



Date: August 13th, 2024

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Author and title: Danny Renfrow – Chief of Police

Title: **Animal Sheltering and Partnership with Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe**

Jen Callaway, Town Manager

Recommended Action: Town staff is seeking Council direction to further discussions and continue to evaluate our current sheltering model and partnership with the Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe. If the Town Council directs staff to continue to explore an alternative animal sheltering model, would members of the Council want to be a part of an ad hoc committee to evaluate new service models.

Discussion: The Town of Truckee and the Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe (hereafter HSTT) have maintained a successful partnership for two decades, providing support and governance for pets, their owners, and vulnerable wildlife populations in the community. These joint efforts began in 2004, when HSTT was planning to build an animal shelter; at the time, there was also a need to find a more permanent solution for the Town's temporary kennel facility. Rather than build separate shelter spaces, it was decided to build and operate a joint facility.

The shelter space has been operating with a 50/50 partnership agreement between the Town and HSTT under a 55-year lease. Recently, HSTT has engaged the Town of Truckee to assess and reconsider the existing partnership. According to Shelter Animals Count database, "since 2020, animal shelters nationwide have experienced increases in animal intakes, stagnant or decreased outcomes, and a persistent gap in animals lingering in shelters." To address this capacity crisis, HSTT has increased programs to provide free pet food, low-cost/free spay/neuter surgeries, wellness clinics, behavior/training support, veterinary medical grants, and more. HSTT has urged that the community's growing needs, especially in the context of the current animal sheltering crisis, highlight the urgent need for a new partnership agreement as the existing operations model has no capacity for growth.

There are three common sheltering models in the United States:

1. Municipally operated: the government agency provides all sheltering services, including intake, adoption, veterinary care, etc., and all legally mandated requirements. It is funded almost exclusively by tax dollars.
2. Privately operated: a nonprofit organization, typically a humane society or SPCA, may have more selective admission policies than municipal shelters and may offer expanded or different community services. Donors, grants, fundraisers, etc. fund this model.
3. Privately operated with a municipal contract: a non-profit organization, typically a humane society or SPCA, takes responsibility for providing animal control sheltering services via a municipal contract. It may also provide expanded community programs. Both the non-profit and the municipality fund its operation.

HSTT's goal is to function as a privately operated non-profit with a municipal contract. Under the new model, HSTT would oversee all shelter operations, improving processes, employee morale, and collaboration. The Town would continue to support its sheltering and general care services. By contracting shelter operations, HSTT can ensure operational continuity, safe and humane conditions for animals, reliable medical care, increased community outreach and support services, and education on responsible pet ownership and animal welfare.

Staff is seeking the direction of the Council to further these discussions and continue to evaluate our current sheltering model and partnership with HSTT. If the Town Council directs staff to continue to explore alternative animal sheltering models, would members of the Council like to be included in an ad hoc committee to evaluate the sustainability of engaging in a new sheltering model?

Priority:

<input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Climate and Greenhouse Gas Reduction	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Investment	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency and Wildfire Preparedness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Core Service

Fiscal Impact: None

Public Communication: This publication

Attachments: None