN HENON: Great.
14 Thank you. If you all could have the
15 microphone a little closer so the
16 stenographer and we can hear you, and you
17 may proceed with your testimony. Thank
18 you.

19 MR. MEDLEY: Thank you,
20 Councilman Henon.

21 Good afternoon, Chairman Henon,
22 Chairwoman Quinones-Sanchez, and City
23 Council Committee members. Thank you for
24 the opportunity to appear before you
25 today to address the Resolution No.

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2 170149 sponsored by Councilman Henon,
3 which calls for the hearing regarding the
4 Animal Care and Control Team of
5 Philadelphia budget and facilities.

6 My name is Vincent Medley and I
7 am the Executive Director of ACCT Philly.
8 ACCT Philly's mission is to provide
9 shelter, care, and lifesaving efforts for
10 animals in need to protect the health,
11 safety, and welfare of the people and
12 animals of Philadelphia. This mission
13 supports our core values of transparency,
14 respect, innovation, commitment, empathy,
15 and professionalism.

16 Our role in the City of
17 Philadelphia is best understood through
18 the eyes of the community we serve.
19 Whether it is a pet owner who has made
20 the painful decision to humanely
21 euthanize their elderly dog or cat
22 they've loved as a family member for
23 years or the Animal Control officer who
24 takes an animal into custody for
25 state-required rabies quarantine because

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2 a child has been rushed to the hospital
3 after being bitten by an aggressive dog
4 or also may be seen through the eyes of a
5 good samaritan who has brought a lost,
6 injured, sick or even starving dog or cat
7 into the care of ACCT Philly.

8 By contrast, ACCT Philly is a
9 City-related non-profit agency which was
10 created by the City in 2011 to provide
11 animal care and control services. Our
12 agency is critical to the services and
13 operations to the citizens who generate
14 the 14,000 service requests that need an
15 immediate response to make Philadelphians
16 safer. As the Executive Director, I am
17 confident and pleased to tell you that
18 the services you have entrusted us with
19 are in good hands.

20 As early as 2004, residents
21 came together and demanded the City
22 convert its existing animal shelter that
23 euthanized more than 70 percent of the
24 animals that entered the shelter to one
25 that met the national standards for

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2 lifesaving programs. ACCT Philly's
3 efforts to meet this national goal
4 started in 2012. In that year, the
5 shelter, with the help and support of the
6 community, volunteers, and rescue
7 partners, saved 62 percent of the animals
8 that were taken into our care. Just this
9 past year, we saved 80 percent of the
10 animals that came into the shelter, which
11 is the highest in ACCT Philly's history.

12 Using the Asilomar Accord
13 measurements, which is the most widely
14 recognized formula for calculating an
15 animal shelter's lifesaving performance,
16 ACCT Philly's performance is on par with
17 national norms. Indeed, when compared to
18 other animal care and control agencies in
19 the country, Philadelphia is one of the
20 most efficient animal shelter programs.
21 On average, ACCT Philly spends \$181 per
22 animal, which is not only among the
23 lowest in the country but also means
24 there's not a penny to spare or to waste.
25 Like the citizens of our great city, we

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2 know how to do more with less. Indeed,
3 in 2014, the Petco Foundation, the
4 largest animal charitable foundation in
5 the nation, named ACCT Philly one of the
6 nation's most efficient shelters per
7 dollars spent.

8 The Petco Foundation continues
9 to be a huge supporter of our work. In
10 January 2015, Petco granted ACCT Philly
11 \$1 million to renovate and expand the
12 adoption center on the current ACCT
13 Philly campus.

14 Word has spread nationally
15 about ACCT Philly's lifesaving work and
16 Philadelphia's lifesaving work. In 2013,
17 the Best Friend's Animal Society awarded
18 ACCT Philly an \$800,000 grant to save
19 more cats. It is a commonly overlooked
20 fact that our shelter receives more cats
21 than it does dogs. Last year we received
22 23,000 animals, 13,000 of which were cats
23 and about 8,000 were dogs. In 2014,
24 PetSmart Charities, another nationally
25 renowned animal shelter charity, awarded

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2 ACCT Philly a \$500,000 grant to operate
3 an Everyday Adoption Center at their
4 PetSmart store in Plymouth Meeting. In a
5 recent meeting with their leadership, we
6 were asked to renew our three-year
7 contract.

8 The aforementioned agencies
9 have recognized ACCT Philly as an agency
10 whose standards and practices are
11 consistent with national best practices.
12 These investments have also positioned us
13 for current and future successes.

14 The work we know is far from
15 done because we are still humanely
16 euthanizing over 5,000 animals a year.
17 But when you compare that to 2004, a year
18 when the City of Philadelphia euthanized
19 21,000 animals, we as a community and a
20 government have taken an enormous leap in
21 the right direction.

22 In closing, I want to assure
23 you that Philadelphia's Animal Care and
24 Control is standing on solid ground. We
25 recently completed the first strategic

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2 plan in our agency's history. With the
3 City's assistance, we are nearing the
4 completion of a full replacement of the
5 HVAC system. ACCT Philly is also
6 scheduled to purchase new dog kennels in
7 early 2018. In addition, the Petco
8 Adoption Center, currently in the design
9 phase, will give our building a
10 much-needed facelift of a modern animal
11 care and control agency.

12 All this progress would not be
13 possible without the collaborative hard
14 work and dedication of ACCT Philly's
15 committed staff, our passionate
16 volunteers, faithful rescue partners, and
17 the City's residents. Our success is
18 yours. Any national or local recognition
19 we receive reflects your efforts.

20 Thank you to the Committee and
21 the Committee Chairs for permitting me to
22 speak. My staff and I welcome any
23 questions you may have.

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
25 Vince. Thank you for your testimony.

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2 And, again, I just want to state for the
3 record for public disclosure, I am a
4 Board member of ACCT appointed by our
5 Council President, and I see by visiting
6 the shelter on many occasions and
7 Adoption Center how hard the employees
8 work and how hard the volunteers work and
9 how critical it is for the time,
10 understaffed, underresourced that -- but
11 the time that people put in to make sure
12 that ACCT runs as efficiently as it
13 possibly can under some of the challenges
14 that we face.

15 So I want to kudo to you and
16 the staff. And, Vince, I know you're new
17 to ACCT and you inherited an extremely
18 underfunded agency that is a subsidiary
19 of the City of Philadelphia, non-profit,
20 but we're going to keep working on it.
21 As a Board member and a Councilmember,
22 only certain things that I can do. I can
23 volunteer my time, I can observe, but
24 it's my responsibility to champion a few
25 things that I can do, and that's shed

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2 light and have hearings where we can let
3 people know and let the community
4 at-large know who put in a lot of sweat
5 equity that we recognize that there is a
6 funding shortfall. We recognize that the
7 facility isn't adequate for the amount of
8 intake and the care, not just for the
9 animals but for staff and the volunteers.

10 So that's what I'm going to do,
11 and that's what I'm going to continue to
12 do, but we need to do it responsibly and
13 we need to do it in cooperation and
14 staying on focus. You and your team do
15 your job and the volunteers do your job
16 and allow me and my colleagues to work
17 and continue to work with the
18 Administration to try to get to a place
19 that is acceptable or a good start, but a
20 commitment. And I think the
21 Administration to some extent has been
22 willing to show some of that commitment.
23 So I want to thank the Administration for
24 at least sitting down and having ongoing
25 conversations on where to start and how

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2 to start. We want to start now, and I
3 think by just the commitment to I think
4 rejuvenate and I think revive the
5 advisory committee is just a start to
6 take a look at some of our space
7 allocation and spacial design, whether
8 it's in whole or co-location. I think
9 from all the experts here, ACCT needs to
10 have its own facility, and we're going to
11 hopefully try to work towards that, but
12 the Administration I think is -- not I
13 think; I know is anxious to continue the
14 conversations to move forward and what's
15 in the best interest of your mission.

16 So with that, I do have a few
17 questions. Can you describe the various
18 roles and functions that ACCT Philly
19 plays in the City of Philadelphia?

