



CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 07/12/2022

REQUESTER: Jeanne Snider, Assistant City Attorney

PRESENTER: Jeanne Snider, Assistant City Attorney

ITEM TITLE: CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF RESOLUTION R-2223-16: A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, APPROPRIATING \$3,000 FROM THE GENERAL FUND BALANCE AND \$7,000 FROM THE REIMBURSEMENTS-MISC. RISK MANAGEMENT ACCOUNT FOR PAYMENT OF EXPENSES INCURRED FOR THE CARE OF ANIMALS SEIZED BY THE NORMAN ANIMAL WELFARE DIVISION.

BACKGROUND:

On April 12, 2022, Norman Animal Welfare (NAW) assisted Oklahoma game warden Zack Paulk in the service of a document search warrant at 5701 E. Robinson Street, Norman, Oklahoma. Upon execution of the search warrant, Norman Animal Welfare Manager, Kellee Robertson, observed in an open garage door and in plain view two green McCaw parrots inside a cage. The parrots were missing feathers and appeared in distress with no access to food or water. Owners and residents of 5701 E. Robinson Street, Norman, Oklahoma, were the same people that 356 animals were seized in April 2021 at 5500 E. Rock Creek Road, Norman, Oklahoma. During the April 12, 2022 search, 168 animals were seized from the property. (*See Attachment A.*) The animals were deprived of food, water, appropriate shelter, and veterinary care. Two draft horses had eye infections and were in need of immediate veterinary care. Seven sphynx kittens and two adult sphynx cats were all in poor condition, and one kitten died two days later due to respiratory distress. Nine French Bulldogs were seized. One of the French Bulldogs had a chronic untreated ear infection with open wounds from scratching and a staple still left in her skin from a previous surgery. She has sustained irreversible ear canal damage, among other medical issues, and the others suffered from bacterial infections due to unsanitary conditions. The other animals, which included number of chickens and red-footed tortoises, had respiratory infections and no access to food, water or veterinary care.

Emergency boarding and veterinary care was provided to all of the animals.

NAW personnel located rescues and community volunteers to care for the animals. Boarding, veterinary and other expenses were incurred to house and care for the animals.

DISCUSSION

On April 19, 2022, the City filed a bond application with the Cleveland County District Court asking the Court to determine all reasonable and anticipated costs incurred by the City. A hearing was set for April 22, 2022, and on this day, the owners of the animals relinquished ownership of all the animals to the City of Norman.

The NAW staff worked with the rescue organizations and community volunteers providing care for the animals to determine costs incurred through April 22, 2022, including actual veterinarian costs. While a number of rescues and community volunteers waived some expenses, the City incurred \$10,000 for boarding expenses and veterinary care. (See *Attachment B* for a breakdown of all expenses.)

On April 29, 2022, the Court entered an Order for defendants, Aaron Stachmus and Bryson Anglin, to compensate the City of Norman in the amount of \$10,000. Defendants paid \$5,000 on April 23, 2022, and were ordered to pay \$1,000 per month from May 2022 to September 2022 for the remaining \$5,000. To date \$7,000 has been received and deposited into the City's Reimbursements-Misc. Risk Management account. The Court will retain jurisdiction over this matter until the full amount is satisfied.

RECOMMENDATION

At this time, City staff is recommending an appropriation of \$3,000 from the General Fund Balance (Account 10-29000) and \$7,000 from Reimbursements-Misc. Risk Management (Account 439-365264) for a total of \$10,000 transferred to Other Sup-Mat-Animal-Sup Misc (Account 10660270-43115).