

**CITY OF ALBANY
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: 11/1/2010

Reviewed by: BP

SUBJECT: Animal Control Services

REPORT BY: Judy Lieberman, Assistant City Manager

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Negotiate with the City of Berkeley regarding services which could be added to the city's contractual services, including, but not limited to animal licensing and license renewals;
2. Develop options for dog walking business licenses in conjunction with the East Bay Regional Park District and the City of Berkeley;
3. Increase public awareness to encourage dog licensing

BACKGROUND

The City of Albany has contracted with the City of Berkeley for Animal Control Services since 1993. The City of Berkeley provides both animal control services and shelter services to the City. In FY2009/10 Berkeley Animal Services handled approximately 130 live animals and 30 dead animals from Albany. This is 6% of the total animals handled by Berkeley Animal Services.

The most recent contract between Albany and Berkeley for animal control services expired on June 30, 2010, and was in the amount of \$26,446 per year, for a three year period. The proposed amount from the City of Berkeley for the upcoming three year period is \$47,024.66 per year, a 78% increase. After discussions with Berkeley staff, the City of Berkeley's Animal Control Services Manager has agreed to extend the current contract rate through December, 2010 with the new rate coming into effect in January 2011. The City is awaiting the revised contract, and this provides an opportunity to negotiate for services with the City of Berkeley.

DISCUSSION

In attempting to address this cost increase and explore other options, staff has begun to assess the City's animal licensing, ordinances and services. A survey of animal control services and costs for other municipalities in our surrounding areas was prepared and is included as Attachment #1 to this report. In summary, our findings indicate that other adjacent options would be more expensive, but that there are some opportunities to provide more efficient or effective services, and/or reduce City costs. Two specific areas include dog licensing and handling investigations and determinations regarding vicious dogs.

The Waterfront Committee has recently supported the licensing of dog walkers on the Albany Waterfront, and the Park and Recreation Commission will also be reviewing this issue and making recommendations. The East Bay Regional Park District already has a program for licensing dog walkers in regional parks. The City will need to address how best to develop a coordinated approach.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

Dogs, and pets in general, are a positive asset in terms of companionship, mental health benefits and community. Public health issues surrounding pets include ensuring that they are vaccinated, addressing lost pets, and addressing impacts on neighborhoods from ill-behaved or vicious pets. The environmental impact of dogs on the waterfront, in terms of public health and relationship with wildlife must also be considered.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact at this time. However, the City's contract for Animal Control Services with the City of Berkeley is anticipated to rise significantly in the upcoming year. Some of the recommendations included in this report are intended to increase revenues or reduce city costs.

Attachments:

Memorandum dated September 22, 2010 re: Animal Control