



CITY OF BANNING STAFF REPORT

TO: CITY COUNCIL
FROM: Douglas Schulze, City Manager
PREPARED BY: Doug Schulze, City Manager
MEETING DATE: January 9, 2024
SUBJECT: Animal Shelter and Animal Control Services

RECOMMENDATION:

Direct City Manager to provide A.R.E. Animal Rescue with termination notice to be effective June 30, 2024.

BACKGROUND:

The decision to terminate the Agreement with A.R.E. Animal Rescue is neither questioned nor opposed. I believe the decision to terminate the Agreement is in the best interest of all concerned. However, 90 days does not provide adequate time to negotiate a contract, obtain approvals and implement. Our previous contract with Riverside County provided a 180-day termination provision because that is a minimum timeframe for a transition of this type. The City cannot afford to take on the cost of a contract with Riverside County Department of Animal Services.

A proposal from Riverside County Animal Services was received on December 12, 2023. Riverside County will not provide Animal Shelter Services without also providing Animal Control Services, which means we will need to lay off our two Animal Control Officers. The County daily impound fee is \$34.10, which means every impounded cat or dog will incur a charge to the City of \$341.00 after the minimum 10 day holding time. Some animals will be recovered by the owners, but as we've experienced, the majority of animals will not be picked up by the owners so fees will continue to be charged until those animals are adopted or euthanized. Using the 2020 statistics (last year of previous County contract) and 2023 statistics, the contract cost is likely to exceed \$900,000 annually. These costs will be direct City costs. This is a cost increase of \$600,000 annually and will increase per CPI. It can be argued that costs will be less, but budgeting best practices are to conservatively estimate revenues and to estimate expenditures using data-based assumptions.

The City would not control animal impound costs under a contract with Riverside County that includes both animal control and animal shelter services. City animal control officers can be directed to prioritize reunification with the animal owner over impounding. The City could not provide that same direction to Riverside County Animal Control Officers.

2023 Statistics

\$34.10 daily fee X 10 days = \$341.00 (minimum 10 day holding period)

740 dogs X \$341.00 = \$252,234.00

1,081 cats X \$341.00 = \$368,621.00

TOTAL: \$620,855.00

2020 Statistics

226 dogs X \$34.10 = \$77,066

106 cats X \$341.00 = \$36,146

TOTAL: \$113,212

The expenses the City pays in addition to the \$60,000 contract fee with ARE is less than \$10,000 annually for propane and utilities. Costs for veterinary services will not change because the City is responsible for injured animals prior to impound. For example, if a stray dog is hit by a vehicle and requires veterinary care, the animal is taken to an emergency clinic and treated. Animal Control and the Clinic will attempt to locate the pet owner, but if that cannot be accomplished the City is responsible for the cost of services provided. After treatment and release, the animal will be transported to the shelter for impound, at which point the animal becomes the responsibility of the shelter operator.

Two full-time County ACO's will be an expense of \$273,125 and will increase annually per COLA. Our current costs, including wages, benefits, vehicle leases, training, equipment, etc. is \$250,000. From past experience, prior to 2021, we can expect the level of animal control service will decline.

JUSTIFICATION:

A timeframe of more than 90 days is required for transition from the contract animal shelter services provided by A.R.E. Animal Rescue to another option. In addition, the contract cost and proposal from Riverside County Department of Animal Services requires use of Riverside County for Animal Control Services.

FISCAL IMPACT:

A contract with Riverside County Animal Services will result in a significant annual cost increase for animal shelter and animal control services. Actual costs will depend upon number of pets impounded. Estimated increase cost is \$500,000 annually.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Direct City Manager to provide notice of contract termination to A.R.E. Animal Rescue effective June 30, 2024.
2. Direct City Manager to provide notice of contract termination to A.R.E. Animal Rescue effective [insert date].
3. Take no action. Previous City Council direction for 90-day notice of termination will remain effective.