

# The Dallas Morning News

## Editorial: It's time for Dallas Animal Services Chief Jody Jones to go

May 16, 2016

The job of effectively leading Dallas Animal Services is more than Jody Jones can handle.

She has consistently shortchanged taxpayers, especially those suffering due to the loose dog chaos in southern Dallas. Most recently, after [dogs mauled a South Dallas woman to death](#), this newspaper talked to dozens of other residents [who lived to tell of their own chilling encounters](#) with loose and stray animals.

Among the reasons Jones must go:

1.

She has stubbornly maintained faith in community outreach as the solution to the loose dog problem. Only under intense pressure did she sign on to a strategy late last year that [modestly increased enforcement](#). Even last month's expansion of that plan emphasized educational efforts far more than a commitment to [pick up dogs and ticket irresponsible owners](#).

2.

Since the deadly May 2 attack, communication from Jones and Dallas Animal Services has been heartless and wrongheaded.

In an interview Thursday, Jones indicated that, despite Antoinette Brown's death in South Dallas, she believes her strategy for loose dogs is on the right path and no changes are necessary.

"I hate to say it, but people die in traffic fatalities every day, Jones said. "I wish we could be everywhere to everyone, but that just isn't reality."

City Manager A.C. Gonzalez [walked that statement back the next day](#) and announced that Deputy Police Chief Rob Sherwin will now help lead the troubled animal operation.

So how did Dallas Animal Services respond? With a chirpy email blast and social media message that read: *"Exciting news!!! The City Manager, DPD and PAS partner together on a new venture to strengthen services and communication."*



DallasAnimalServices @DallasShelter

Exciting news!!! The City Manager, DPD and DAS partner together on a new venture to strengthen services and... [fb.me/DiiydyHA](https://fb.me/DiiydyHA)

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No, it's not exciting news. It's news that Dallas Animal Services can't do its job.

3.

Jones and her department rely too much on deflection and excuse-making.

[As we wrote in December](#), City Hall tends to defer to Jones as the shelter and field expert, and her views rule. In turn, Jones invariably responds to questions and criticisms about her strategy with "hey, I'm nowhere near the top of this chain of command."

4.

Jones has [focused on the shelter's live release rate](#) — that is, the number of dogs that make it out alive — to the exclusion of common sense.

We appreciate that the city hired Jones in 2011 with the goal of significantly reducing euthanasia rates. However, the angst — fed by Jones and some of her supporters — over what picking up loose dogs may do to the live release rate drowns out these two messages:

- Most important is the safety and quality of life for southern Dallas residents. Additionally, many street dogs are dying slowly of malnutrition, disease and injury. Euthanasia is a far more humane end.
- Looking *only* at live release rates doesn't tell the entire story. Say, for example, the shelter takes in 2,000 more dogs in a month, but only an additional 300 get out alive versus a year prior. Yes, the live release rate, as expressed by a percentage, goes down. But 300 more dogs were saved. There's success in that equation.

5.

At day's end, Jody Jones is the leader whose responsibility is getting animal services right. She's gotten the loose dog issue wrong.

### **More on Dallas' loose dog problem**



[Timeline: How the South Dallas dog mauling exposed 'gaps' at City Hall](#)  
[City manager vows to fix flaws in animal control](#)

[Dogs bit Dallas woman more than 100 times, like they were 'eating a steak'](#)

[Woman mauled by pack of dogs in southern Dallas has died](#)

[Owners of dogs could face criminal charges, police chief says](#)

[Editorial: City Hall, what's your response to woman's death?](#)

[Floyd: How can a city be 'world class' if it has a third-world dog problem?](#)

['Sweet' rescue dog never made it to foster home](#)

[How this pit bull's slashed throat explains faulty Dallas animal plan](#)

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