

From: Christina Flores
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 8:50 AM
To: Bryan Pankhurst
Cc: Daisy Ruiz; Karen Phillips
Subject: FW: Dec 9th Meeting Agenda Item 10a

Good morning,

Can you please add this as additional information to the future Council agenda item?

Thank you,

Christina Flores

Executive Assistant

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From: cburley@cfl.rr.com <cburley@cfl.rr.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 26, 2020 8:31 PM
To: Daisy Ruiz <DRuiz@cityofpsl.com>; Greg Oravec <Mayor@cityofpsl.com>
Cc: Shannon Martin <Shannon.Martin@cityofpsl.com>; Christina Flores <CFlores@cityofpsl.com>;
Stephanie Morgan <Stephanie.Morgan@cityofpsl.com>; David Pickett <David.Pickett@cityofpsl.com>;
Jolien Caraballo <Jolien.Caraballo@cityofpsl.com>
Subject: Dec 9th Meeting Agenda Item 10a

Greetings Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council,

I am contacting you to say thank you for your consideration of a Pet Sale Ordinance that includes rabbits.

While I am not a resident of your jurisdiction and it is not your obligation to hear my perspective, I want you to know that your decision on this matter has a huge impact.....for animal welfare, for shelters, for consumers, and for the voracious financial black hole of animal rescue.

My attention to the dirty secret of the Pet Trade came when I decided to find a companion for the Humane Society rabbit I had adopted a year prior. This turned out to be an involved process. Rabbits are territorial and, like humans,....do not want an arranged marriage. Getting no help from my local shelter, I had to reach out to the rabbit rescue community. I actually drove 3.5 hrs to Gainesville only to come home husbun-less because my girl didn't like any of the candidates. I was connected with The Humane Society of the Treasure Coast (they are bunny savvy!). I drove 1.5 hrs south with my

girl to try bunny dating again. This time my girl found a handsome buck she seemed to like and I took him home.

It was TWO MONTHS of territorial poop wars and occasional domestic violence before I got them bonded in a peaceful relationship. This was just the beginning of my education. One more rabbit that I adopted from the Keys (that has to be kept separated from the other two) completes what my household (and my sanity) can accommodate.

It was my awareness of how difficult it is to develop a relationship with these animals that have been traumatized by child mauling, confinement in inappropriate housing, and often not fed or watered adequately, that made me realize why these animals are so easily discarded by people who shouldn't even have access to them. I came to know the extreme burden placed on rescues and the heroic efforts made to assist Animal Services that have been overwhelmed with hoarding cases in various areas of the State. There was a time when The Humane Society of the Treasure Coast needed assistance with an entire back room filled with rabbits in cages.

What you will do, if you pass an ordinance that prohibits the sale of rabbits at pet stores, is help slow down the over breeding (in inhumane conditions) of rabbits that are then weaned too early, sent to a warehouse (where they are boxed and loaded into a tractor trailer) and shipped (in extreme heat, with no food/water) from GEORGIA, to all parts of Florida.....where they are sold by people (kids and high turnover employees) who cannot properly sex the baby rabbit, to people who don't want a rabbit anymore after two weeks to two months. Some unwary consumers get TWO (same sex!~NOT!) rabbits and end up with 50! (happened in my area). You will be freeing rescues to focus on assisting animal services and shelters instead of rabbit wrangling in parks and neighborhoods (trying to catch the ones 'set free') and fielding phone calls from people desperate to dump their bunny on someone else (anyone else).

I will close by saying that if you want or need documentation to support a unanimous yes for this ordinance, I will be happy to provide it. I successfully supported a request for one in my area (Indian Harbour Beach).

***There have been NO ill effects for our Pet Supermarket and there was no protest. Life is probably much easier for the employees who no longer have to freeze the ones that don't survive shipping to send back for credit.

Rescues adopt out SPAYED and NEUTERED rabbits to people who are READY for a PET rabbit (not a back yard farm animal), with the understanding that the rescue will take the rabbit back if there is an allergy issue, loss of income or housing.

Thank you again for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Gwen Burley