20 MR. MEDLEY: Yes. And thank
21 you for your kind words, Councilman
22 Henon, and I also want to just thank you
23 as well for your leadership in this
24 arena.

25 So our role is a dual role in

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2 the community. We serve -- we have a
3 service contract with the City to provide
4 animal care services, and that is for
5 citizens who call us for requesting
6 service for an animal that's chasing
7 people, bite cases, animals that are sick
8 or injured. So we -- our officers are
9 part enforcement and also part ambulance.

10 And as far as the other
11 function, we serve a lifesaving role in
12 the community that requires us to and has
13 required us over the years to not only
14 have programs that protect the public but
15 also that when an animal arrives in our
16 shelter, that they are able to get out
17 alive. And so what we've seen over the
18 years is an expanded -- and recognizing
19 that the community is a part of our
20 solution, but they can't be the only part
21 and, in fact, we need to have an
22 ever-increasing part in that.

23 We also serve a role as animal
24 care and a public health entity for our
25 citizens and for the animals that come

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2 into our shelter. I'll let our Medical
3 Director, Dr. Herendeen, kind of give you
4 an idea of, from a shelter standpoint and
5 an animal care standpoint, what our role
6 is.

7 DR. HERENDEEN: Thank you,
8 Vincent.

9 So your City shelter is able to
10 house about 120 dogs and up to 200 cats.
11 We provide food, water, and ideally a
12 clean and size-appropriate enclosure,
13 species-appropriate enclosure for those
14 animals. We also provide a basic medical
15 assessment. We provide pain medication
16 and treatment when indicated as they're
17 represented to us. And as Vincent also
18 alluded to, our first priority is to
19 identify what the best home situation to
20 get that animal into as quickly as
21 possible might be.

22 So that's the role we play for
23 the animals that come to us. For the
24 people who come to us, we try to provide
25 advice and resource. We have a ton of

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2 fosters that we also provide care for our
3 animals in their homes. Those are all
4 the ways that we kind of serve the City.

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: Vince, how
6 much investment has the City made into
7 the ACCT facility over the past ten
8 years? Are you able to answer that
9 question? I know we have a current
10 capital project that's going on, but
11 that's been in the queue for the past ten
12 years. Do you know of any other
13 investments that the City has made to the
14 facility?

15 MR. MEDLEY: Yeah. I would
16 have to look into that and get back to
17 you. I do know our current HVAC project
18 that is recently -- all but is finished,
19 except for some housekeeping. We have
20 over \$200,000 the City has available to
21 us now to add new dog runs for the --
22 because our existing ones are -- they've
23 lived out their lifespan. And so we have
24 that as well. And then there's also
25 different small renovation projects that

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2 we've had over the last year that the
3 City has invested, but beyond that, I'm
4 not aware.

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: If you could
6 provide to me the actual investment over
7 the past ten years, and I'll make sure
8 that members of the joint Committee and
9 Council as a whole gets an understanding
10 of what the investment is. And I'm not
11 just talking about the last year. When I
12 became a Board member six years ago, a
13 little over six years ago, the HVAC
14 project was going to happen then, and
15 it's finally coming to fruition,
16 thankfully so, but maybe commitments or
17 approvals and carryover budgets from 15
18 years ago started. I don't know. But if
19 you could, completion, capital
20 improvements to the facilities over the
21 past ten years would be wonderful
22 information to have.

23 And the total square footage, I
24 think we already heard that. It's 32,000
25 square foot; is that correct?

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2 MR. MEDLEY: The building
3 itself, the full building, is 32,000.

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: And who do
5 you share the space with and why?

6 MR. MEDLEY: We share the space
7 with Vector Control. And as far as the
8 reason why, I know that Animal Care and
9 Control was once a part of the Health
10 Department and Vector is a part of the
11 Health Department as well, and I think it
12 was an inherited structure.

13 COUNCILMAN HENON: And what is
14 the impact of share of that space on your
15 operation?

16 MR. MEDLEY: I think the impact
17 is -- in any animal shelter, and this is
18 my fourth shelter, the question of what
19 the mission is of the building and the
20 use of the building, the parking space,
21 all those things factor into how we
22 govern and go about our business, and it
23 also affects our ability to have that
24 mission focus. And so I think it's a
25 unique situation to have, to share the

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2 building as an animal care and control.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: Is there a
4 lot of storage space that's not yours in
5 the facility?

6 MR. MEDLEY: Currently we have
7 no indoor storage space unless you count
8 some of the -- we have like corridors
9 that we keep supplies that are not --

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: Let me ask
11 the question this way. Do you know of
12 the Health Department -- does the Health
13 Department, Vector who you share space
14 with, have a lot of storage space?

15 MR. MEDLEY: I know they do
16 have storage space inside the -- they do
17 have rooms inside of the building to
18 store.

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: Can you
20 describe some of the space that you and
21 your staff have.

22 MR. MEDLEY: Yes. You know,
23 just -- our -- we are used to sharing
24 space and so we do share space. So, for
25 instance, myself, my office, I share with

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2 my assistant. We have --

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: What's the
4 size of your office?

5 MR. MEDLEY: It's --

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: That you
7 share. I've been to your office, so I --

8 MR. MEDLEY: Yes. The Medical
9 Director says it's about three times the
10 size of this table, so I would probably
11 agree with that.

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: You share a
13 closet.

14 MR. MEDLEY: We share a closet
15 that got converted, yes, sir. And then
16 as far as the rest of our space, it's --
17 in terms of housing the animals and where
18 we can hold supplies to make that happen,
19 we generally have to store supplies out
20 in the open.

21 COUNCILMAN HENON: What is the
22 total number of animals that you can
23 house in the shelter at one time?

24 MR. MEDLEY: We can house about
25 200 cats if we're at maximum capacity and

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2 about 120 dogs, and that includes small
3 dogs and large dogs.

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: The Chair
5 recognizes Councilman Greenlee.

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
7 you, Mr. Chairman.

8 Good afternoon. And I want to
9 echo the Chairman's statement about how
10 things have improved over the years,
11 because it's an issue I've been following
12 even before I was an actual
13 Councilmember, and I know there's been
14 significant improvements.

15 Just to stay on this issue
16 about your facility, I think you heard
17 Ms. Perelman's statement to Councilman
18 Domb's question, if basically Vector
19 Control could find another place, that
20 would have tremendous impact on your
21 services. Without trying to put you on
22 the spot, even though I am, how would you
23 respond? Would you agree with that? I
24 mean, could you do most of what you think
25 you could be able to do if you had the

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2 total space in that facility?

3 MR. MEDLEY: I think one of the
4 things that I'm focused on is how do we
5 make the most use of the current
6 building. If you look at a modern animal
7 shelter, it generally will have an
8 administrative area where most people
9 office and then areas for customer
10 service and then also -- and for our
11 Animal Control officers and the dispatch
12 function of our shelter and then also the
13 housing of animals.

14 So I think one of the -- I
15 think some of the things I would like to
16 see are areas for us to be able to
17 quarantine animals that are a danger to
18 the public and also so that they are
19 not -- so citizens are not having to walk
20 by cages where animals are in quarantine
21 but also adoption animals in close
22 proximity.

23 So, I mean, the space issues
24 are -- I think have been documented, but
25 I think also I would say we are working

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2 very closely with the MDO's office to
3 resolve those issues.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: That was
5 going to be my next question. How active
6 or how soon might that happen? Because I
7 know we're pounding on the same issue,
8 but it seemed like you said that 13,000
9 square feet would make a significant
10 difference, is what I think I heard
11 and --

12 MR. MEDLEY: Well, you know --

13 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I know
14 this isn't your final -- you don't have
15 the final decision. I get this. But it
16 just seems that that's something -- and I
17 know it's easier for us to sit here and
18 say just find another place for Vector
19 Control, but it seems like it would make
20 such a significant difference, and we've
21 been hearing this for years back many
22 years ago, the whole space issue.

