



STAFF REPORT

October 11, 2023

File Number 0600-10; A-3478

SUBJECT

ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE SAN DIEGO HUMANE SOCIETY

DEPARTMENT

Police Department

RECOMMENDATION

Request that the City Council adopt Resolution No. 2023-135 authorizing the Mayor to execute, on behalf of the City, an Animal Services Agreement with the San Diego Humane Society (“Agreement”). The term of the Agreement is 15 months, from October 2023 through December 2024. At the end of the term, there is an optional Administrative Extension of six months. This Agreement allows the City to maintain its current monthly rate of \$115,422 through December 2024. Additionally, the approval of this short duration contract will allow staff necessary time to further research the future of animal control in the City of Escondido

Staff Recommendation: Approval (Department Name: Edward Varso, Chief of Police)

Presenter: Edward Varso, Chief of Police

FISCAL ANALYSIS

City staff analyzed several options for animal control services. The following factors were considered: cost effectiveness; scope of service; legal requirements; and community benefit. Staff researched agreements from other municipalities and in-house options for animal control services.

Option 1 – Joint Powers Agreement (JPA)

A JPA study was completed in 2014 by Citygate Associates LLC. Cities included in the JPA study were Escondido, Oceanside, and San Marcos. At that time, Escondido’s annual contribution was estimated between \$1.6 to \$2 million. The annual cost would cover operating expenses. In addition, a shelter facility would need to be built. Bond measures could cover the cost of the facility. The JPA would take approximately four years to start. This option could still be considered in future years.

Option 2 – In-house Animal Control Services

Staff research determined that in-house animal control services, comparable to the level of service provided by the San Diego Humane Society, would require approximately \$2 million dollars for annual operating costs. Additionally, a shelter facility would be needed. Based on the City of El Cajon’s



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construction of an animal shelter, costs are estimated at \$14 million. This process would take several years to complete. While the City of El Cajon built their shelter and provided animal control services for a short period of time, they have since contracted with San Diego Humane Society for their animal control needs.

A major portion of animal control costs are related to veterinary services and animal care. Eliminating these aspects would result in high euthanasia rates and reduced services to the community. Even with these severe reductions, costs are still estimated at \$1.7 million for annual operating expenses. At this time, the San Diego Humane Society can provide a higher level of service at lower cost.

Option 3 – Contract with Another Animal Control Entity

In an effort to explore all options, staff researched San Diego County Animal Services, however they discontinued services to the cities of Carlsbad, Del Mar, Encinitas, Santee, San Diego, and Solana Beach. Those cities now use San Diego Humane Society for their animal control needs. Chula Vista Animal Care Facility services other cities in close proximity. Coronado has its own facility. Staff will continue to research other animal control options.

Animal Control Service Providers Throughout the County

Animal Control Provider	Cities Served
San Diego Humane Society	Carlsbad Del Mar El Cajon Encinitas Escondido Imperial Beach La Mesa Oceanside Poway San Diego San Marcos Santee Solana Beach Vista
Chula Vista Animal Care Facility	Chula Vista Lemon Grove National City
Coronado Animal Control Facility	Coronado

Recommendation – Animal Control Agreement with San Diego Humane Society

To maintain a high level of specialized, wrap-around animal control services, it was determined to be in the City’s best interest to retain the San Diego Humane Society, a California nonprofit corporation.

The San Diego Humane Society services 13 municipalities within San Diego County. The proposed annual fees for the City of Escondido are comparable to rates paid by other cities.

The San Diego Humane Society calculates the City of Escondido’s animal control costs based on services specific to Escondido. The major portion of these expenses are related to:

- Veterinary services
- Animal intakes
- Animal care and shelter
- Humane law enforcement field services.



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- Dog Licenses Issued

Philanthropic and charitable donations to the San Diego Humane Society cover about 50% of Escondido's total animal control costs. The remaining expenses are included in the proposed Agreement annual payment.

After careful consideration and negotiation, the following commitments were established:

- Annual cost = \$1,385,064 (No increase from current agreement)

The San Diego Humane Society continues to explore options for reducing the City's Agreement contribution. One possibility includes increasing fees to generate revenue, which would offset Escondido's final expenses.

Pursuant to Section 13.2 of the Animal Services Agreement between the City of Escondido and the San Diego Humane Society, an Administrative Extension of 120 days was in the best interest of both parties. The Administrative Extension was agreed upon in June, 2023. October 28, 2023, is 120 days from the Agreement's original termination date of June 30, 2023.

It is requested that the City Council adopt Resolution No. 2023-135 approving an Animal Services Agreement with the San Diego Humane Society. The proposed Agreement covers a period of 15 months, starting October 2023 and ending December 2024. At the end of this term, an administrative extension period of six months will allow further negotiations to establish a multi-year contract with the San Diego Humane Society. A minimum compensation increase by Consumer Price Index (CPI), but not to exceed 5%, will take effect on the first day of service within the Extension Period. The extension period from January 2024 - June 2024 could also be used to explore other animal control service options.

The Police Department's FY 2023-24 Operating Budget covers annual expenses of \$1,385,064.

PREVIOUS ACTION

On June 24, 2020, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2020-89 to approve an animal control agreement with the San Diego Humane Society through FY 2023.

On May 22, 2019, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2019-74 to approve a Second Amendment to the San Diego Humane Society Animal Control Services Agreement for a one-year extension.

On June 20, 2018, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2018-107 approving a First Amendment to the Animal Control Services Agreement for a one-year extension.

On June 11, 2014, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2014-65 approving a two-year Animal Control Services Agreement with two automatic one-year renewal periods with the San Diego Humane Society.



