



[Houston PetSet](#) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to ending the homelessness and suffering of companion animals and elevating their status in society. Houston PetSet works to achieve its mission by focusing its efforts in six key impact areas including spay & neuter, transport & rescue, community service & education, cruelty prevention, research, and advocacy. In addition, Houston PetSet provides annual grants to animal welfare-related organizations in the Greater Houston area. By providing critical funds and collaborating with strategic partners, Houston PetSet seeks to end the crisis of animal homelessness in our community.

On behalf of Houston PetSet, our partners, and those in the animal welfare community, we thank you in advance for taking the time to provide your responses to this questionnaire. It is important to note that Houston PetSet will **NOT** be endorsing any candidate in any municipal race and will be using this completed document as a resource for groups and individuals that are interested in learning more about your candidacy. Your responses will be posted to our website and will be accessible for all.

The current animal homelessness population presents a public health and public safety issue that affects the quality of life of many Houstonians. The Houston PetSet questionnaire includes questions covering general animal welfare, city services, and partnerships. **We ask that you complete this questionnaire (by filling in your answers via Microsoft Word) and return it to [marketing@houstonpetset.org](mailto:marketing@houstonpetset.org) no later than July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019.**

Sincerely,

**Tena Lundquist Faust**  
**Co-President**

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**Co-President**

## Animal Welfare

1. To what extent have you been involved with any animal welfare issues, including rescue, spay & neuter, foster, transport programming, legislation, and anti-cruelty?

Answer:

Although I have been aware of Houston's homeless animal crisis, I have not been active in animal welfare other than adopting rescue animals. I am just beginning to take real action on this important issue as I mount a serious campaign for city council. Two active Houston animal rescuers — both longtime BARC volunteers — volunteer in my campaign. My website includes a lengthy Issues article about the stray animal crisis. If elected, I will be a strong advocate for animals and do everything I can to raise awareness and funds to support BARC and the Pet Set master plan.

2. Do you have a plan to address underserved areas that need low cost spay & neuter programming and other veterinary services?

Answer:

I understand Pet Set has already received one Maddie's Fund grant to open a low-cost spay/neuter vet clinic in one underserved area as part of its master plan. A larger BARC budget (No. 8) should also include funds to increase free s/n at BARC and support the master plan as well as rescue groups and events, such as Houston Big Fix, to increase free and low cost s/n and vet services in underserved communities.

3. Do you have, or have you ever had in the past, a companion animal? If so, was it a rescue animal?

Answer 3

Over the years, I have had many pets and companion animals.

At the moment, I am blessed with a sweet rescue chocolate lab named Drew Lynn Kennedy. I also recently adopted a feral cat who stays in my back yard. Shelby Kennedy has been fixed and vaccinated and shares the back yard with 5 free range hens, known as Susie and the Ladies, and a free range rabbit, Buddy.

### Quality of Life/Public Safety/Public Health

4. What impact, and how will reducing the stray animal population improve the quality of life of all Houstonians, if any?

Answer:

Your website notes important studies showing that stray animals are more of a concern in some neighborhoods than safety. Reducing the homeless animal population will therefore have a serious impact on the quality of life in those areas and in many other parts of Houston where some of the city's most dedicated volunteers spend time and money to rescue animals. As I mention later, stray dogs are more of a problem in poorer areas, but stray cats are a problem in most neighborhoods. So reducing stray cats even more will indeed impact many Houstonians.

5. How do you plan to work with communities that have historically reported high rates of stray animals? Please describe below.

I will work to increase funding for and awareness of all rescue efforts to pick up, s/n and rehome dogs.

Although I don't think District C includes communities with high rates of stray dogs, stray cats are a major problem everywhere. City efforts to s/n and TNR stray cats should be greatly expanded as should funding for such programs as the Big Fix.

As I suggest in my website's "Stray Animals" article ([shelleykennedy.org](http://shelleykennedy.org)) many people don't know about humane animal traps. I will encourage pet supply stores to display (with low-cost s/n locations) and advertise traps.

6. How do you plan to address animal homelessness and the stray population citywide?

Answer:

I will wholeheartedly support and advocate for the Pet Set master plan. The city and the BARC Foundation must do everything possible to increase funding for city efforts to implement the master plan. I also hope to work with private shelters to revive the possibility of a real coalition, such as the New York coalition that obtained \$20 million in grants from Maddie's Fund for a 10-year plan to move toward "no kill". I'd love to be part of a Houston team to convince Maddie's Fund to give Houston its share of much-needed funds.

### **City of Houston Services**

7. Do you have a strategy to address overcrowding in the city animal shelter? If so, please describe below.

Yes

Additional Comment:

Increasing transport to out-of-state shelters will certainly help. BARC does make good use of free social media and TV publicity for animals on the "list" and to announce when the shelter is full. I understand BARC has two new vets starting in July and hiring even more vets would help BARC transfer animals faster to RPM and other rescues. BARC has land to expand kennel space (back parking lot). If necessary, BARC could expand by at least one kennel (about 45 dogs) and add on to the cat building.

8. Should BARC (City of Houston animal shelter) receive additional funding based on budget comparisons to national standards and peer cities? If so, how much and how would you increase the department's overall budget?

