

Cheri Simmons

Richmond BC

February 26 2010

Thank you Mayor Brodie and Richmond City Council for the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Cheri Simmons, I am the former Store Manager for PJs Pets, and I am writing this letter in response to your recent decisions made regarding the proposed puppy sales bylaw.

You must be aware of the fact that your decisions here today will have far reaching effects of which we will not be fully aware of until it may be too late. By banning the sale of rabbits and puppies or other animals from pet stores you take away accountability, responsibility and the good morals needed to find animals homes. Please, look at the pages of any newspaper in the pet section; you will see hundreds of ads for puppies and other animals looking to be sold. Who is regulating these nameless and faceless people? No one is..... and without pet stores this will go from an alternative place to purchase to the main place to purchase. It worries me what will happen then to all these animals. Right now you have an opportunity to put in place guidelines which will work for everyone. The outright ban of an animal is not a solution, it is only a stop gap. Solutions to this issue have already been put forward to Richmond Animal Protection Society (RAPS), solutions which they have refused to be part of.

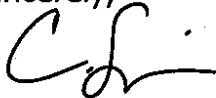
From 1998 to 2008 I was a Store Manager for PJs Pets, of which the last 5 years were spent in Richmond. In the beginning of 2007 when RAPS took over the contract for the municipal shelter. Carol Reichert, (the executive director, manager, and founder of RAPS), and I established a relationship with the RAPS animal shelter and PJs Pets. In addition to providing RAPS with thousands of dollars worth of donated pet foods and guaranteeing RAPS a fixed discount of our suppliers book cost, I also told Carol that I would donate kennel or cage space for what ever pet she wanted to bring to the store which needed to be adopted. PJs Pets would also donate all the costs associated for the animal in our care for however long it would take to find a home which they would have full authority of who adopted. After many weeks of trying to arrange this with Carol, who kept assuring me she was all for this, Carol finally told me that the majority of Directors for RAPS had voted against having animals for adoption at PJs Pets. This made no sense then and still does not. How can they claim to be so

concerned with finding homes for pets and turn down an environment guaranteed to find homes? As another solution I then told her if they could not leave animals here, then what about a table set up on the weekend which they could man and show the public what animals were available for adoption. Again they would not accept.

I urge our city council to look for other more reasonable solutions which make sense to our city's problem. Arbitrary bans made by a select few are not the answer. Pet Stores are not the sole problem as shelters such as RAPS would have you believe. The staff who work in pet stores are just as dedicated to animals as the staff at shelters are. As you can tell by the above mentioned, pet stores are willing to be part of the solution, will RAPS step up and work with pet stores?

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you wish to discuss any of the above. Thank you very much, and I appreciate the time you spent to read this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheri Simmons', written in a cursive style.

Cheri Simmons
Former Store Manager PJs Pets Richmond BC