



GREG CROMER
MAYOR

The City of Slidell

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THOMAS S. SCHNEIDAU
CITY ATTORNEY

October 1, 2020

Louisiana Ethics Administration Program
P.O. Box 4368
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821

RE: Request for an Advisory Opinion

Dear Louisiana Ethics Administration Program:

I serve as the City Attorney for the City of Slidell, Louisiana. The Slidell Police Department is a department of the City of Slidell headed by an elected police chief. The chief has requested that I seek an opinion from the Board of Ethics consistent with the below.

The City, through the police department, owns a number of highly trained K9s that work with specially trained SPD officers in various law enforcement activities, including narcotics detection and suspect apprehension. Each K9's human partner is its "handler". During its working life, a SPD K9, while owned by the City through the SPD, remains in the custody of its handler, who is an employee of the City and member of the SPD.

At a certain point, either because of age or physical limitations, a K9 needs to be retired from active service with the SPD. For a variety of reasons, including concerns for the well-being of the animal and public safety, the SPD desires that a retired K9 live out its life with its handler or another adequately trained member of law enforcement, with preference for the former.

The SPD's question is this: does the Louisiana Code of Governmental Ethics prevent an SPD "handler" from receiving—through auction, private purchase, donation, or other disposition from the City through the SPD—ownership of his/her K9 once the K9 is retired by the SPD? I note for reference only that federal law appears to allow for such dispositions of K9s owned by federal agencies and the military. See *e.g.* 40 U.S.C. § 555; 10 U.S.C. § 2583.

The SPD appreciates there are legal considerations for any such disposition which are beyond the bounds of the Louisiana Code of Governmental Ethics. However, the SPD desires to understand what impact, if any, the Code may have on such a contemplated disposition.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

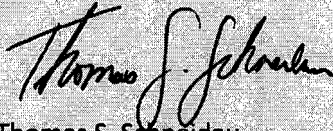
Louisiana Ethics Administration Program

October 1, 2020

Page 2

Thanking you for your consideration of the above, I remain

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Thomas S. Schneidau".

Thomas S. Schneidau
City Attorney, City of Slidell, Louisiana

Tracy Barker (Ethics)

From: Thomas Schneidau <tschneidau@cityofslidell.org>
Sent: Friday, October 2, 2020 8:39 AM
To: Tracy Barker (Ethics)
Cc: Amye Martin
Subject: Request for Ethics Opinion
Attachments: SPD Ethics Request (K9s).pdf

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Please do not click on links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Tracy,

The attached is being mailed to the Ethics Administration Program at its Baton Rouge PO Box, but I am also forwarding to you directly for your reference. I don't know if it's possible to get this one the Nov. agenda as well.

This is a unique one, for sure.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank you and have a nice weekend!

Best regards,
Thomas

Thomas S. Schneidau
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