



December 18, 2024

The Honorable Cindy Grove, Mayor of Valley  
Members of the City of Valley City Council

Dear Mayor Grove and Council Members:

I hope this message finds you well. I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our more than 22,000 members and supporters in Nebraska to respectfully urge you **to retire K-9 Sonic and return him to his former handler James Deemer.**

According to the official city Facebook account, Sonic is recovering from spending the last *four months* confined to a kennel facility, and "once he's back to full strength, [the city] will [start the application process](#) internally and externally." A news report [indicates](#) that Sonic could be sold to another law-enforcement agency if he doesn't remain with the Valley Police Department. Because Sonic was left to suffer potentially irreversible mental and physical deterioration in a kennel, he may never be back at "full strength."

When continuously confined to a kennel environment, dogs experience acute and chronic stress that can cause permanent [neurobiological changes](#). It appears that no city employees bothered even to visit Sonic during this time of intensive confinement, and it seems likely that his former handlers were not permitted to see him. Sonic was trapped in a kennel, isolated from everything and everyone he knew, without any semblance of adequate mental or physical stimulation. We understand that during this time, his caretaker repeatedly flagged for city officials that Sonic was "going nuts."

We are certain that despite the mayor's recent [statement](#), you *don't* actually regard Sonic as you would an old lawnmower or a line item on a budget but as a sentient individual who has suffered for months because of inexcusable bureaucratic callousness and neglect. Respectfully, the right thing would be to retire Sonic and return him to his original handler, who appears to have provided the dog with a stable and loving home and who, we understand, has offered to purchase the dog. Sonic has suffered enough and should not be used as a pawn in a personnel dispute.

**Please, do the right thing.** Thank you for your consideration. I can be reached at [AllisonF@peta.org](mailto:AllisonF@peta.org). I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Most respectfully,

Allison Fandl  
Manager of Special Projects  
Cruelty Investigations Department | PETA

cc: Bobby Martinez, Chief of Police, Valley Police Department

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