Yes

Additional Comment:

I would lobby other council members to increase the BARC budget as much as possible as a top budget priority. The size of the increase depends on the next budget and BARC's prioritized budget requests. Mayor Parker dramatically increased BARC's substandard budget by about 30%. Houston, however, continues to play catch-up with other major Texas cities. BARC needs more funding for: animal control officers and trucks, additional vets and supplies, more kennel techs and support staff to staff expanded hours of operation.

9. Will you commit to expanding intake hours for animal surrenders at the city shelter?

Yes.

Additional Comment:

A larger BARC budget should fund more staff to expand hours for intake as well as adoptions and other services. As I understand it, BARC is often the last resort for pet owners bent on leaving/dumping an animal at a no-fee shelter. If they can't drop off during posted hours, they will likely dump the animal somewhere — dog park, side of the road or the infamous Corridor of Cruelty.

10. Will you commit to funding additional Animal Control Officers to respond to 311 and BARC calls?

Yes

Additional Comment:

The number of AOCs and trucks should be increased to an adequate level and increase as the population grows. This would improve response and give officers more time to try to return the animal to its owner if feasible.

11. What is your plan to address animal abuse, including dog fighting (and cock fighting) in the City of Houston and how would you involve the community to assist in this effort?

Answer:

I and my staff will coordinate with Pet Set and the county Animal Cruelty Taskforce, as well as HPD, to publicize and educate through social media, PSAs, my and fellow council members' regular email newsletters and public appearances. The Animal abuse hotline, 832-927-PAWS, needs to be as well known as 911 and 311.

12. There are a number of duplicative services (ex. animal control services, investigative/enforcement, wellness services, etc.) that are offered between the City and County. Do you believe in the existing model, based on geography OR would you explore other options? If you would explore other options, what specific options do you have in mind?

Because Houston is spread out and shelters anchor different sectors, the geographic model theoretically works better for adoptions, turn-ins and wellness services. There is considerable possibility of overlap in animal cruelty investigations because the larger private shelters have their own officers. Hopefully, the county Animal Cruelty Taskforce will improve coordination.

We need to study countywide, public-private efficiencies, and I commit to helping set up meetings. Merging city and county operations, however, has proven difficult because of different personnel practices.

## Partnerships

13. Would you support a partnership with local animal welfare organizations to address the growing issues relating to animal welfare? What specifically would you propose?

Yes

Additional Comment:

As I wrote in the first question, I will wholeheartedly support and advocate for the Pet Set master plan. I also hope to work with the county and private shelters to revive the possibility of a real coalition, such as the New York coalition that obtained about \$20 million in grants from Maddie's Fund for moving toward "no kill". I'd love to be part of a Houston team to convince Maddie's Fund to give Houston its share of much-needed funds. As I responded in #12, I will commit to organizing countywide, public-private partner meetings to discuss efficiencies in animal services.

14. Are you familiar with the six key impact areas of Houston PetSet? How would your administration support Houston PetSet's impact areas?

Yes

Additional Comment:

Impact areas: spay and neuter, transport and rescue, community service and education, cruelty prevention, research and advocacy.

Most of these can be addressed with more city and community funding and publicity. I and my staff will be strong advocates for city and Pet Set efforts through my city and Facebook pages as well as other social media, my newsletter, press releases, public appearances and announcements of new programs to address these issues.

## City of Houston Ordinance/Advocacy

15. Would you support a local ordinance that prohibits apartments or homeowners' associations from banning specific dog breeds?

YES

Additional Comment:

The problem is the irresponsible owner, not the poor dog who is trained or allowed to become a problem. About 20 states have now banned discrimination against pit bulls, often the target — along with Dobermans and Rottweilers — of discriminatory practices, even in insurance. I have a friend who applied for homeowner's insurance through Costco. The application asked if she had a pit bull. She immediately complained to Costco. Such practices are ridiculous and based on nothing but ignorance and prejudice.

16. Will you support the creation of a local ordinance that better defines and creates a higher standard of shelter for animals.

YES.

Additional Comment:

With the failure of HB 295, cities must incorporate the bill's provisions into local ordinances. Fortunately, Houston's ordinance already includes most of these provisions, including the prohibition against short or dangerous tethers and keeping dogs out in subfreezing or bad weather. We could add the specific description of adequate outdoor shelter and keeping the dog out of sunlight and standing water. Our ordinance already requires water, grooming and health care. We certainly need more public awareness and stronger enforcement. I would be open to suggestions for improvement from animal welfare organizations.

17. Will you support a local ordinance that bans the sale of dogs from breeders and puppy mills in retail locations within the City of Houston?

Yes

Additional Comment:

Houston's ordinance could be amended to prevent all retail stores from selling dogs and cats. Fortunately, Petco and PetSmart do not sell cats and dogs. I also know Wabash sells puppies and kittens supposedly from individuals, not breeders or puppy mills.

Our ordinance needs to be better enforced, especially at Traders Village and similar places that sometimes sell unhealthy and unvaccinated animals. Our ordinance already bans selling or giving away a live animal on a public right-of-way, in a commercial parking lot, or at outdoor special sales or parking lot sales.

18. Would you support mandatory microchipping for dogs and cats in the City of Houston?

Yes

Additional Comment:

New funds would be needed for enforcement and for educating the public. I imagine one could even go door-to-door and provide this service.

In future, please contact Houston PetSet if you would like information or educational materials relating to the subjects above.

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