23 MR. MEDLEY: Yeah. I
24 definitely don't want to displace anyone,
25 and if you ask me if I want more space,

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2 we could use it, because we're currently
3 beneath minimum standards for space, but
4 it wouldn't be an effort to say we need
5 more housing to house more animals.

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: So that
7 13,000 square feet could significantly
8 help you in your mission; is that a fair
9 statement?

10 MR. MEDLEY: Yes, I would say
11 so.

12 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.
13 And, again, not to be critical, because
14 again I certainly acknowledge the
15 improvements, but in your written
16 statement, you talk about the -- probably
17 going to mess this word up -- Asilomar.

18 MR. MEDLEY: Asilomar, yes,
19 sir.

20 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Accords
21 measurement. It says when compared to
22 other animal control agencies,
23 Philadelphia is one of the most efficient
24 animal shelter programs.

25 We saw the chart that the folks

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2 put up. How does that compare? Are we
3 talking about different things or are
4 you -- I'm just trying to -- because that
5 seemed to be a little contradictory from
6 what we saw on the screen.

7 MR. MEDLEY: So if you look at
8 what the cost per animal is to save
9 animals and to operate a shelter, you're
10 going to see ACCT Philly, the City of
11 Philadelphia, on the low end. However,
12 when you look at our lifesaving rate,
13 it -- so a comparable -- not a comparable
14 city, but I look at a city that has a
15 similar lifesaving rate, the City of
16 Houston. They spent \$530 per animal to
17 get to 80 percent lifesaving rate. And
18 so what we're saying is that although
19 there may be some differences, the
20 Asilomar Accords are used so that there's
21 similarity, and a lot of it has to do
22 with community resource, but also in
23 order for us to save the population of
24 animals that are currently being
25 euthanized in our shelter, the cost is

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2 going to increase significantly, and the
3 reason why is because right now what we
4 are saving are the animals that have
5 the -- are the most adoptable, that are
6 the healthiest. Now, some of them are
7 unhealthy and we have partners that pull
8 unhealthy animals, sick animals, but --
9 and also the behaviorally unsound
10 animals. So the question is how do we
11 provide resources for those animals that
12 right now don't have live outcomes for us
13 to point to.

14 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay. If
15 you could just -- how much on average
16 does it cost to house one cat and one
17 dog? Is it different figures, or how
18 much would you say?

19 MR. MEDLEY: We can break that
20 information down for you. Our average
21 cost per animal housed in our shelter is
22 \$181.

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Average,
24 okay. And how many animals move through
25 your facility each year?

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2 MR. MEDLEY: This past year it
3 was 22,971, which is down from over
4 25,000 in 2016 -- I mean in 2015, and
5 it's decreased over the last three years.

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And what,
7 if there limitations, does the ACCT
8 insurance policy place on your
9 operations?

10 MR. MEDLEY: I don't know if
11 it's the insurance policy more than it is
12 the liability related to. So, for
13 instance, we have had insurance claims
14 against us. Last year it was over \$1.2
15 million in claims, and this past year it
16 was \$250,000 in claims. We've worked
17 very hard to keep our claims and issues
18 surrounding the claims down so that we
19 are able to get insurance.

20 Last year our insurance brokers
21 sent out 40 requests for proposal for
22 insurance. We received two responders.
23 One responder finally said, no, we're not
24 going to insure you, and the second
25 responder said, yeah, we'll insure you if

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2 you're willing to pay much more than
3 you've already paid.

4 And so I think to answer your
5 question, for me it's a question of being
6 able to keep our doors open. If we do
7 not have insurance, we will not be able
8 to function or to do any business or have
9 a contract with the City.

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.
11 Just one other on a little different
12 note. I know sometimes we've heard from
13 our office when people call 311 about
14 some animal-related issue, sometimes
15 they're told ACCT handles certain things.
16 Sometimes they're told to call the SPCA.
17 Could you briefly like sort of tell what
18 the differences might be between what you
19 do and the SPCA?

20 MR. MEDLEY: Yes. As a
21 501(c)(3) with the City, we have a
22 service contract. So that contract
23 spells out specific services we provide.
24 There are certain services, like animal
25 cruelty, that we -- and animal cruelty

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2 investigation that we are not -- we don't
3 have a process set up to investigate, but
4 then also, more importantly, I think the
5 PSPCA does a tremendous job of
6 investigating animal cruelty, and that is
7 the mission of their -- so we work hand
8 in hand with the SPCA as a partner in
9 resolving these issues, and also the
10 Philadelphia Police Department works with
11 the PSPCA as well.

12 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Do you
13 know -- and this isn't your call, but I
14 just wondered if you know. Is there a
15 record kept of 311 calls relating to
16 animal issues at all; do you know?

17 MR. MEDLEY: My understanding
18 is that anything that is called into 311
19 is recorded and is part of a report.

20 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: There is
21 a report on that?

22 MR. MEDLEY: Yes, sir.

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.

24 All right. Thank you. Maybe -- and that
25 regulation that you have, you said that

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2 the mission you're given, if that's in
3 writing, could you forward that to the
4 Chair and we could all have a copy and
5 see exactly what --

6 MR. MEDLEY: You mean the
7 contract?

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Yes.

9 MR. MEDLEY: Yes, sir.

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
11 you.

12 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
14 Councilman.

15 I failed to recognize
16 Councilman Oh has been present for some
17 time, but we've been in some in-depth
18 conversations through the hearing. So I
19 do want to recognize that Councilman Oh
20 was here.

21 Mr. Medley, can you list the
22 key elements of the operation when it
23 comes to services that you are required
24 to offer by federal, state, and local
25 law?

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2 MR. MEDLEY: So the services
3 we're required are -- and mainly this is
4 the authority given us through the
5 contract and being the City's animal care
6 and control, is to enforce the rabies law
7 for the state, to inspect dangerous dog
8 owners who after they've been declared by
9 the court as dangerous, we provide the
10 inspection while PPD provides the actual
11 initial investigation and writes the
12 charges. We have a requirement to house
13 animals for a minimum of 48 hours unless
14 they're owned and we know that they have
15 or their owner surrendered them to the
16 shelter.

17 Let me think.

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: Is there
19 anything about adequate and fair funding
20 or proper funding to effectuate the
21 services that are required?

22 MR. MEDLEY: The City does have
23 ordinances regarding funding. As far as
24 the state law, they just require that
25 there are minimum standards that we

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2 provide and that we are inspected by the
3 State Dog Warden periodically to ensure
4 that we are meeting those standards.

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: So minimum
6 standards to what? I'm sure that carries
7 a broad net.

8 MR. MEDLEY: So as far as
9 minimum care, housing for animals. If
10 there was a kennel in disrepair, we
11 wouldn't be able to use that; that
12 animals are being given basic food,
13 water; that they have basically minimum
14 housing care. There's nothing beyond
15 that that's a law, although we do work as
16 hard as we can to follow best practices
17 and national standards.

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: How many
19 staff do you have?

20 MR. MEDLEY: We have 90.

21 COUNCILMAN HENON: How many
22 animal control vehicles do you have and
23 do you know when the last time they were
24 replaced or repaired and do you know the
25 age of them?

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2 MR. MEDLEY: We currently have
3 five animal control vehicles. I think
4 our last replacement was -- I'll have to
5 get back to you on our last replacement.

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: More or less
7 than ten years?

8 MR. MEDLEY: It's less than ten
9 years for our last replacement.

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: More or less
11 than five years?

12 MR. MEDLEY: It might be around
13 five years.

14 COUNCILMAN HENON: And they're
15 on the street 24/7?

16 MR. MEDLEY: Yes.

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. What
18 investments do you -- look, I know we're
19 kind of drilling you here.

20 MR. MEDLEY: That's okay.

21 COUNCILMAN HENON: There's a
22 reason for the line of questioning, and
23 it's not particular to your role as
24 Executive Director. I think it's
25 important that members of these

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2 Committees that are holding these
3 hearings and the people at-large, public
4 at-large know what goes into an animal
5 care facility like ACCT Philly.

