

QUESTIONS FOR MLA CANDIDATES

The NWT is in second last place regarding Animal Protection Laws. Animal abuse and neglect continues throughout the Territory with few charges and even less convictions. How will you promote and work toward better animal rights in the Territory?

This is a shameful standing. I attended the public meetings the last time the act was being updated to voice my level of disappointment in the government's current animal welfare laws. I even stood up to an MLA and called him out in front of all, so I'm definitely not afraid to fight for better animal welfare laws.

The problem is, this act was just reviewed not so long ago, so bringing it forward for yet another revision is going to be challenging to sell, but I will certainly do everything humanly possible to reopen the issue. The reality is, there is a strong possibility it will not be a priority for the next government. There are acts that haven't been reviewed in 30 years which will most likely be a priority for this government.

You know my passion for animals (95%+ vegetarian diet), raised \$40,000 for NWT SPCA, weekly video's to social media, supply donations, etc. so I will commit to you I'll encourage and engage this next government to improve animal welfare in the North. I Can be very convincing, so if there's a window of opportunity, I will absolutely jump on it.

I'll also be frank. The community, and all other candidates are more interested, at the moment, in addressing the social issues, specifically the downtown core. Not once during my door to door knocking has the topic of animal welfare been identified as an issue or concern.

Northern Communities are continually asking the NWT SPCA for help regarding animal care, supplying pet food and removal of unwanted or nuisance dogs. It is important to the health and safety of their neighbourhoods. The NWT SPCA helps members and community governments by sending pet food as well as removing dogs from their community. The alternative is starvation and shootings as a means of control. Will you support the NWT SPCA and advocate for Annual Core Funding from the GNWT so the organization can continue its many programs and necessary services to assist NWT Communities?

Yes, yes, yes I will fully commit to this. I believe I have the ability to engage other MLA's to commit to some core funding for the NWT SPCA. When I'm extremely passionate about an issue, I can sell solutions quite well. This is how I'm able to fundraise (sell so many tickets) for the NWTSPCA. I believe my passion on this topic will serve the organization well.

You do a large amount of work for all the communities and should not have to fully bear the costs for an NWT-wide service. The government should step up to the plate. If anything, we may be able to take advantage of barge shipments to reduce the costs of flying in pet food, if there is an ample place to safely store the food at the point of arrival.

I'd like to see our government commit to assisting the NWT SPCA to offer animal therapy programs in the corrections, education and healthcare systems as well. Having inmates learning to care for animals gives them a sense of purpose and responsibility, in addition to saving an animal's life for rehoming. It will also increase compassion for animals' well being overall when released. I do believe overall this will improve animal welfare throughout the North. Baby steps lead to larger steps.

Health, corrections, education and our seniors could benefit from animal therapy during recovery (health) and during major exams (education) and for lonely seniors. There may not be the capacity to offer all of this, but I would start with the corrections system.

3. Most Northern Communities have limited access to vet care. It is a major reason for the over population and the suffering of thousands of dogs in the North. Communities continue to ask the NWT SPCA to visit their community with the mobile spay and neuter clinics. Will you support funding for the NWT SPCA to increase the number of animal health and wellness clinics in the NWT communities? What steps will you take to ensure this Government support?

Our government has limited funding available and I think my responses to the previous question is a first step to significantly assist the NWTSPCA.

I think the GNWT could also donate some of their end-of-life assets to the NWT SPCA. A highway truck, with a full mechanical inspection, could be donated to assist with hauling a mobile clinic or RV/camper. I would also support the GNWT donating, or loaning, a gently used tent trailer, or small RV/camper for the mobile unit team so they have accommodations while traveling during the summer months. If the camper is equipped with a good heat source, then visits to winter road access communities would be an option.

If the NWT has students going through veterinary school, the GNWT should be sponsoring them to return to the North to practice their skills. Part of that agreement should include these amazing mobile clinic drives. The GNWT could offer a per diem to assist these students (vet and vet tech students) to help offset their expenses.

In summary, yes I support core funding for the NWT SPCA. If that is not a viable option the other MLA's will support, then I would engage them to approve animal therapy programs.