

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: JOHN SKEEL, DIRECTOR
SONOMA COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES
SUBJECT: CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING - ADOPTION OF THE REVISED
ANIMAL SERVICES FEES

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

Sonoma County Animal Services is requesting the Council adopt revised animal services fees and approve a time-limited amnesty for dog license fees and penalties. Whether to adopt by resolution the proposed animal services fees and approve a time-limited amnesty for dog license fees and penalties is a matter of Council policy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sonoma County Animal Services (SCAS) is proposing several additional fee increases to help recover some of the costs of services delivered to residents in the jurisdictions served. This item was continued from August 11, 2015, Regular Meeting.

BACKGROUND

Sonoma County Animal Services (SCAS) provides sheltering, administrative, and field services for the City of Santa Rosa, unincorporated areas of the County, the Town of Windsor, and is responsible for rabies control for the entire County. On June 25, 2013, Council amended the City Code and approved an increase in dog license fees and expired license penalty.

SCAS is requesting additional fee increases. Fees and penalties collected for some services delivered to residents of the City of Santa Rosa are applied to offset the City's net cost for services.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

On August 11, 2015, the City Council reviewed this item and asked that it be continued so that some questions and concerns be addressed (Attachment 1).

ANALYSIS

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors approved Animal Services fees for FY 2015-16 to cover increased costs to provide service. Many fees on the fee schedule had not been adjusted since 2010. Fee increases ranging from 3-13% will recover increased costs of doing business, including those associated with salaries, benefits, services and supplies. Costs for salaries and benefits are estimated to be 9% greater in FY 2015-16 than in FY 2014-15. The FY 2015-16 fees include a new Animal Services fee to recover the costs of assisting with capturing livestock that have escaped confinement.

The Board of Supervisors also authorized Animal Services to implement a limited-term amnesty program, through FY 2015-16, for dog license and late license penalty fees, with the goal of increasing compliance with licensing requirements. With this authorization, Animal Services will identify and schedule an amnesty one day per quarter and one week per year. The amnesty will be an incentive to encourage compliance from dog owners who may be reluctant to license their animal due to outstanding fees and penalties. By paying the current license fee during an amnesty period, dog owners would be provided a current license and released from responsibility from all past license and penalty fees accrued. The amnesty would also apply to dog owners who have never complied with licensing requirements.

FISCAL IMPACT

The projected revenue increase resulting from owner surrender, license, impound and boarding fee changes is estimated to be \$5,287 in FY 2015-16 for which the City of Santa Rosa will receive credit consistent with its County of Sonoma animal services contract.

It is challenging to estimate the impact of an amnesty on program revenue. There is potential for some lost revenue due to the license fee and penalty waiver. If the revenue decreases, it could cost the City more for the services since the revenue is an offset to the costs. However, it is also likely that there will be increased ongoing revenue due to greater license compliance.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Questions and responses

Resolution/Exhibit A

CONTACT

Liz Licursi, Administrative Technician, elicursi@srcity.org, 707-543-3012