6 What investments do you make in
7 the staff development and its morale?
8 And I say that not to judge, because I'm
9 not. Just to understand, again, we're
10 going to drill home the purpose of this
11 meeting, this hearing. You're
12 underfunded and you need more space, and
13 with underfunding comes more
14 responsibility, more work with less. So
15 the question is, has or will ACCT make a
16 commitment for staff development to help
17 their development skills and the morale
18 in the facility?

19 MR. MEDLEY: Yes, definitely.
20 In fact, that's been something that since
21 I started, we have been very much focused
22 on. One of the first things I did is we
23 worked with the MDO's office to allow an
24 Urban Fellow to come in to the shelter
25 and really work with our leadership staff

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2 on personal and professional development.

3 That involved all of our leadership staff

4 getting the books called Strength Finder,

5 which assesses talents and personality

6 traits to allow us to be better at

7 communicating with one another and

8 working together as a team.

9 We also sought out the City's

10 innovation team and we have been -- the

11 innovation team has worked with us as

12 part of a process to incorporate all of

13 the things we identified in our strategic

14 plan, which has been recently completed,

15 and how do we better communicate and

16 involve our staff and integrate our

17 volunteers and our partner base. We've

18 had at least six sessions, and those

19 sessions are not only for leadership, but

20 we pull staff members from every division

21 or every department in our organization

22 in order to -- so that we all have that

23 cross trained and learning.

24 Also as part of our strategic

25 plan, we are developing an employee

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2 academy that includes on-boarding, but
3 also classes that teach proficiency that
4 reflect the most recent national
5 standards. That's along with process
6 mapping, which we are in the process of
7 doing with our whole agency, as well as
8 creating a comprehensive policy and
9 procedure manual.

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: Do you know
11 the average length of tenure for the
12 staff? How long have they worked in the
13 organization?

14 MR. MEDLEY: I can get you that
15 information. I do not know it off the
16 top of my head, but that is another piece
17 of the strategic plan that we've
18 identified to target and to -- as
19 retention.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: It will be
21 my last question. How is your staffing
22 level compared to other shelters in the
23 country, knowing that we are half of the
24 average?

25 MR. MEDLEY: So the earlier

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2 panel talked about the number of minutes
3 per day that each animal -- is a
4 recommendation for each animal to have
5 with a staff member, and that number is
6 15. Our number hovers around, just based
7 on the math, about nine minutes per day.
8 So we have a -- we are understaffed when
9 it comes to the people, whether it's our
10 kennel attendants, our vet nurses, our
11 veterinary staff when it comes to the
12 care of animals.

13 COUNCILMAN HENON: The Chair
14 recognizes Councilman Domb.

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
16 Mr. Chairman.

17 And welcome. I have two
18 questions I wanted to ask. In an earlier
19 panel, I think it was Inga Fricke
20 mentioned that each pet is supposed to
21 have 15 minutes of time and the total
22 would be 32 in an eight-hour day. Right
23 now in ACCT how many pets do we house and
24 how many people do we have?

25 MR. MEDLEY: We have 90 people

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2 and we house -- is that on a daily basis

3 or you mean --

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Daily. How
5 many pets?

6 MR. MEDLEY: So about 300 pets
7 per day we house.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: 300. So if
9 you can do 32 per person, that's nine
10 people.

11 DR. HERENDEEN: It would be
12 nine to ten people to provide 15 minutes
13 per animal for one day of minimum care,
14 but Vincent's number of 90 staff includes
15 lifesaving promotion staff, our front
16 counter staff, our ACL officers. All of
17 those people get two days off a week.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So roughly
19 ten people of the 90 are allocated to the
20 pets?

21 DR. HERENDEEN: We have 14
22 animal care positions.

23 COUNCILMAN DOMB: 14, okay.
24 And so are you giving 15 minutes per pet
25 typically per day?

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2 DR. HERENDEEN: No.

3 COUNCILMAN DOMB: How much time
4 are you giving?

5 DR. HERENDEEN: As Vincent was
6 saying, I think an estimate may be as
7 high as nine minutes per pet, especially
8 in these slower months of the winter.
9 However, there's certainly times where it
10 can drop quite a bit more.

11 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So I'm
12 confused about the math. If ten people
13 can handle the amount of pets you have
14 and you have 90 people, why can't they
15 get 15 minutes each?

16 DR. HERENDEEN: There's a
17 little bit of confusion the way the
18 number was presented. So 90 is our total
19 staff, but our animal care staff is 14,
20 and that 15 minutes per animal per day is
21 basic care.

22 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I understand.
23 Your total staff is 14 that's there on a
24 daily basis.

25 DR. HERENDEEN: For animal care

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2 staff.

3 MS. HOUGHTON: And they also
4 have responsibilities in addition to just
5 the basic care of the animals, like
6 laundry and cleaning the animal dishes
7 and things like that that are in addition
8 to that individual 15-minute care that
9 they should be receiving.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. No; I
11 understand.

12 And, Mr. Medley, you're the
13 Executive Director of ACCT?

14 MR. MEDLEY: Yes, sir.

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: That means
16 the buck stops with you?

17 MR. MEDLEY: Yes, sir.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. So are
19 you familiar with the Earned Income Tax
20 Credit?

21 DR. HERENDEEN: We heard about
22 it just an hour ago.

23 MR. MEDLEY: Somewhat. I mean,
24 I'm familiar with it from --

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I need you to

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2 be fully versed, and I'll tell you why.

3 More than half of the people that are

4 coming in probably would qualify. This

5 is for people that have jobs making 7 and

6 a quarter to \$23 an hour and have -- zero

7 children, they get \$506, but if they have

8 two children, two kids, making 44,000,

9 single parent, a couple, 50,000, two

10 kids, they can get checks up to \$6,000

11 and they can file back three additional

12 years. That's 24 grand. It's a lot of

13 money. That's federal money that is like

14 sitting in Washington that if we don't

15 get the word out -- and every year it's

16 \$100 million we don't get to the 40,000

17 people who qualify. So everyone who

18 comes here I mention this.

19 MR. MEDLEY: Yes, sir. By all

20 means, we will make sure that that

21 happens.

22 COUNCILMAN DOMB: We'll get you

23 all the forms you need. Department of

24 Revenue has all the forms. Every person

25 who comes in, even if -- give them the

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2 form even if they don't qualify. Let
3 them give it to ten other people, but
4 give them the form.

5 MR. MEDLEY: Yes. We will do
6 that.

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you
8 very much. Thanks for your testimony
9 today.

10 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
12 Councilman.

13 I appreciate your testimony
14 here. I don't think we have any more
15 questions from this panel, but some of
16 the questioning was, I'm sure, difficult
17 for you and you're put on the spot, but
18 it's important that we really talk about
19 the purpose of this hearing. And I think
20 it was clear, it was consistent
21 throughout your mission and the expertise
22 from national standards what needs to
23 happen here in the City of Philadelphia,
24 and we're here to help. We're here to
25 support. We also recognize again

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2 everybody's support, the network, the
3 volunteers, and your staff. So we
4 appreciate that.

5 I am going to have to
6 unfortunately make an announcement that
7 we are going to go for -- we're going to
8 have to end -- you may leave. Thank you.
9 Thank you for your time.

10 I know we have people that are
11 on testimony for public comment. I'm
12 going to ask you to bear with me. We
13 have to recess this hearing, go into our
14 Public Property Committee hearing and go
15 over some bills real quick while we got
16 Councilmembers for a quorum, and give you
17 the time that you deserve and the respect
18 that you need for public testimony. So
19 it will probably be another 20 minutes to
20 a half an hour before we get to public
21 comment, and then we'll invite you all up
22 to have -- to take as much time as you
23 need for public comment.

24 So the Committee on Public
25 Property and Public Works' joint

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2 committee with Appropriations will take a
3 short recess. We will wait five more
4 minutes for Public Property and Public
5 Works to get through its business that we
6 have here at our 3 o'clock schedule.

