

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Serious problems persist at Indianapolis' animal shelter**

Indianapolis, Ind., October 1, 2008 – Three weeks after two independent investigators substantiated claims of mistreatment of animals and violation of laws at Indianapolis Animal Care & Control, and the subsequent resignation of IACC Administrator Steve Talley, more disturbing reports of suffering and death within the facility are surfacing.

The group of concerned citizens that filed the grievance leading to the independent investigation submitted their own recommendations for reform to the IACC Advisory Board and the Director of Public Safety. Top on the list of recommendations are calls for consideration of disciplinary and/or legal action against individuals whose mistreatment of animals at the city's shelter was found to have violated Indianapolis law.

The recommendations even suggest that the shelter be temporarily closed until necessary changes can be put in place to ensure that laws will not continue to be violated. Even last week came a disturbing report of a dog tranquilized by an animal control officer left in a kennel unconscious, bleeding and eventually dying. In the same kennel, dog(s) infected with the very dangerous and contagious parvovirus were housed with the general population of kennel dogs, violating quarantine policies and jeopardizing the lives of the nearby animals.

“IACC has ample policies in place to prevent such occurrences and they are apparently ignored with disastrous, and all too often fatal results,” commented Greg Brush, the group's spokesman. A review of the shelter's policies showed that there are at least 4 separate policies that outline the process of tranquilizing an animal. The policies recognize the seriousness of the process, and recommend that animals which are not recovering well from the process should be transferred to a veterinary hospital.

Maureen Owen, veterinary technician and president of the Feral Bureau of Indiana and signatory to the group's grievance further added, “Tranquilizing is similar in consequences to general anesthesia. It's very serious, and in veterinary practices, anesthetized animals must be warmed to maintain their body temperature and their heart and respiration should be monitored constantly. To lay a tranquilized dog in a cold kennel and then walk away and hope it will survive is reckless.”

Although the shelter has suspended an officer for incorrectly reporting the situation to a kennel staffer working in the kennel, rather than to a supervisor, there has thus far been no disciplinary action taken against the officer who tranquilized the dog, supervisors or kennel manager who were also apparently involved. “Despite Director Newman's assurance that there would be no retaliation for so-called whistleblowers, the suspension of the reporting officer rather than those who actually placed the dog's life in jeopardy seems to have all the outward signs of retribution for speaking up about this incident,” offered Brush.

The IACC Advisory Board is expected to present and vote on their own recommendations for reforming IACC at the next IACC board meeting on October 8<sup>th</sup> at the IACC shelter, 2600 S. Harding Street at 6pm. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

Full copies of the groups recommendations and the grievance are available at [www.indynokill.org](http://www.indynokill.org)

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