



# CLEARLAKE POLICE DEPARTMENT

14050 Olympic Drive, Clearlake, CA 95422

Timothy Hobbs | Chief of Police

September 5, 2024

Honorable J. David Markham  
Presiding Judge  
Superior Court of California, County of Lake  
255 N. Forbes Street, 4th Floor  
Lakeport, CA 95453

SUBJECT: Response to 2023-2024 Grand Jury Final Report Entitled: “City of Clearlake Animal Shelter”

Dear Judge Markham:

Pursuant to California Penal Code Section 933.05(a), (b), and (c), the following are my responses as Chief of Police of the Clearlake Police Department, and on behalf of the City Council, to the findings and recommendations in the above-entitled Grand Jury Report:

## FINDINGS

### F-1 Agree

*The animal shelter is overcrowded when there are more than 40-45 dogs being housed there.*

### F-2 Agree

*The 10-year contract at \$375,000.00 per year has no provision for an increase over time.*

### F-3 Disagree

*Timely medical care is not always provided.*

The City of Clearlake and NBAS are committed to ensuring that all animals receive timely medical care. There are instances when animals are dropped off by Police Department employees outside of NBAS staff hours, and any injuries may not be immediately recognized. Once NBAS staff become aware of the animal and any injuries, prompt medical attention is provided. Additionally, some animals may not initially present with immediate medical needs, or their injuries may become more apparent during their stay. In these cases, NBAS ensures that medical



care is acquired as soon as the need is identified. The City of Clearlake's priority is to provide all animals with the care they require as promptly as possible.

**F-4 Agree**

*There continues to be an overall lack of communication between NBAS and the community.*

**F-5 Disagree**

*Cleaning practices need improvement.*

NBAS uses the recommendations of the UC Davis Veterinary School for cleaning practices.

**F-6 Partially Agree**

*There is no set schedule for food deliveries and expired food is being fed to the dogs.*

The City of Clearlake and NBAS agrees that there are no scheduled deliveries for food. This is due to the fact food deliveries are determined by the needs of the shelter, which changes due to shelter population. The City of Clearlake disagrees that expired food is being fed to the dogs. NBAS sources food from a local feed store to ensure that the shelter is well-stocked with high-quality food.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**R-1 Has been implemented.**

*That the City of Clearlake limit the population to 40-45 dogs at this time.*

The City of Clearlake and NBAS recognize the critical importance of maintaining a shelter population of fewer than 40 to 45 dogs to ensure the welfare of the animals and the quality of care they receive. While we strive to adhere to this target, the shelter population can fluctuate due to various factors beyond our control, such as responses to calls, the mandatory seizure of vicious or injured animals, pregnant animals giving birth while in shelter care, and animal hoarding cases, which can involve an unknown number of animals. These unpredictable circumstances make it challenging to accurately forecast the shelter's population and guarantee we keep the population under the 40 to 45 dogs.

However, the City of Clearlake is committed to working with NBAS to actively pursue strategies that help maintain the population within the desired range whenever possible. We will continue to collaborate closely to develop and implement comprehensive strategies. Additionally, NBAS will persist in utilizing options such as community foster programs, partnerships with outside rescue organizations, and online adoption campaigns to help manage the population and ensure the best possible care for the animals.

**R-2 Has been implemented.**

*That the Clearlake City Council review the contract with North Bay Animal Services annually.*

The contact between the City of Clearlake and NBAS requires NBAS to provide an annual report regarding the provisions of services under the contract and NBAS's performance. This provides the City Council the opportunity to ask questions and review the performance of NBAS. The City of Clearlake and NBAS are fully committed to maintaining a strong and transparent partnership. Currently, NBAS submits monthly reports to the City Council, providing regular updates on our operations, including adherence to contract terms. If either party feels a review is necessary, it can be requested at any time. The existing 10-year contract offers a stable foundation for both the community and NBAS to address evolving needs and changes. Given the ongoing monthly reporting, the City and NBAS does not currently see a need for an additional annual contract review.

**R-3 Has been implemented.**

*That the Clearlake City Council exercise regular oversight of NBAS to ensure that timely medical care is provided.*

The City of Clearlake and NBAS agree that the health and well-being of the animals in the care of NBAS are paramount. The City Council's monthly reports offer valuable insights, confirming that medical care and health standards are being met promptly. This process, combined with routine inspections and open communication between NBAS, the City Council, and the Police Department, strengthened by new quarterly updates to be shared with staff and the Council, ensures that any issues are swiftly addressed. Historically, NBAS has consistently met and exceeded expectations during inspections and veterinary reviews. The ongoing routine reporting and inspections will solidify a regular oversight process, guaranteeing that timely and adequate medical care continues to be provided.

While NBAS strives to provide timely medical care, it is important to recognize that Lake County, like much of the nation, is experiencing a shortage of veterinary service providers. NBAS works closely with local providers to meet the medical needs of the animals; however, the availability of services is sometimes dependent on their availability. To ensure that timely care is provided, NBAS has also established relationships with veterinary providers outside of the county who can assist when local resources are limited.

**R-4 Has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.**

*That the Clearlake City Council ensure that NBAS improve communication with the public.*

The City of Clearlake and NBAS recognize that effective communication with the public is crucial to the shelter's success. To strengthen this connection, NBAS has begun implementing a comprehensive communication plan that includes regular updates, increased transparency, and an

accessible website to ensure that information is readily available and easily understood by the public. NBAS consistently shares information through multiple channels, including social media and their website, keeping the community informed about shelter operations, events, and initiatives. Furthermore, NBAS is committed to continually improving their efforts with finding new and improved ways for clear and accessible information to keep the community engaged and involved. By prioritizing these ongoing efforts, NBAS aims to build trust, foster collaboration, and ensure that our community feels connected and informed about the shelter's mission and ongoing work.

**R-5 Has been implemented.**

*That the Clearlake City Council ensure that NBAS comply with the terms of the contact regarding the University of California at Davis, Veterinary School's recommendations for cleanliness.*

The recommendation has been implemented. The Clearlake Police Department conducts inspections of the Clearlake Animal Shelter, and review of NBAS cleaning standards. NBAS is committed to maintaining the highest standards of cleanliness and sanitation, in full compliance with the recommendations of the UC Davis Veterinary School. These standards are crucial for preventing disease and ensuring a healthy environment for all animals in our care. NBAS will continue to monitor and uphold these standards through regular inspections and detailed reporting.

**R-6 Has been implemented.**

*That the Clearlake City Council support regular food deliveries through a local food distributor.*

The City of Clearlake and NBAS recognize the critical importance of providing a consistent and reliable food supply for the shelter animals. NBAS has taken proactive measures to source high-quality food from a local feed store to ensure our shelter is well-stocked. It is important to clarify that NBAS does not intentionally provide expired food to the animals.

While there is no fixed schedule for food deliveries, this flexibility allows NBAS to respond effectively to the fluctuating shelter population and specific needs of the animals in their care. Additionally, NBAS Pet Pantry, a valuable community resource, will continue to be stocked with donated goods from various vendors and suppliers, supporting both shelter animals and pets within the broader community.

Best Regards,

TIMOTHY HOBBS

Chief of Police