7 Thank you.

8 (Recess for Public Property and
9 Public Works hearing.)

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: Good
11 afternoon. We are reconvening the public
12 hearing of Public Property on Resolution
13 170149. We will hear public testimony
14 for those who are on our witness list for
15 public comment. Again, thank you for
16 your patience. I apologize. I wanted to
17 make sure that everybody had the
18 opportunity to be heard. The in-depth --
19 hopefully you thought that the earlier
20 testimony with the two panels were
21 satisfactory for a start as far as having
22 public information being conversed on the
23 City Council.

24 With that, respectfully, Clerk,
25 would you please read our first person to

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2 testify. As a matter of fact, we're
3 going to come up in three's and we'll
4 begin with our public comment.

5 THE CLERK: Dana Phillip, Robin
6 Ackerman, and Megan McCrea.

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. We'll
9 continue on. Again, for the record, for
10 those who couldn't hang around because of
11 the hearing running long, all public
12 comment testimony has been submitted and
13 it will be made and is a part of the
14 public record that will be posted online
15 as well.

16 Clerk.

17 THE CLERK: Ian Griffiths,
18 Kathy Jordan, Maria Termini-Romano,
19 Candace Scheirer.

20 (Witnesses approached witness
21 table.)

22 COUNCILMAN HENON: We'll go
23 with two and then we'll read our next
24 witnesses for public comment and
25 testimony.

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2 Again, thank you for your
3 patience. Please. I know I had
4 mentioned it several times. We just want
5 to kind of keep it in the confines of our
6 resolution.

7 And, Madam, you may start
8 first. State your name for the record
9 and begin with your testimony.

10 MS. TERMINI-ROMANO: Good
11 afternoon. My name is Maria
12 Termini-Romano. I thank you for the
13 opportunity to share my thoughts with
14 regard to ACCT Philly and its current
15 funding.

16 My relationship with ACCT began
17 four years ago when as a consumer our
18 family adopted a second family pet from
19 the shelter. Shortly after that, we
20 decided to become more involved with the
21 organization, recognizing the great need
22 for in-kind support through volunteerism
23 and private donations.

24 I have been an active volunteer
25 for almost three years, serving as an

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2 animal transporter, a foster parent, a
3 hands-on volunteer working directly with
4 the shelter dogs, a liaison for several
5 rescue partner organizations, and a
6 monthly donor.

7 I am aware of the
8 organizational structure of ACCT Philly
9 existing as an independent 501(c)(3)
10 non-profit corporation that holds the
11 City of Philadelphia contract for animal
12 control services, and I have attended
13 numerous Board meetings, getting to know
14 the individual Board members as well as
15 their professional credentials and
16 affiliations with other non-profit animal
17 welfare organizations in the region. I
18 also believe that ACCT Philly is not only
19 woefully underfunded, but also lacks the
20 leadership with the skill and forethought
21 to manage the funds that they currently
22 have. This has led to poor, unhealthy
23 living conditions for the animals in its
24 care, a physically and emotionally
25 draining work environment for its

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2 employees and volunteers, and a severely
3 tarnished reputation among the community
4 at-large.

5 Adequate funding for ACCT
6 Philly is an attainable goal, and
7 increasing available funds from the City
8 would certainly go a very long way toward
9 improving the day-to-day operations and
10 care provided to the animals in the care
11 of ACCT Philly, as well as improving the
12 condition of the physical plant, which
13 houses the organization. These municipal
14 funds, when managed properly, could
15 possibly support the addition of more
16 staff veterinarians, an additional animal
17 behaviorist or higher quality veterinary
18 care through the use of more advanced
19 diagnostics and medical treatments, all
20 of which are greatly needed within the
21 current system of operation at ACCT.

22 With that said, I think we
23 would all be very naive to believe that
24 any municipal animal shelter in a large
25 urban area could sustain itself wholly on

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2 the funds provided by the municipality
3 which it serves. Revenue sources need to
4 be viewed as two-pronged, municipal
5 funding and philanthropic funding. Most
6 non-profit organizations, including those
7 in animal welfare, depend significantly
8 on monies raised through fundraising and
9 large-scale philanthropy. Many have
10 advancement subcommittees that work in
11 conjunction with the Board of Directors
12 to set forth a vision for development for
13 the organization as a whole as well as
14 initiating, establishing, and maintaining
15 revenue sources from fundraising events,
16 in-kind donations, private philanthropy,
17 and grant funding.

18 It is my understanding that
19 advancement planning exists on a very
20 small scale within ACCT Philly and up to
21 this point has not appeared to be a
22 priority for the Board of Directors nor
23 the leadership team. Furthermore,
24 self-reported grant funds totaling
25 approximately \$2 million have not

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2 translated into improved quality of care
3 nor improved infrastructure.

4 ACCT functions in a day-to-day
5 survival mode, trying to get from one day
6 to the next while mitigating major issues
7 among its constituencies. This is not
8 sustainable for an organization that
9 wants to improve the quality of the
10 services that it provides while
11 cultivating and retaining amicable
12 relationships with all of its
13 constituencies.

14 Having served on several such
15 advancement committees for area
16 non-profits that have successfully raised
17 significant funds from private donors, I
18 can say confidently that establishing and
19 supporting such a subcommittee could be a
20 substantial help to the Board of
21 Directors, the leadership team, the
22 agency itself and, most importantly, the
23 animals who depend on their care.

24 I have always felt that having
25 Board members that also hold leadership

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2 positions in other non-profit animal
3 welfare agencies in the region has posed
4 a serious conflict of interest when it
5 comes to developing and maintaining
6 relationships with private funding
7 sources. For example, if a Board member
8 who holds the two positions meets and
9 cultivates a relationship with a willing
10 donor, do they direct those dollars
11 toward the organization where they are
12 employed or to ACCT Philly where they
13 serve as a Board member? The advancement
14 committee could alleviate this conflict
15 as members of this committee could be
16 community leaders, business leaders,
17 passionate private citizens who have
18 personal and professional relationships
19 with others who may be willing and able
20 to contribute significant dollars to ACCT
21 Philly, and they can be the agency's
22 advocates in the community, the face of
23 ACCT, if you will. This committee could
24 also oversee and direct the fundraising
25 efforts through things like events,

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2 mailings, in-kind donations,
3 commemorative naming of kennels in areas
4 of care in the shelter. They could also
5 oversee the use of the funds raised
6 through private philanthropy, ensuring
7 that they are not just included with the
8 general operating budget but rather used
9 to fund programs and facilities that
10 would directly improve the daily life of
11 the animals living at the shelter - the
12 outdoor runs that are frequently in
13 disrepair and in hazardous conditions;
14 the laundry facility that is inadequate
15 to handle the amount of laundry generated
16 on a daily basis; the broken kennels that
17 are unable to house large dogs, leading
18 to reduced capacity and euthanasia of
19 dogs due to space constraints; inadequate
20 veterinary services, leading to animals
21 suffering physically without humane
22 treatment; and rescues taking on
23 astronomical medical expense of treating
24 untreated animals once they are in their
25 care. The list can go on and on.

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2 I believe most of us here share
3 the common goal of improving the level of
4 care and services that ACCT Philly
5 provides to the animals in its care and
6 the community it serves. In order to
7 achieve this goal, we need to first
8 acknowledge that the current funding and
9 the provision of care at ACCT Philly are
10 both woefully inadequate. Once the
11 organization makes a commitment to
12 improving the level of care and services
13 it provides, the funding sources, both
14 municipal and private philanthropy, will
15 likely be willing to support the
16 organization and its goals.

17 The commitment of the City
18 Appropriations Committee and the City
19 Council to assist in securing more
20 funding for general operations at ACCT is
21 greatly appreciated. The creation of the
22 advancement subcommittee would also go a
23 very long way toward developing and
24 maintaining private funding sources that
25 will work in conjunction to provide the

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2 monies necessary to improve and enhance
3 the level of care that the animals of
4 ACCT Philly deserve.

