



Canton Police Department
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Mnemonic CTPZ/ ORI TX2340100
Chief of Police Brad Allison

6/7/2023

Lex Talamo
Via email to Lex@LadyFreeThinker.Org

Dear Lex,

Thank you for your recent emails regarding animal welfare conditions in the Dog Alley of the City of Canton. I appreciate the opportunity to provide some background information, address your concerns, and note changes that we will be making going forward based upon your investigation.

The flea market in the city of Canton, known as First Monday Trade Days, has been occurring since the 1850's. The day-to-day population of Canton is around 4,200 people. During First Monday weekend, the number of daily visitors to our town will swell to more than 80,000 people. First Monday vendors number more than 5,000 people, selling all manner of wares. This monthly influx provides unique challenges to our town, affecting all city services.

The flea market area commonly known as "Dog Alley" exists on Tyler St., primarily within the city limits of Canton. In addition to sales of animals, merchandise is sold on the property. The properties are privately owned, open to the public, and not associated with the City of Canton, other than lying within our jurisdiction.

The City of Canton operates the only governmental animal shelter in Van Zandt County, staffed by two full-time animal control officers (ACOs). Our animal control officers patrol the Dog Alley area for compliance with Texas law and city ordinances. Additionally, SPCA of Texas inspects the Dog Alley property monthly.

In review of your investigation, I am obviously concerned and appalled by what your investigator documented. As such, I have instructed our animal control officers to remain present in the Dog Alley area for the duration of First Monday weekend, and to take enforcement actions on any violations within their purview. To accomplish this goal, I have authorized any overtime needed. I also will reach out to SPCA of Texas to coordinate our efforts and investigations.

I will specifically instruct our ACOs to check in on each vendor noted in your report with apparent violations, perform their own investigations, and take any enforcement actions warranted. Your report has also been shared with the property owners to apprise them of the situation and take any remedial action they deem necessary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brad Allison'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Brad Allison
Chief of Police
BAllison@CantonTX.Gov