

Animal name: Rizzo

Animal number: 45918

Physical description: large-sized, german shepherd

Description of identified behavior concerns:

Rizzo was impounded on Aug 10, 2022. ACO called in due to dog's leash being tangled and dog was barking and growling at people who approached. ACO noted dog appeared fearful and "will attempt to bite" at intake. Behavior notes from Jan 1, 2023 indicate that Rizzo could be leashed "after gaining trust" but would bark at people from a distance and was difficult to redirect. Due to behavior exhibited at intake, brief behavior notes listed above, and lack of more recent behavior notes, this dog should be further assessed to better understand possible triggers, potential for harm to people and animals, and level of management required to maintain safety.

Feedback when Rizzo is removed is that Rizzo will lower her body and is flooded. She will walk at the end of the lead and actively avoids affiliation.

Video 4/27/23 : At front of kennel, ears airplaned out, body weight shifted back, piloerect 3 quarters of spine, lip lick. Retreats with roached back to back of kennel, ears back, low tucked tail. When person leaves Rizzo comes forward, spins x4, high tail, figure eights with barking, flagging tail, hops, poops then returns to stereotypic behavior until phone is returns. When handler re-enters camera, Rizzo pins ears back, lip lick, roached back. When human passes, Rizzo lunges and returns to stereotypic behavior. Returning human: lip lick, low tail, airplanes ears and lunges when human passes.

Video: on approach low wag tail, lip lick, full teeth bare, barking, body weight on back legs, backing up and advancing forward. Will not acknowledge or eat thrown treats. As walking away, spins once and jumps to track.

Summary of risks to humans and management requirements:

Threat display without contact, Decreasing distance while engaging in threat display including eyeing, fixating, or tracking person

Identified leveling: High VI

Summary of risks to conspecifics and management requirements:

No information provided regarding domestics; unable to assess risk for this category.

Identified leveling: Unable to Identify

Summary of risks to other domestic animals and management requirements:

No information provided regarding domestics; unable to assess risk for this category.

Identified leveling: Unable to identify

Summary of Quality of life:

Exhibits high-risk behaviors to humans, Unable to rest or relax during the day, takes longer than two minutes to recover from exposure to triggers. Also engages in stereotypies in kennel consistently during active and passive observation and noted increase in frequency, duration and intensity over length of stay.

Identified Leveling: Significant Intervention Needed

Recommendations and options based on risk assessment and management requirements:

The level of management for this animal is akin to that of an exotic canid that cannot be safely handled without significant precautions. If adopted out, Rizzo would require the following to be safely managed for the remainder of the life of the animal, as this level of aggression is unlikely to be remediated in any sense.

- Fully secure 10-12 foot fencing with airlocks to prevent escape and a shift area for cleaning and feeding
- Provisioning of a full enrichment program for Rizzo to meet quality of life and animal care standards for housing a large canid that meet or exceed the Association of Zoos and Aquaria (AZA) guidelines:
https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2332/large_canid_care_manual_2012r.pdf
- Enclosure must include provisions for severe weather, as Rizzo is unlikely to be comfortable and may be dangerous if he lives in the home with a person unless advised by a qualified, and certified behavior consultant (PhD, CAAB or CDBC)
- Commitment to lifelong positive-reinforcement (only) training within protected contact as there is likely no behavior modification protocol that will impact this behavior in a positive direction. Any positive reinforcement behavior modification would need to be conducted by a qualified and certified behavior consultant (trainer is an insufficient level for this type of risk) to manage fear-based aggression (distance sessions may be appropriate) – (potential cost \$8,400/year)
- Possible partnership with a veterinary behaviorist for psychopharmaceutical intervention in partnership with a local veterinarian (potential cost: \$6,000 - \$10,000/year) in order to attempt to alleviate the unrelenting stress of living in proximity to people, which act as a clear trigger for aggression with this dog.
- Rizzo will never be able to safely leave property.
- Rizzo will need to be fully sedated for any veterinary health exams, any medical interventions, and potentially basic husbandry (\$100 - \$300 in addition to regular cost of visit).
- Adopter must be careful to avoid any forms of punishment (including shock collar, prong collar, or choke chains) as that is likely to increase aggression, anxiety, fear, and stress per the recommendations of the Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV) and the

American Veterinary Society of Animal Behaviorists (AVSAB) –
<https://avsab.org/resources/position-statements/>