5 Thank you.

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
7 for your testimony.

8 State your name for the record
9 and proceed with your testimony.

10 MR. GRIFFITHS: My name is Ian
11 Griffiths. I've only been a volunteer
12 dog walker at ACCT for about a year and a
13 half. So my experience is way smaller
14 than Maria's. So I'm not going into as
15 much detail, but when you're considering
16 these requests for more funding, I can
17 emphasize more highly that when a shelter
18 dog gets adopted, it leads to a higher
19 level of quality of life for the adopter
20 as well as the dog. I hope you'll go to
21 the YouTube video that shows their most
22 famous dog, Russ, and his new mom, Kayla.
23 That video has been seen by over 1.5
24 million people, and it's made it around
25 13 different countries, including my home

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2 country of Australia. And besides seeing
3 how happy Russ is, just have a look at
4 how happy his new mother is.

5 I don't bring any special
6 expertise to the table. I basically have
7 no experience in animal welfare, other
8 than just going over to ACCT and running
9 a couple of dogs. But I do like to read
10 the websites of other cities in the
11 Northeast, look at their budgets and what
12 they do with a higher level of funding.

13 Washington, DC may not be a
14 fair comparison, but their annual budget
15 is \$16 million per annum between the two
16 non-profits that take care of Animal Care
17 and Control. A fair comparison would
18 probably be Baltimore, which has a
19 similar tax base, almost identical
20 poverty levels. Their shelter, Barcs,
21 spends \$300 per animal per year while
22 ACCT spends \$182 per animal. And even
23 that, ACCT has several responsibilities
24 that Barcs does not. So if you're
25 comparing strictly similar

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2 responsibilities, Baltimore spends
3 between two and three times the amount
4 that ACCT spends per animal.

5 On a resident basis, Barcs
6 spends 48 percent more per resident than
7 ACCT. And in terms of square footage, I
8 think someone mentioned ACCT uses 19,000
9 square feet of the total building in
10 Philly. The Barcs building is 22,000
11 square feet and it takes between half to
12 two-thirds of the daily animals that ACCT
13 takes.

14 The effects of this are
15 noticeable when looking at how other
16 shelters spend their higher level of
17 funding. To be clear, ACCT management
18 never share their targeted investment
19 priorities for new funds with volunteers.
20 So it's very likely that the examples I'm
21 giving are very low on their priority
22 list. However, these examples are
23 actually what other shelters do when they
24 have more funds.

25 Last year Brandywine Shelter

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2 from Chester County came into
3 Philadelphia and had the funds to rent
4 the Armory in Center City and run five
5 days of TV and radio ads to promote their
6 event, and it was these ads, I believe,
7 that led to the hundreds of shelter dogs
8 and cats being adopted from the
9 Brandywine Shelter.

10 The Center City Graduate
11 Hospital market at this point is a very
12 unsaturated market with lots of
13 potential. I believe that was the first
14 adoption event ever held where TV and
15 radio ads were being heavily run. At
16 this moment in time, ACCT could never
17 even dream of holding such an event.

18 Also, in Washington, Baltimore,
19 and New York City, each of their shelters
20 have roaming adoption vans that can
21 target other unsaturated areas and areas
22 with demonstrated low return rates. Both
23 Washington and Baltimore adopt 200 dogs a
24 year from their vans combined. So that's
25 400 dogs a year combined for both

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2 Baltimore and DC, but together have less
3 than the total population of
4 Philadelphia.

5 In contrast, ACCT doesn't have
6 the funds to invest in large-scale
7 off-site adoption events with large-scale
8 promotions or even consider an adoption
9 van, and it shows in the number of dogs
10 adopted from ACCT each year.

11 ACCT adopts most of its dogs to
12 people who live in a ten-minute radius
13 from this facility. The problems of this
14 are twofold. One, after years of
15 adopting to that market, that area is
16 oversaturated and has hit the point of
17 diminished marginal returns.

18 Second, the area where ACCT
19 adopts most of its dogs to simultaneously
20 is also the area with the City's highest
21 return rates, not an optimal situation.

22 This is not the fault of ACCT
23 adoption staff. Many times I'm there
24 late at night after 8 o'clock and I see
25 the adoption staff working well past 8:00

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2 p.m., well past their finish time for the
3 day, to get adoptions done. It's simply
4 a lack of resources to go out and have
5 dogs adopted in fresh markets a
6 significant distance away from
7 headquarters and with low return rates.

8 At present funding levels, ACCT
9 adoptions are best fixed and actually, to
10 be honest, are in a declining phase. In
11 2016, 388 less dogs made it out alive
12 than in 2015, and this year similar --
13 it's a slightly lower amount of dogs for
14 the first three months have made it out
15 compared to last year.

16 Again, I'm not blaming the
17 staff at all for this. Again, it's just
18 simply basically ACCT can only adopt dogs
19 within a ten-minute radius of their
20 building, and that's very tough at the
21 moment.

22 Over the last three years due
23 to the decline in the adoption figures,
24 they put more pressure on the small
25 mom-and-pop rescue organizations to take

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2 an unprecedented amount of dogs. The
3 percent total of dogs that have made live
4 exits over the last three years that
5 small rescue organizations have taken has
6 gone from 49 percent in 2015 to 52
7 percent in 2016 to 56 percent this year.
8 This compares to only 46 percent in New
9 York City and 23 percent in Baltimore.
10 This rate of growth is obviously
11 unsustainable. If there's one group of
12 people who have less money than ACCT,
13 it's the small mom-and-pop rescues that
14 take the most at-risk dogs from ACCT.

15 In the topsy-turvy world of
16 animal welfare, the dogs that need the
17 most resources end up going to the one
18 group that has less resources than ACCT.
19 These small rescues donate all their time
20 for free and have full-time jobs and
21 basically have to raise funds 12 months a
22 year. They are being asked to take more
23 dogs, but ACCT gives them less resources
24 at the same time.

25 Except during the HVAC project,

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2 ACCT hasn't had the resources to spay and
3 neuter the dogs that the rescues take,
4 forcing the rescues to pay for it
5 themselves. If ACCT had a higher level
6 of funding, they would be able to spay
7 and neuter the dogs, all the dogs, that
8 rescues take, and that would save each
9 small rescue \$4,000 to \$5,000 a year, a
10 significant sum, which they could
11 reinvest to care for the dogs they take
12 until they are adopted.

13 In terms of the facility
14 itself, I'd just like to make one
15 comment, and I think another volunteer
16 from ACCT also wrote about this in their
17 testimony. When an owner-surrendered dog
18 comes into ACCT, the shelter is a very,
19 very frightening environment. At the
20 moment, hundreds of these dogs are just
21 too frightened to be handled, and
22 unfortunately ACCT euthanizes them. In
23 New York, they have separate rooms for
24 owner surrenders to de-stress before
25 entering the general population.

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2 Before I take my seat, I would
3 like to offer one criticism of ACCT.
4 When a dog files their evaluation and
5 don't make it into the adoption kennels,
6 due to not having enough promotional
7 staff, ACCT has to pick and choose which
8 dogs to promote to rescue organizations
9 and which ones to select for euthanasia.
10 The volunteers are ready, willing, and
11 able to take on the responsibility of
12 promoting those dogs in the second group
13 by ourselves if ACCT would simply give
14 those dogs a couple of hours to exit when
15 there are kennels open.

16 To be clear, when a dog gets
17 the full promotional treatment from ACCT
18 staff, volunteers, and the 37,000 people
19 who follow the Facebook pages, Philly
20 Urgents and Dawn Timmeney that promotes
21 these dogs, 90 percent of those dogs make
22 it out alive. A volunteer approach would
23 probably yield a save percentage of about
24 a third of that. But a 33 percent chance
25 is a million times more than zero, and

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2 every dog deserves a chance, no matter
3 how small.

4 Thank you for your time.

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
6 for your testimony, and thank you for
7 your patience and waiting around.

