

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

694



FROM: Department of Animal Services

SUBMITTAL DATE:
July 19, 2012

SUBJECT: Receive and file the Addendum to Business Plan for Future Sustainability July 1, 2012

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Receive and file the Addendum to Business Plan for Future Sustainability July 1, 2012.

BACKGROUND: The Department of Animal Services (DAS) submitted a Business Plan for Future Sustainability (the Plan) in October 2010. The business history, service description, and organizational goals have remained consistent. This document describes actions taken by the department to continue to achieve budget goals and the financial outlook looking forward. Changes to business drivers are identified and strategic initiatives are revisited and expanded upon to meet the current organizational reality.

Departmental Concurrence

Robert P. Miller

RPM:bw

Robert P. Miller, Director
Department of Animal Services

FINANCIAL DATA	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$ 0	In Current Year Budget:	N/A
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$ 0	Budget Adjustment:	N/A
	Annual Net County Cost:	\$ 0	For Fiscal Year:	

SOURCE OF FUNDS:	Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Requires 4/5 Vote	<input type="checkbox"/>

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE

BY: *Debra Cournoyer*
Debra Cournoyer

County Executive Office Signature

- Policy
- Policy
- Consent
- Consent
- Consent
- Consent

Dep't Recomm.:
Per Exec. Ofc.:

Prev. Agn. Ref.: 11/9/10 3.24

District: A11

Agenda Number:

2.9



Department of Animal Services
Addendum to Business Plan for Future Sustainability



Submitted by: Robert P. Miller, Director of Animal Services

July 1, 2012

Addendum to Business Plan for Future Sustainability

The Department of Animal Services (DAS) submitted a Business Plan for Future Sustainability (the Plan) in October 2010. The business history, service description, and organizational goals have remained consistent. This document describes actions taken by the department to continue to achieve budget goals, and the financial outlook looking forward. Changes to business drivers are identified and strategic initiatives are revisited and expanded upon to meet the current organizational reality.

Actions taken to achieve budget goals

In an effort to bring Fiscal Year 2010/2011 budget into balance and in anticipation of reductions for Fiscal Year 2011/2012, strategic staffing reductions were made consistent with recommendations in the October, 2010 Business Plan for Future Sustainability. The Plan outlined expected outcomes of the staffing and program reductions. The information below describes the actual outcomes.

Reduce Unincorporated Officers - During Fiscal Year 2010/2011, DAS initiated the reduction in unincorporated Animal Control Officers (ACOs). The department also reduced the field services management and supervisory staff to the current level of four sergeants, three lieutenants, and one commander. As stated in the Plan, DAS adjusted service levels to exclude: owner surrenders in the field; owner requested euthanasia in the field; transportation of out-of-jurisdiction animals to the proper jurisdiction; assisting county residents with wildlife removal/relocation (except in cases of public safety). Since this staffing reduction, the number of animals impounded in the field by ACOs has increased. The increase in calls is enervating central dispatch where services are filtered and distributed. Additionally, low priority call

response has dropped. As a result, it appears that constituents are describing their calls to be “high priority”, in an effort to obtain service. The outcome, however, has been that officers are now responding primarily to calls identified as “high priority”. Work load has increased and ability to respond to low priority calls has decreased. This has resulted in a backlog of low priority calls to which supervisors (lieutenants and sergeants) are now responding.

Reduce Veterinary Staff - In an effort to bring Fiscal Year 2010/2011 budget into balance, and in anticipation of reductions for Fiscal Year 2011/2012, strategic staffing reductions for veterinary services were recommended in the October, 2010 Business Plan for Future Sustainability. It was not necessary to reduce the veterinary staff. The strategy to reduce veterinary costs and increase clinical revenue in the future is described in the Business Drivers section below. The requirement to provide low-cost public spay and neuter services by the County of Riverside is a provision of a successful 1977 ballot initiative in which funding was not identified and service levels not defined.

Reduce Management – DAS has reduced management consistent with the plan. Existing managers have been struggling with a greater scope of responsibilities. To increase job satisfaction among line staff, supervisors, and managers, the department has implemented a Management Development Program that recognizes the unique needs of DAS managers and provides specific methods to implement learning. DAS managers represent seven percent of total staff for Fiscal Year 2012/2013.