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On June 22, 2011, City Council adopted Resolution 2011-82, approving an animal control services agreement with Escondido Humane Society through June 30, 2014.

BACKGROUND

Purpose

The purpose of this Agreement is to ensure the proper, humane and efficient handling, ownership, treatment and disposition of dogs, cats and other domesticated animals, and to ensure the enforcement of laws, ordinances and regulations of the State of California and of the City concerning the regulation, licensing, impounding and disposition of dogs, cats and other domestic animals within the City.

San Diego Humane Society Qualifications

San Diego Humane Society personnel have demonstrated their competence and professional qualifications necessary for the satisfactory performance of animal control services by virtue of their experience, training, education and expertise. The City has used the San Diego Humane Society for its animal control services since 2014, after it merged with the Escondido Humane Society.

Founded in 1880, the San Diego Humane Society is the oldest and most comprehensive animal welfare organization in San Diego County and one of the oldest and largest in the United States. It is a private not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. It receives funding from charitable contributions, corporate and foundation grants, investment income, retail sales, and fees from services provided.

The San Diego Humane Society served over 85,000 animals in 2022-2023 through pets admitted, wildlife rehabilitation, community services (spay/neuter, vaccination & microchips) and more. With campuses in El Cajon, Escondido, Oceanside and San Diego, San Diego Humane Society provides animal services for 13 cities within San Diego County.

SDHS Animal Services Provided for the City of Escondido

From July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023, the San Diego Humane Society helped 6,549 animals in Escondido and provided the following services:

- Sheltered 2,829 animals
- Administered 4,884 rabies and distemper vaccines
- Microchipped 634 animals
- Licensed 4,201 animals



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- Performed spay/neuter surgeries for 482 animals
- Responded to 3,266 humane law enforcement calls for service, including:
 - 139 Bite Reports
 - 145 Park Patrols
 - 238 Barking Dog Calls
 - 243 Notices of Complaint
 - 81 Citations

Scope of Services

The San Diego Humane Society shall provide the services required by and in accordance with the laws, regulations, ordinances and codes of the State of California, the County of San Diego, and the City as specified by the proposed Agreement.

Animal Sheltering - San Diego Humane Society shall provide the City with animal shelter services to receive and care for all domestic animals delivered by members of the general public or Animal Field Services. The San Diego Humane Society shall also provide humane disposition of animals.

The San Diego Humane Society shall maintain an animal shelter at 3500 Burnet Drive, Escondido, CA 92027 which shall be open for public service and operation during reasonable days and hours of operation similar to other such facilities within the County of San Diego, and which shall comply with the standards described by the laws of the State of California, and the ordinances of the County and the City. Such animal shelter services shall include:

- The housing and care of stray domestic animals for the legal hold period according to the laws of the State of California, and the ordinances of the County and the City.
- The housing and care for domestic animals under rabies quarantine for the legal hold period according to the laws of the State of California and the ordinances of the County and the City.
- The housing and care for police and animal cruelty holds for a minimum of fourteen days.
- Providing lost and found opportunities for domestic animals brought to the shelter.



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- The housing, care for, and the disposition of all animals coming into the possession of SDHS using safe and humane methods in accordance with the State of California laws and the ordinances of the County and the City.
- Assuming all expenses to maintain and operate the Shelter and properly care for the animals.
- Managing the dog license program for the City.

Animal Field Services – The San Diego Humane Society shall humanely and efficiently enforce all applicable animal field service laws, regulations, ordinances and codes of the City (and any County laws, regulations and ordinances as adopted by the City) pertaining to animal field services. The San Diego Humane Society shall provide the City with the following animal field services in response to complaints generated by the public, law enforcement and the City:

- Investigate and enforce animal cruelty laws and related activities
- Respond to calls for animal field services
- Pick up and care for injured domestic animals
- Address dangerous animal situations
- Monitor and respond to bites and enforce rabies quarantine requirements
- Investigate and enforce vicious or dangerous dog complaints and activities
- Patrol the city and impound stray dogs
- Respond to and investigate noise complaints
- Issue criminal and/or administrative citations for violations of City animal field services laws
- Testify in a court or administrative hearing regarding violations of animal field services laws
- Require Humane Officers to maintain qualifications under California Corporations Code section 14502 and California Penal Code section 830.9 capable of performing and enforcing the provisions of the City ordinance related to domestic animals
- Require Humane Officers to complete a course in training related to the exercise of his/her powers, this course shall meet the minimum standards prescribed by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training and the State Humane Association of California, within one year of date of hire



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Reports and Records – The San Diego Humane Society shall prepare and provide quarterly and annual reports for the City. These reports shall include information regarding: animal shelter operations; statistics concerning number of animals contacted, sheltered, and related disposition; citations processed; and field services performed.

Community Engagement – The San Diego Humane Society shall provide the following services related to community engagement:

- Public education
- Animal behavior modification program
- Seasonal 24-hour kitten nursery
- Pet education classes
- Community events
- Disaster response such as: Specialized Disaster Response Emergency Team; large and small animal evacuation; and large and small animal sheltering
- Affordable community veterinary assistance programs such as: spay/neuter; vaccinations including rabies clinics; microchipping; and safety net service programs
- Owner requested euthanasia.

Adoption of Resolution No. 2023-135 approving an animal control Agreement with the San Diego Humane Society will provide fifteen months of animal control services for the City of Escondido.

RESOLUTIONS

- a. Resolution No. 2023-135
- b. Resolution No. 2023-135 Exhibit "A"