



Legislation Text

File #: 20-361, **Version:** 1

Report regarding a resolution amending an existing agreement with the County of San Mateo for continued facilitation and coordination of animal control and licensing services for an additional one-year term beginning July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, and authorize the City Manager to execute the amendment. (*Sharon Ranals, Assistant City Manager*)

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council adopt a Resolution amending an existing Agreement with the County of San Mateo for continued facilitation and coordination of Animal Control and Licensing Services for an additional one-year term beginning July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, and authorize the City Manager to execute the amendment, at an estimated cost for fiscal year 2020-21 of \$708,050.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

An agreement with the County related to animal control services was last adopted by City Council on March 25, 2015, with a five-year term which expires on June 30, 2020. The Staff Report from 2015 provides the following background:

Animal Control has been one of the longest running regional/shared services in San Mateo County. Since 1952, the County has contracted with the Peninsula Humane Society (PHS) for animal control field and sheltering service. All twenty cities in the County have in turn contracted with the County for these services. Historically, cities have taken advantage of the economies of pooling resources in order to realize lower costs for services than each city could likely achieve by providing its own services.

Cities participating in the Animal Control agreement include: Atherton, Belmont, Brisbane, Burlingame, Colma, Daly City, East Palo Alto, Foster City, Half Moon Bay, Hillsborough, Menlo Park, Millbrae, Pacifica, Portola Valley, Redwood City, San Bruno, San Carlos, San Mateo, South San Francisco, and Woodside.

The current Animal Control agreement includes the following services:

- Rescue injured animals
- Capture of at-large or stray animals
- Investigate animal bites and attacks
- Removal of dead animals from public property
- Removal of dead or living wildlife from private property if such wildlife has direct contact with humans and/or animals that involves a bite or attack
- Enforce leash laws and local ordinances (not including barking dog complaints, to be reported to local police)
- Euthanasia of severely injured animals
- Investigate reports of animal cruelty
- Provision of shelter services, including impounding, receiving of unwanted animals, housing, redemptions, treatment, sale, and adoption of animals
- Provision of treatment services to injured animals
- Conduct administrative hearings for Dangerous and Vicious Animal designations under the guidelines of the applicable City's ordinance, if any

- Provide in-person customer service at a minimum of two County locations that are open during normal business hours to enable residents the ability to obtain animal licenses and/or permits for all dogs and cats
- Work with San Mateo County veterinarians to ensure anti-rabies vaccination reporting is carried out as required by the County.

In 2019, prior to the expiration of the agreement, the County hired an outside consultant, Citygate Associates, to conduct a performance audit of the operator, PHS. Contracted cities were invited to communicate any issues or concerns that they wanted to see examined in the audit. A report, “Animal Care, Control, and Shelter Services Contract Compliance Review” was issued on December 9, 2019. The report outlined opportunities to strengthen future contracts, clarify expectations, and improve ongoing communications between all parties. The review resulted in 28 recommendations, with an opportunity provided for PHS to respond.

A subcommittee of several City Managers, led by George Rodericks from Atherton, was established to meet with County administrators to discuss and recommend changes in future contract provisions. The County will continue to evaluate the existing agreement with the Peninsula Humane Society and is entering into a one-year extension to facilitate that evaluation before making recommendations regarding a long-term contract.

Negotiations with PHS resulted in several changes in the contract terms for a one-year contract extension, with the fees charged to cities to remain essentially flat for 2020-21; the total county-wide total paid to PHS is not to exceed \$6,625,381. It should be noted that Cities are billed for and pay actual costs based on each City’s proportionate share, with an offset or credit given for that City’s share of licensing revenue for the last calendar year. The methodology for billing is specified in new Section 4.2 of the Agreement, which is included in the attached Amendment. Calculations for the twenty cities for fiscal year 2019-20 and 2020-21 are attached to this report.

Fees charged by PHS for services provided to the public will not increase in 2020-21. These fees are as follows:

One-year license	\$4.28 per license
Multi-year license	\$4.28 for the first year and \$2 for each additional year
Late fees collected	\$2.50 collection service fee for each license
Replacement tags	\$4.28 per tag
Bank and supply fees	Actual Cost

Another significant provision in the terms, as specified in Section 5.3 of the Agreement and called out in the Amendment, refers to the total cost of construction of the new Animal Shelter in San Mateo, and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was agreed to by the Cities and County on September 9, 2014. The revision to the MOU provides that the total cost of the shelter construction project is being updated, and when available the County will provide to Cities the final total cost of the Shelter construction which will be paid proportionately by each City as provided by the Memorandum. The MOU provides that the County would advance the funds for construction, to be repaid by the municipalities according to their share, though a 30-year, interest-free lease agreement. Continued Animal Control and shelter services to a City is contingent on that City approving any amended cost and proportionate share, as previously agreed in the MOU.

The Peninsula Humane Society has already approved a one-year extension to its agreement with the County. Approval of the Amendment to the Agreement between the County and the Cities will be agendaized for consideration by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors at the end of June, 2020.

FISCAL IMPACT

The percentage share of each City's costs is set by formula and services provided, and is revisited annually. South San Francisco's estimated share for 2020-21 will be 9.97% of the total contract amount of \$6,625,381, or \$660,550. In addition, the City is assessed a proportional share of the County's total costs to administer the contract, estimated at \$475,000, which is approximately \$47,500 for South San Francisco's share. The total estimated Animal Control costs for South San Francisco are \$708,050, which is comparable to the costs for the current year. City Council is also alerted to an increase in South San Francisco's prorated share of updated construction costs for the new regional Shelter facility in San Mateo, which will be provided when available.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Approval of this one-year contract amendment for Animal Services addresses several Strategic Plan Priority Areas: qualify of life, by making providing valuable services for pet owners; and public safety, by providing for the capture and shelter of stray and dangerous animals and the removal of dead animals on public property, in addition to other animal control services noted in this report.

CONCLUSION

Animal Services has been a long standing shared service among twenty cities in San Mateo County. Delivery of animal services through a regional contract is likely more cost-effective than were South San Francisco to provide services and operate an animal shelter independently or through smaller subgroupings. Given the current Covid-19 pandemic, and uncertainty of the 2020-21 budget, it is prudent to extend the existing five-year contract with Peninsula Humane Society for one additional year, with no increase in rates charged over the prior fiscal year.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2019-20 Final Animal Control Costs to Cities
2. 2020-21 Estimated Animal Control Costs to Cities