Financial Outlook

The budget for Fiscal Year 2012/2013 includes expenditures for DAS to function as a stand-alone department as a result of the dissolution of the Community Health Agency. The

budget also includes revenue and expenditures anticipated to meet contract obligations for the City of Indio. The City of Indio chose to maintain its current shelter and animal care program. An adjustment will be submitted if necessary reducing the appropriations. Additionally, position changes to correct minor errors or variations will be discussed with the Executive Office and adjustments made as necessary.

Despite funding changes, separation from the agency, and absorption of other staff, DAS projects a small but manageable budget gap. Part of this gap is attributable to the retention of one employee targeted for lay off. In addition to cost-saving measures, one strategy to manage the gap is to stagger hiring of unfilled positions. The DAS will provide quarterly updates and does not expect to exceed the approved budget.

Changing Business Drivers – Opportunities

Maddie's Fund – DAS has established a coalition of western Riverside County cities and humane organizations with the goal of reducing pet overpopulation in this area. Essential in this effort was the intent to gain support from Maddie's Fund, a nonprofit organization dedicated to eliminating the euthanasia of adoptable pets. Maddie's Fund required the creation of a coalition in order to receive grant funding for regional spay/neuter programs. At the beginning of 2012, Maddie's Fund drastically changed their granting priorities which made the coalition ineligible to apply for funding at this time. New priorities will only support efforts to treat unhealthy animals to make them available for adoption, eliminating entirely the component for spay/neuter funding.

American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) - A recent success has been the developing relationship between DAS and the ASPCA. During Fiscal Year 2011/2012, DAS has received six grants from the ASPCA totaling over \$60,000. In addition

DAS partnered with the ASPCA on National-promoted projects, such as the ASPCA Challenge adoption and the Mega Match-a-thon, re-homing more than 400 animals in one day. The ASPCA has now assigned an official ASPCA representative to work with DAS. The ASPCA has singled out DAS for a number of opportunities including travel grants, participation in webinars, articles and promotions. Our most recent partnership is through a rescue transfer project. They have also shown interest in helping DAS develop or bring back programs that were discontinued due to budgetary constraints, like the award-winning Healthy Pet Zone project or the Meet Your Match Adoption program. DAS is looking forward to continuing the relationship with the ASPCA in Fiscal Year 2012/2013. Revenue projections for Fiscal Year 2012/2013 anticipate revenue resulting from this relationship.

Spay & Neuter Revenue Opportunities - The utilization of contract surgeons capable of processing a greater volume of cases, will likely increase clinical revenue. Additionally, grant funding opportunities have trended positively for the department with involvement of the ASPCA and targeted spay/neuter efforts in conjunction with the Shelter Transport Animal Rescue Team (START). DAS together with START is building a consortium of animal welfare advocates dedicated to solving the pet overpopulation problem through directed spay/neuter efforts following the Healthy Pet Zone model. DAS is very active in the California Pet Lovers license plate initiative. The Chief Veterinarian has been appointed to the non-profit board which is drafting the license plate revenue distribution model. It is expected this effort will account for significant revenues for spay/neuter programs in coming fiscal years.

Donations - Direct donations to DAS have been minimal as constituents are directed to supporting two foundations. These foundations were responsible for more than \$65,000 in direct funding to DAS during Fiscal Year 2011/2012. DAS occasionally receives large unsolicited

donations in response to media coverage. For example, the Great Danes that were impounded several years back resulted in numerous donations, and during the current fiscal year the United Activists for Animal Rights responded to the increase in abandoned horses cared for by DAS by making a \$10,000 donation.

Clinic revenue enhancement strategy - DAS is shifting resources to increase public spay and neuter surgeries. Due to attrition, shelter medicine responsibility is being shifted to registered veterinary technicians under the oversight of the Chief Veterinarian.

Changing Business Drivers – Threats

Reduction of License Revenue – The incorporation of Eastvale and Jurupa Valley results in a loss of license revenue to the department. This is projected to be \$55,000 annually. The potential for increased license revenue is lost as well.

Potential for cities on step up plans to meet increasing cost of services - Although cities have entered into contracts with the County to provide Animal Care and Control services, DAS is maintaining communications with these cities as they struggle with their continuing budget constraints. The budget for the City of Desert Hot Springs was recently a matter that gained media interest. Significant to DAS was the fact that Animal Services cost of service increase was a factor. DAS has communicated with Desert Hot Springs and reviewed current contract payments to maintain an awareness of this and other contract cities' abilities to meet the terms of their contracts. Similarly, DAS is observant of proceedings in the newly-incorporated cities of Eastvale and Jurupa Valley. The failure of these cities and ultimate return of responsibility for county service provisions would have a significant general fund impact.