8 Clerk, would you please read
9 our next witness for testimony and public
10 comment, please.

11 THE CLERK: Candace Scheirer.

12 (No response.)

13 THE CLERK: Brenda Malinics.

14 (No response.)

15 THE CLERK: Deb Welter.

16 (No response.)

17 THE CLERK: Kathy Calabrese.

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: How about we
20 do it this way: Anybody that wishes to
21 testify, come on up.

22 Come on up. You want to
23 testify? Come on.

24 (Witnesses approached witness
25 table.)

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2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Again, thank
3 you for your patience. While she
4 approaches, I just want to remind
5 everybody that, you know, a commitment
6 from the Administration leading up into
7 the hearings is really taking a look at a
8 lot of the funding, the facilities, and I
9 know that it hasn't been utilized
10 correctly in the past. It's not defunct,
11 even though they haven't met, reinstating
12 and reengaging the animal advisory board.
13 So let us get a chance to bring that back
14 up and develop a structure, with your
15 input. And for those who left and/or
16 couldn't make it, I'm going to be
17 soliciting everybody's input on what
18 structure would be helpful to address
19 some of the needs that we have here
20 today.

21 So if you can state your name
22 for the record and begin with your
23 testimony, and thank you.

24 MS. KAY: My name is Azita Kay.
25 I'm the Founder and President of the Paw

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2 It 4ward Foundation. We are a local
3 rescue that 99 percent of our dogs are
4 actually pulled from ACCT Philly.

5 Originally when you asked on
6 Facebook to have us come out and send you
7 a testimony in regards to our experience
8 with ACCT Philly, I shared a lot of
9 information in regards to some of the
10 things that had happened through our
11 experiences with pulling dogs and some of
12 the issues that we had experienced, but
13 based on today's meeting and seeing the
14 two panels that came in, I sort of wanted
15 to address some of the things that they
16 mentioned to you from another viewpoint.

17 I know you mentioned that your
18 number one thing is to look at the
19 quality and efficiency and resources that
20 ACCT currently has, and it seems as
21 though there was a lot of information put
22 out there today that many of you
23 questioned yourselves in regards to the
24 numbers really not matching the numbers
25 that they're presenting, and I really,

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2 really want you to take a step back and
3 really look at what ACCT is doing right
4 now and whether adding additional funds
5 is really the way to go right now and
6 maybe just really re-looking at the
7 organization and what they're doing right
8 now whether it makes sense.

9 There was a lot of information
10 put out there that in 2012 and 2013, the
11 quality of care of the animals while they
12 were there was horrifying, and it's so
13 much better now, but I provided a year's
14 worth of dogs that we pulled that still
15 came out with pneumonia and cost us
16 thousands of dollars, to less pets are
17 handed out now than they were in 2012 and
18 2013 to just anybody. Every time there
19 is a Clear the Shelter event, dogs are
20 just handed out to anyone, and you can
21 see the volunteers the next day looking
22 on Craigslist and these dogs are up for
23 sale now.

24 I'm not really sure how the
25 things that were presented today make

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2 absolutely any sense, and I really want
3 you to think about this. This is a local
4 shelter that's asking for additional
5 funding, but the partners, the partners
6 are actually sending you testimonies
7 asking you not to support them. How is
8 that even possible? How does that make
9 sense, if the people that are trying to
10 help, the volunteers that are there every
11 day, are actually questioning you
12 actually providing money to this
13 organization?

14 There's definitely a
15 disconnect. Things are not making sense.
16 And I really urge you to really look at
17 things again.

18 You know, the people earlier
19 mentioned the no-kill shelter, but a
20 no-kill shelter also has the power to put
21 a dog or cat down based on their medical
22 needs or their behavior. Who is making
23 that decision right now at ACCT? Who is
24 qualified to make that decision and is
25 that being documented?

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2 There's a lot of things that
3 are going on that yet are not being
4 looked at, and today every person that
5 came up on this panel was more interested
6 in having space for an office instead of
7 talking about adding kennels to help the
8 dogs. If you look at ACCT Philly, their
9 website right now, they're actually
10 looking at having less kennel space
11 because they feel like adopters are being
12 overwhelmed when they come in when
13 there's too many dogs and cats available.
14 How is that being a shelter and saving
15 lives?

16 There's also Hillary, the
17 position on board right now, started last
18 year with taking kennels away from
19 animals and providing one dog taking up
20 two spaces because she felt like that was
21 a more humane way of handling things.
22 Yet dogs are being handed to rescues
23 almost dead. I'm not really sure how,
24 again, this person is qualified to make
25 any decisions.

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2 And I know I'm sort of going on
3 my rant that started with the testimony,
4 but, again, if you're looking at just
5 numbers, how is ACCT functioning and only
6 providing \$182 per animal while others
7 are spending 500 and yet they're saying
8 they're providing the best rates of live
9 exit? Because every night we receive an
10 e-mail that three dogs or cats are going
11 to get put down unless we do something.
12 So I really urge you to look at those
13 live release rates.

14 Are owner surrenders being
15 accounted as numbers of animals that are
16 being killed? If you actually took your
17 dog to ACCT today and said you couldn't
18 take care of them anymore, that dog has
19 absolutely no right. That dog could be
20 put down as they come in. Is that number
21 being accounted? Where are those dogs
22 being accounted for?

23 There's so many things right
24 now that are so much more important than
25 you putting money into adding office

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2 space for people that work there.

3 The quality of the education
4 for those individuals that work there --
5 and, again, there's a lot of people there
6 that are trying to do the right thing,
7 but what is the quality of what the
8 Administration is providing right now at
9 ACCT? And, again, I urge you to really
10 investigate this.

11 And I apologize. I know this
12 meeting is for, you know, funding for
13 additional space, but I almost feel like
14 how can you move forward when there were
15 no answers to the questions that you
16 asked in regards to those numbers.

17 They're literally handing dogs
18 out to people to make those live rates
19 look better than they are. They're
20 inflated. You're asking the same thing
21 we are, where are those numbers coming
22 from, and yet no one is getting an
23 answer. I'm just baffled at how this is
24 being not looked at further.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: So we will

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2 look at it further, and believe me, I
3 appreciate you coming in, and I am -- I'm
4 trying to keep the focus in on a few
5 things, and that's the reason that I'm
6 having the hearing. I understand there
7 are other issues, and I'm giving
8 flexibility because of the inconvenience
9 that you've had for all day, but just a
10 couple things I just want to make a point
11 on.

12 One, if you have a list of
13 questions, you could certainly contact my
14 office, and we'll try to get answers to
15 them as quickly as we possibly can or at
16 least as much as those answers can be
17 provided. So that's one.

18 Two, as far as space and office
19 space, it wasn't about office space. I
20 don't even think office space is a
21 concern. I think it was the space for
22 the animals and the lack of -- my line of
23 questioning and they don't -- their
24 testimony didn't provide, hey, we only
25 have this office space. I know what

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2 office space they have. So my line of
3 questioning was a lack of space that ACCT
4 needs to --

5 MS. KAY: For animals.

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: For animals,
7 not office space, just that space is
8 limited because they're sharing with
9 other departments. So that's the clarity
10 that I wanted to get out publicly.

11 MS. KAY: Good. Thank you.

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: It has
13 nothing to do with office space, because
14 they don't have much of it.

15 MS. KAY: It did sound like
16 office space today.

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Well, I
18 asked them, because they don't have much
19 of it and I asked them that question
20 because they don't have much of it
21 because they share with other
22 departments, and I wanted to have
23 everybody who doesn't go down there --
24 you go --

25 MS. KAY: Thank you for

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2 clarifying.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: You know
4 that. It has nothing to do -- it has to
5 do with the continuity of the flow of
6 animals and how it gets its help, and we
7 don't have the resources to provide what
8 we should at least on an average,
9 national average, and for me I wanted to
10 point that out publicly and I also wanted
11 to make sure that everybody knows that we
12 shouldn't be forced in the position to
13 have happy and sad meet, and that's what
14 you have right now. And I wanted to kind
15 of publicly let people understand that
16 that's not the way ACCT Philly and any
17 shelter should be operating, and we need
18 to correct that. While other departments
19 of the Administration were here, I wanted
20 to point that out publicly. So that's --

21 MS. KAY: Okay. Thank you.
22 But, again, I feel like if you're not the
23 person that we need to reach out in
24 regards to our concerns, who is? Because
25 we're not having a voice out there.

