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Dear Councilman Brey,

I am writing to you today to ask to be added to the next Licensing, Permit, and Inspections Committee meeting agenda for special consideration of my home occupation license. I will explain in the following paragraphs why I am asking for special consideration.

Several years back I started watching friends and family members pets when they would go away on vacation. Because of our background and experience (my parents help me out when I need it) in animal care, word spread quickly and soon we had others asking us to watch their animals in our homes too. We realized there was a demand for a business like this, and so we created Four Paws Pet Care. (Our name is registered at the courthouse and we do file taxes.) When this all formally started, I called the state and researched the city's website but didn't find any kennel licensing or anything that I had to apply for.

Apparently I didn't do that good of a job looking into it, because after someone reported us to building inspection, Mr. Schwartz called and informed us of the Home Occupation License. He asked us to fill out the forms for both mine and my parents residences . We did, but had a lot of questions. Mr. Schwartz wasn't able to completely answer some of the questions because there were some grey areas. Our applications were denied. I had a conversation with him at that point, and misunderstood him, thinking he said that it was okay to continue as long as we didn't have more than 3 dogs in our home at once. About four weeks ago he called me again to let me know that I had misunderstood, and said that we could no longer have our business because we were getting compensated for watching animals.

In order to remedy this situation, I informed our booked clients that we would watch their animals for no compensation (I couldn't cancel on them with such short of notice), contacted a realtor immediately and asked her to find some homes either zoned I-1 (the zoning Mr. Schwartz said we needed to operate) or outside of city limits for us to move the business to. After looking at several properties we found that we really do not desire to move at this point.

We then considered trying to get our homes re-zoned. Last week I consulted a lawyer to ask her advice and to see if she could help us with the re-zoning paperwork, and she suggested filling out the Home Occupation License once again, as re-zoning is a long, complicated process. We will be returning the paperwork to city hall Monday, March 23rd for both mine and my parents residences.

I would like to ask for special consideration of our applications for both residences so that I may continue running the business. I have found that there is a high demand for the services that we offer. I have many clients who have pets who have special needs and cannot use regular kennels. When the animals stay with us they stay in our home and are treated like they are our own pets receiving specialized care if they require it. We never accept more than a few animals at a time, as we never take more than we can handle. We also never leave the animals outside unattended and we are very cautious so as not to cause disturbances to our neighbors. If the committee would require it, I would be more than happy to type up a formal detailed description of how I run the business. I would also be willing to get approval from our neighbors as well as testimonials from clients, other animal care professionals, and several local veterinarians to prove that I run a high quality, responsible business.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to read this letter. Please let me know if I can provide you with any other information in regards to this situation. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Respectfully,
Katelyn Sheck