SB 90 Claims - The SB90 reimbursement portions of the California State Hayden Law have been placed in continued suspension by the Governor. Animal shelters were relieved of the duties imposed by the mandates of the Hayden Bill because the shelters are no longer entitled to reimbursement from the state. That suspension of these stray animal mandates, however, does not relieve shelters of all duties, only those for which reimbursement would otherwise be provided. Since there is no obligation to take in animals surrendered by their owners, the retention (hold) period for these animals remained unchanged.

Strategic Initiatives Revisited

Canine License Program (CLP)-The CLP has been partially implemented with the complete in-sourcing of all administrative citations, the utilization of the Interagency Intercept Program and the launching of the web licensing portal early in 2012. Web licensing now accounts for almost \$1,000 per day in gross receipts. Development and implementation of a program which will automate data input from rabies vaccination certificates will be online in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2012/2013 to provide greater efficiency in issuing licenses and collecting revenue.

Alternatives for sheltering at San Jacinto Valley Animal Campus - County Purchasing prepared an extensive RFQ for animal sheltering services at the San Jacinto animal shelter. After having sent the RFQ out on two separate occasions, the county received no responses. Currently, DAS is utilizing a portion of the shelter to house animals that have been seized for animal cruelty cases and for certain quarantine cases. The department is diverting operations staff from the Riverside animal shelter to clean the cages and maintain the health of the animals. Although this has put a stress on Riverside operations staff, it has freed up precious time for field ACOs who

would have to otherwise transport these animals to the Western Riverside City/County animal shelter.

A new model for the Coachella Valley Animal Campus (CVAC) contract renegotiations to eliminate county subsidy - DAS entered into contracts for sheltering services with the desert cities using rates established to fully recover the costs of providing services. Because the increase for three desert cities (Cathedral City, Coachella, and Desert Hot Springs) was significant, the Board of Supervisors approved a step-up plan to bring all contracts in compliance with new rates by Fiscal Year 2014/2015.

Establishment of a County Service Area for spay/neuter or public safety and enforcement parcel assessment - DAS explored the possibility of seeking additional funding for services through an assessment process. The Economic Development Agency provided expert advice and informed DAS of the cost of such a ballot initiative. It was the general consensus that this may be an approach for a time when such a ballot initiative is more likely to succeed. This idea has been tabled for future consideration.

Actively updating fees – DAS is undertaking a fee study to bring forward during the first half of Fiscal Year 2012/2013. If the study indicates fee increases, those increases will be recommended when the study is brought forward. This study will include an evaluation of clinical fee methodology to ensure costs for providing public services are appropriately captured.

Rendering Service Alternatives – DAS met with Waste Management to determine the feasibility of utilizing the county landfills in lieu of the current rendering service. Due to landfill rules and regulations, it is not a reasonable or cost-effective alternative for DAS.

Additional Service Contracts – In 2011, DAS solicited all non-contract cities in the County offering to provide field and shelter services based on newly established fees. DAS received responses from Norco and Indio. A contract was developed for Indio, but it was not approved by the City Council. At this time, Norco has not moved forward with a contract.

New Strategic Initiatives

Pit bulls and Chihuahuas - Due to the severe impact of the sheer number of unwanted Pit Bull and Chihuahua impounds on the sheltering system, in accordance with SB 861 Speier effective October 7, 2005, DAS plans to request Board approval to initiate a county ordinance requiring owners of such dogs to have them altered. Pit bulls and Chihuahuas account for approximately forty percent of sheltered dogs and are involved in a disproportionate number of field activities and dog bite cases.

Through the years DAS has identified an increasing trend by some pet owners representing their own animals as strays either at the shelters or as a result of a call for service. The result of this is three fold: owners are not paying for the service when surrendering pets; animals are not held for the prescribed time in accordance with state law; and, shelter staff spends an inordinate amount of time identifying and contacting the owners as well as caring for these pets while the investigation takes place. Some dogs and cats have very significant medical or behavioral issues making adoption or rescue impossible. DAS will bring forth an ordinance amendment recommendation prescribing an administrative citation process to respond to this situation.

EXHIBITS