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2 There is hundreds of people that attend
3 the Board meetings and have questions,
4 and they're not being answered. I think
5 at some point you have to realize why is
6 the public even attending a meeting like
7 this. There are things that are going on
8 that are going to boil over. I mean,
9 it's unheard of of volunteers coming out
10 and stating the issues. And you said
11 happy and sad. It's not about happy and
12 sad. It's about quality and efficiency
13 there and ethical decisions being made
14 there. And it's just -- again, I'm going
15 to ask you to not fund any more money to
16 ACCT unless things are changed and done
17 correctly. This is taxpayer money being
18 blown out and not allocated the right
19 way.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: It is
21 taxpayers' money and I'm going to fight
22 for increased funding. I want to make
23 sure that it is being funded efficiently
24 and smart. Whether interpretation happy,
25 sad, me, I just kind of make it simple as

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2 possible, but the fact of the matter is,
3 the two shouldn't be meeting and it is
4 because of funding and the space.

5 I think -- I'm encouraged by
6 the commitment from the Administration to
7 reinstate and reengage. However that
8 shapes up, I don't know. That's not my
9 expertise, and I'm not claiming to be.
10 There are certain things that I can fight
11 for and that we could fight for up here,
12 and that is for responsible and efficient
13 funding as well as the space that allows
14 the efficiency or inefficiency or what --
15 the concerns don't meet. So that's the
16 purpose of us moving forward.

17 MS. KAY: Where can we go
18 within --

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: We're going
20 to figure it out. We have --

21 MS. KAY: Who can help us with
22 our concerns?

23 COUNCILMAN HENON: I'm going to
24 try to do that. I don't have an answer
25 for you. I don't have an answer for you

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2 here.

3 MS. KAY: No. I don't want you
4 to think --

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: But I know
6 there's a commitment to move forward with
7 trying to get answers and trying to get a
8 more effective way that voices can be
9 heard and more structured opportunity for
10 public comment, and I think the elevation
11 of this hearing is necessary.

12 MS. KAY: Absolutely.

13 COUNCILMAN HENON: And after
14 this young lady's testimony, I am going
15 to keep this resolution in Committee for
16 the call of the Chair so we reserve the
17 right to come back and revisit it.

18 MS. KAY: And my last point --
19 and I'm sorry for being the troublemaker
20 today.

21 COUNCILMAN HENON: We're going
22 to lose the Councilman here and it will
23 be just me and you.

24 MS. KAY: No, no, no. The only
25 thing I'm saying is that unfortunately

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2 it's no more at being heard. Everyone is
3 at the point where they want to see
4 action.

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: I hear you.

6 MS. KAY: We've been heard
7 enough. It's the action part that we
8 need.

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: I don't
10 grandstand. That's not my style. I'm
11 hoping that --

12 MS. KAY: Thank you for putting
13 this together. And I'm going to be
14 quiet.

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: Please state
16 your name for the record and you can
17 proceed.

18 MS. MAGGIOLINI: Yes. Lisa Ann
19 Maggiolini. I'm with Ariel's Angels Pet
20 Food Pantry and Rescue. I rescue less.
21 I'm a small rescue, but I'm a large
22 organization in the City of Philadelphia.
23 I'm a large organization in the City of
24 Philadelphia because I try to keep the
25 animals from going to the shelter.

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2 That's my mission. My mission
3 has been to -- I used to pull from Animal
4 Control, but it became a political issue.
5 Like when the staff changes, you have to
6 resubmit stuff. It's the same paperwork.
7 If you have a personal issue with
8 someone, then you get banned and you can
9 no longer pull, but you're still trying
10 to rescue.

11 We do get stuck with all of the
12 medical bills. They do have the City
13 funding. They shouldn't release dogs and
14 cats out that are not spayed and
15 neutered. That's part of the problem.
16 We end up re-picking up those same dogs
17 that come from ACCT from the Clear the
18 Shelter events. Education and advocacy
19 is the most important thing and actually
20 getting out in the community.

21 I'm a resource for Alley Cat
22 Allies. If you Google nokill.org,
23 Philadelphia, I'm one of the first that
24 pop up. I've been on Fox and Friends
25 National News, ABC Shelter Me. I'm the

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2 only cage-free no-kill rescue in the
3 tri-state area. And I have no space at
4 all and I have no funding, but yet I pull
5 medical cases. And when they don't allow
6 me to pull, other rescues pull for me.
7 This cat was going to get put to sleep on
8 Saturday and came to me last night from
9 another rescue from New Jersey that
10 pulled. This is a 13-year-old
11 owner-surrendered cat that was in there
12 for 20 days, and I have it and now I have
13 the medical responsibility to care for
14 this cat. The cat sat in there for 20
15 days with no medical care and
16 decompensating. I mean, that's not
17 necessary.

18 I just got more things from a
19 parvo puppy they're going to put to sleep
20 with two hours notice if no one steps up.
21 Everything that you get is urgent,
22 urgent, urgent from them. But they have
23 funding and they have space, and the
24 other larger organizations that you were
25 speaking to today, PAWS, they have space.

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2 She said they have three facilities, and
3 they pull, but they don't take owner
4 surrenders. They refer owner surrenders
5 to me and other rescues and
6 organizations. We take owner surrenders.
7 I mean, I don't get any funding. And
8 ACCT will also charge people, and they
9 don't tell them, when you surrender your
10 animal, that animal may walk right back
11 to the euthanasia room. Because I worked
12 at ACCT when it was PACCA. I've been in
13 animal welfare in Philadelphia for 30
14 years. I've also worked in other cities
15 in animal welfare, and there's other
16 things that you can do, licensing, stop
17 the backyard breeding, which starts by
18 not letting animals out that aren't
19 spayed and neutered, having more spay and
20 neuter facilities that don't charge.
21 Somehow I'm unable to use the Best
22 Friends grant that's for the City of
23 Philadelphia, although I pick up cats all
24 around the City, because I'm a rescue.
25 I'm not a rescue. I don't get any money.

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2 I don't get any funding. I'm on
3 disability. I get private donations and
4 that's it.

5 I also work with the PSPCA.

6 I'm a rescue partner. I do cruelty
7 stuff. I worked with George Bengal. I
8 work with the Police Department, because
9 they don't want to take animals to ACCT,
10 because there is no accountability. If
11 you take an animal to ACCT and then you
12 ask where it went, no idea. They can't
13 even tell you if a rescue pulled it, if
14 they put it down. There's no
15 accountability at all.

16 So that's what needs to be
17 done, accountability. And they do have
18 space and funding. We don't. Small
19 rescues don't. We have no funding and
20 we're taking medical cases in.

21 COUNCILMAN HENON: Well, thank
22 you.

23 MS. MAGGIOLINI: Thank you.

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
25 for your time.

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2 (Applause.)

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: Is there
4 anyone else here who wishes to testify
5 public comment?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: Well, again,
8 thank you for your time. Thank you for
9 sticking in there today. I appreciate
10 your understanding that, and I am going
11 to -- we as a joint Committee will be
12 holding this resolution in the joint
13 Committee to the call of the Chair, which
14 means we reserve the right to bring it
15 back up if we don't see that we're headed
16 in the right direction.

17 So this will conclude our joint
18 Committee on Public Property and
19 Appropriations Committee at the call of
20 the Chair.

21 So thank you so much.

22 (Committees on Public Property
23 and Public Works and Appropriations
24 concluded at 5:00 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the
proceedings, evidence and objections are
contained fully and accurately in the
stenographic notes taken by me upon the
foregoing matter, and that this is a true and
correct transcript of same.

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