



Closure of the Berger Blanc in sight

For immediate release

Montreal, October 19, 2012 - The Society for the Protection of Animals (SPA) Canada is happy to announce a great victory for their fight against the Berger Blanc. The city of Montreal has announced on October 18th 2012, that they will create a new municipal animal control facility that is to serve the entire island. This decision was made in reaction to Radio Canada's report that came out on April 11th, 2011 concerning the questionable practices of the Berger Blanc and the unfortunate fate reserved for the animals brought to them, as was discovered by an undercover agent of SPA Canada. The SPA is glad that the city has finally listened to the population's concerns about the issues with for-profit pounds and done something concrete. The plan for a new facility signifies that the closure of the Berger Blanc is imminent as no new contracts will be made and none will be renewed.

Unfortunately, all existing contracts with the Berger Blanc will be honoured until the end of their mandate. This means that the Berger Blanc will remain in business for longer than would be ideal. In addition, the city's plan is to award the actual management of the facility to an external non-profit organization, not by the city itself. The SPA Canada had made it very clear in their requests that this not be the case and as campaign director for SPA, Gabriel Villeneuve, points out, "The city should be the one taking responsibility for the management of animal control facilities to ensure that municipal laws concerning animal welfare are being respected".

Additionally, the city plans on changing municipal laws in an attempt to address the pet overpopulation problem by issuing permits to pet owners and limiting the number of animals allowed, yet there is no mention of mandatory sterilization. Sterilization is the most efficient and humane solution to pet overpopulation and thus the only way to put an end to the thousands of animals euthanized yearly. As a more tangible solution, Gabriel Villeneuve suggests that the city offer a low-cost sterilization clinic as well as ban the sale of animals, be it in pet shops or otherwise, in order to make adoption from a shelter the only option. Overall, these announcements represent an enormous triumph for the SPA Canada, but there is still room for improvement on the part of the city.

SPA Canada will be happy to grant media interviews.

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