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DATE: July 21, 2026

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Travis Sanborn, Finance Director

THROUGH: Kyle Knopp, City Manager

SUBJECT: Update on Spay and Neuter Voucher Program

RECOMMENDATION

Receive and file this report on the Spay and Neuter Voucher Program, and direct staff to establish a recurring dedication of Animal License and Control fee revenue to the program beginning in FY 2026-27.

BACKGROUND

The City Council approved the Spay and Neuter Voucher Program on August 20, 2024, and Resolution 1623-2024, adopted October 15, 2024, established the program and named Animal License and Control fees, projected at approximately \$2,500 per year, as its primary funding source. Vouchers are valued from \$75 for male cats to \$350 for female dogs under 65 pounds, distributed through the Rio Dell Community Resource Center, and redeemed at a local provider, Humboldt Humane, doing business as Critters Without Litters. The McLean Foundation supported the program's launch with two grants awarded October 23, 2024: grant #399 for \$2,000 and grant #400 for \$1,500.

PROGRAM RESULTS

Through the July 1, 2026 billing, the program has provided spay and neuter services to 53 animals: 32 dogs and 21 cats, at an average provider billing of approximately \$120 per animal. Every provider billing through July 1, 2026 has been paid in full. The program has operated continuously for 22 months with no new staff and no new administrative structure: the clinic performs the work, invoices the City per animal, and is paid directly.

FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY

The program is fully funded by dedicated animal fees, philanthropy, and community donations, with no draw on general City resources. Funding secured since inception totals \$13,221.05:

Funding source	Amount
Animal License and Control fee revenue, dedicated to the program effective 6/30/2026	\$8,971.05
McLean Foundation grants #399 and #400 (received 9/9/2025)	\$3,500.00
Community donations (three donors)	\$750.00
Total funding secured since inception	\$13,221.05

The Animal License and Control fees named in Resolution 1623-2024 as the program's primary funding source have exceeded the resolution's \$2,500 annual projection in both years of operation:

Fiscal year	Fees collected	Resolution projection
FY 2024-25	\$3,972.00	\$2,500.00
FY 2025-26	\$4,999.05	\$2,500.00
Total	\$8,971.05	\$5,000.00

Annual fee collections of roughly \$4,000 to \$5,000 exceed the program's annual cost at its current pace of roughly 25 animals per year, making the program self-sustaining at its current scale. Both McLean Foundation awards closed in October 2025; the dedicated fee stream has replaced philanthropy as the program's ongoing funding source.

California's \$50 million California for All Animals initiative, launched in 2022 and administered by the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program, directed more than half of its disbursed funding toward spay and neuter, and its grant funds are now fully awarded. Rio Dell's program demonstrates a small-city model that a successor state funding effort could scale: locally administered, fee-backed, delivered through an existing community clinic, and verified to provider billings. Staff has prepared briefing materials supporting Council engagement with state legislators on stable funding for rural spay and neuter programs.