

RESOLUTION No. 2022-87

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRASS VALLEY ADOPTING POLICY TO REIMBURSE EMPLOYEE HANDLERS OF PEER SUPPORT DOGS

WHEREAS, on November 22nd, 2022, the City of Grass Valley approved a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) between 4 Paws 2 Freedom and the City of Grass Valley (“City”) for the implementation of a Peer Support Dog training program (the “Program”); and

WHEREAS, the Program is intended to assist First Responders in reducing stress after difficult calls with the goal of healthier outcomes and longevity of First Responders; and

WHEREAS, the Program focuses on teaching the primary dog handler (the “Primary Handler”) to train the dog through weekly classes and on-the-job practice to be a certified Peer Support Dog over the course of a one-year period; and

WHEREAS, the Program requires the Primary Handler to attend weekly class for the first year of training and monthly training following certification for at least three years of service, and it requires the Primary Handler and a secondary dog handler (the “Secondary Handler”) to take the dog home with them to relax when they are off shift; and

WHEREAS, the City shall select employee volunteers to perform the duties and responsibilities of Primary and Secondary Handlers under the Program; and

WHEREAS, the Program requires certain costs to be borne by the employee handlers to maintain and train Peer Support Dogs; and the City desires to reimburse certain expenses required of the employee handlers.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Grass Valley as follows:

- 1) That the foregoing statements are true and correct and are incorporated here by the reference.
- 2) That the attached policy providing for City reimbursement of certain expenses relative to the maintenance and training of Peer Support Dogs is hereby approved.
- 3) That the City Manager shall incorporate the attached policy in the City’s Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual.
- 4) That the City Manager is authorized and empowered to amend the attached policy from time to time, consistent with this resolution.
- 5) That this resolution shall take effect immediately and remain in effect until terminated by the City Manager.

ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Grass Valley at a regular meeting thereof held on the 13th day of December 2022, by the following Vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Ben Aguilar, Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Taylor Day, Deputy City Clerk

Michael Colantuono, City Attorney

SUBJECT: Reimbursement of Employee Expenses for the Maintenance and Training of Peer Support Dogs

- I. **PURPOSE:** This policy is intended to reimburse employee handlers for certain costs to maintain and train a Peer Support Dog.
- II. **POLICY:** The City, at its discretion, may provide Peer Support Dog training to assist First Responders in reducing stress after difficult calls. Peer Support Dogs are owned and cared for by City employees who volunteer to be handlers of such dogs. The City shall reimburse the volunteer handlers for certain costs related to the maintenance, and training of Peer Support Dogs.
- III. **SCOPE:** The City's Peer Support Dog program requires volunteer employees to implement the program. Primary Handler and Secondary Handlers are responsible for the care, maintenance, and training of the Peer Support Dogs. The following expenses will be reimbursed to the employee or paid by the City:
- Toys, treats, dishes, grooming supplies, leash, collar, ID tags, licensing, crate, seat belt, halti, or other training equipment needed for at work or training
 - Liability Insurance
 - Pet Health insurance
 - Travel costs for local training, unless the handler used a City vehicle or he/she is paid a vehicle allowance
 - Veterinarian expenses except for at home related issues or home related injuries

The following expenses will be the responsibility of the employee:

- Dog Food
 - Grooming costs
 - Toys, treats, dishes, grooming supplies, leash, collar, crate, seat belt, halti, or other items needed for non-work hours
- IV. **DEFINITIONS:**
- A. **Primary Handler:** An employee who is assigned to undergo initial and regular training with the Peer Support Dog under the City's Peer Support Dog program.
- B. **Secondary Handler:** An employee who is assigned to occasionally takes the Peer Support Dog home for relaxation, in coordination with the Primary Handler.
- V. **GUIDELINES:**
- A. The Primary Handler shall be the owner of the Peer Support Dog.

- B. The Primary Handler shall be responsible for attending training sessions and train with the Peer Support Dog, perform dog handler duties to assist First Responders, and shall care for and maintain the dog, in accordance with the City's Peer Support Program.
- C. The Primary Handler shall be responsible to take the Peer Support Dog home each night to relax when he/she is not on duty. The Primary Handler shall be responsible to care for and maintain the dog in accordance with the City's Peer Support Program. The Primary Handler shall also coordinate with the Secondary Handler for taking the Peers Support Dog home, as needed.
- D. The Primary Handler will be compensated his/her regular pay during training and travel time to training sessions.
- E. Upon separation of employment, the Peer Support Dog shall continue to be owned by the Primary Handler without continued reimbursement by the City, unless the dog is relinquished to another handler, or the program trainer, and the City Manager approves of the relinquishment.
- F. The Secondary Handler shall be responsible to coordinate with the Primary Handler and, to the extent reasonable, shall take the Peer Support Dog home to relax when he/she is not on duty.
- G. The Secondary Handler shall be responsible to care for and maintain the dog when he/she takes the dog goes home

VI. PROCEDURES:

- A. Employees who volunteer to be dog handlers under the City's Peer Support Program shall submit a request for approval to the City Manager.
- B. Upon City approval, handlers shall perform their respective duties under the City's Peer Support Program.
- C. On a monthly basis, Primary and Secondary Handlers should submit expense receipts to the Finance Department for eligible expenses to maintain, and train the Peer Support Dog, as described in Section III above.
- D. Upon receipt of reimbursement requests by the Primary and Secondary Handlers, the City Finance Department shall prepare warrants for reimbursement of eligible maintenance and training expenses for a Peer Support Dog. Such warrants shall be paid to employee handlers consistent with other warrants in the normal course of business.

VII. RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW: This policy shall be reviewed at least once every 3 years by the City Manager