

Council Pleads with Pepper to Reverse Resignation

Updated: Tuesday, 16 Aug 2011, 4:10 PM CDT

Published : Tuesday, 16 Aug 2011, 4:10 PM CDT



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Memphis, Tn - Matthew Pepper took over operations of the Memphis Animal Shelter in March of 2010, a year after the Shelby County Sheriff's office raided the facility.

After the raid, cameras were put in the animal shelter giving folks all around the country access inside, and what they saw upset a lot of people.

A picture of puppies being transported in a trash can was made public and in March of this year, there was a distemper outbreak that led to around 60 animals being put down.

In June, a pit bull was picked up by a former shelter employee, but was never entered into the system. The missing dog, Kapone, has still not been found.

Several members of the Memphis City Council feel Pepper has done a great job with the Animal Shelter, especially considering the situation he stepped into.

At Tuesday's Council meeting, members of the Council asked pepper to reconsider his resignation.

However, with reports of threats and harassing phone calls coming into the shelter, and directly to Pepper's home, he says his resignation is final...

Councilwoman Janis Fullilove pleaded with Pepper to reverse his decision, "I have been threatened, dead animals have been thrown on my porch, people have called to string me up and hang me. I mean, I know the pressure you under. My grandmother has always told me don't give up unless you give out, and I know you are a strong person and I know you don't want to do this and I wish you would reconsider."

"It's nice to see the acknowledgments of your efforts because now one comes into a shelter conditions like the one in Memphis and say, I wonder how bad I can do. We have made significant progress. We have placed more animals than we have ever placed. We are euthanizing animals at a rate we have not seen before. There are a lot of positive things happening at the shelter and it is nice to see those efforts acknowledged by the city council," replied Pepper.

But, he says he'll be leaving the first week of September.

He says in the interim Chelton Beamon, the shelter's Operations Manager, will take over.