

Animal Shelter Concerns

Based off of the rebuttal contract

Upon stepping into the City Managers chair there have several ideas and concerns about building a new animal shelter using donated funds. I have been involved in several attempts to get this project moving forward and also overcoming some potential issues in the future.

The Council and Ms. Thorton agreed on a plan to locate the shelter at the sewer plant complex with BAAB running an adoption site and the City maintaining a short-term shelter to assist in the prevention of the spread of disease prior to transfer to the BAAB facility. At some point when presented with a contract developed by our attorney everything has again gone into a hold pattern.

I have read and studied the proposed agreement from BAAB and see some items that have never been discussed as far as I am aware of.

First off it is my understanding that BAAB approached the City about a shelter originally and not the idea of operating it for the City other than providing volunteers to assist the Animal Control Officer.

Secondly there has never been any discussion of providing BAAB with the funds donated to the City through the utility bills for animal shelter assistance.

The proposed agreement was for BAAB to run the new shelter and the City to continue to operate the existing shelter. Not for BAAB to operate both facilities

Never was there a discussion for BAAB to receive \$150 per animal for housing and expenses.

BAAB is recommending that they provide intake diversion resources. The City of Sweeny should not be taking in any animals other than nuisance and animals that are picked up for running at large. The City Animal Control Officer should already be scanning animals for chips and also attempting to locate the owners prior to being impounded. The City of Sweeny should not be accepting animals based on owner surrender as we are an animal control facility not an adoption facility.

BAAB should not be involved in the operations of the current facility other than providing advice not directions.

As far as I know there has never been any discussion for the City to provide any monetary funds to BAAB. While I agree animal welfare is important and costly, I am not sure where the money would come from with so many other issues that City is faced with at this time.

The best I can tell and it appears our attorney agrees that there is no severance clause for either party to get out of this contract if either was to choose to do so.

The agreement proposed setting citation fees and City keeping those funds. ONLY the judge has the authority to assess fine not the City.

Using the figures given and looking at the budget from a historical perspective, the Animal Control department has never operated at a gain and typically is a burden on the budget even without adding the additional expenses that are being proposed.

I will admit the City can do a better job in management and care of its facilities, but that will come in time as we continue to restructure the operations of the City as a whole and investing what money is available to us wisely. Animal Welfare is important but should be the burden of the animal owners not the City. As I have stated before, the City of Sweeny is an animal control operation not an adoption agency for say.