



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

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**Department:** COUNTY MANAGER

**File #:** 16-577

Board Meeting Date: 9/26/2017

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**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**From:** John L. Maltbie, County Manager

**Subject:** Board of Supervisors' Response to the 2016-2017 Civil Grand Jury Report, "Animal Care and Control in San Mateo County"

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve the Board of Supervisors' response to the 2016-2017 Grand Jury Report, "Animal Care and Control in San Mateo County."

### **BACKGROUND:**

On July 17, 2017, the 2016-2017 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury issued a report titled "Animal Care and Control in San Mateo County." The Board of Supervisors is required to submit comments on the findings and recommendations pertaining to the matters over which it has some decision making authority within 90 days. The Board's response to the report is due to the Honorable Leland Davis, III no later than October 16, 2017.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Grand Jury made four findings and six recommendations in its report. The Board responses follow each finding and the 6 recommendations that the Grand Jury requested that the Board respond to within 90 days.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Finding 1:**

The County has no record of issuing a request for proposals for the animal control agreement; Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA has been the sole vendor since 1952.

#### **Response:**

Agree.

### **Finding 2:**

The County's oversight of the animal control agreement has been insufficient. In recent years,

PHS/SPCA was allowed to miss several required reporting obligations and the County has not performed regular site inspections or performance audits throughout the history of the animal control agreement.

**Response:**

Disagree. Currently PHS/SPCA sends timely monthly, quarterly and annual reports to the Health System. The Health Department observed that only one type of report, the quarterly maintenance and repair reports had not been submitted for several quarters to the County. Once the reporting obligation was clarified PHS/SPCA immediately sent all past due reports. The County contract with PHS/SPCA has no requirement for site inspections; however, during the last 10 months there have been two independent site inspections.

**Finding 3:**

Budget constraints have delayed the new animal shelter construction project, resulting in design concessions and, consequently, extending the use of the existing shelter beyond its useful life.

**Response:**

Agree.

**Finding 4:**

The County currently has no plans for the new shelter to have an adoption center. The lack of an adoption center could become an issue for the County in the future if PHS/SPCA, who currently provides adoption services at their private facility, is no longer the contractor for animal control services.

**Response:**

Partially disagree. The County is aware of the importance of having adoptable animals available for the community. The current agreement with PHS/SPCA is for available animals to be transported to their adoption facility. There are several options the Health System would consider if PHS/SPCA is no longer the contractor in 2020.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendation 1:**

The County shall issue a request for proposals or a request for qualifications for animal control services in preparation for the end of the existing agreement term (July 2020) in an effort to bring transparency and competitive bidding to the process.

**Response:**

The recommendation will be implemented. The current animal control contract expires June 2020. During 2019 an RFP will be developed in concert with the Cities and issued to allow for competitive bidding for the Animal Control and Care contract.

**Recommendation 2:**

The County shall ensure that PHS/SPCA is accountable for meeting all reporting obligations and requests mandated by the agreement.

**Response:**

The recommendation has been implemented. PHS/SPCA sends reports to the Health System, monthly, quarterly and annually. Monthly and annual reports are sent to each City for review. These reports allow the Health System to review the number of calls officers have responded to in the County, the number of animals housed at the shelter, the number of animals in quarantine for bites and the amount of dollars used for maintenance and repairs at the existing shelter. The County also receives an annual audited financial statement report that is completed by an independent auditing firm on behalf of PHS/SPCA.

**Recommendation 3:**

The County shall perform, at a minimum, annual facility and vehicle inspections to ensure a safe and healthy environment for the animals in the County's care and the staff that take care of them.

**Response:**

The recommendation requires further analysis. Further deliberation between the County and PHS/SPCA is warranted for consideration to amend the current contract with PHS/SPCA. The contract amendment may include deploying a small team from DPW and the Health System to conduct bi-annual shelter and vehicle inspections.

**Recommendation 4:**

The County shall execute routine third-party performance audits on the contracted services at logical intervals, e.g. midway through a 5-year agreement term, to ensure efficient and effective service.

**Response:**

The recommendation will be implemented. A deliverable in the current contract with the Cities calls for a third-party performance and financial audit of PHS/SPCA within the 5-year term of the contract. The Health System is currently drafting the RFP for the audit and will disseminate the RFP during 2018 with an anticipated award during spring 2018. The new contract starting July 2020 will execute routine third-party performance audits midway through the 5-year term and during the last year of the contract.

**Recommendation 5:**

Upon completion of construction of the shelter, the County shall address the new facility maintenance and repair responsibilities in a new service agreement upon completion of construction of the shelter; some of these responsibilities shall be delegated to the contractor based on simplicity, urgency and specialization of the repair.

**Response:**

The recommendation will be implemented. The Health System, PHS/SPCA and DPW are currently working on a new maintenance agreement for the new shelter. The responsibilities for repairs will be agreed upon and delegated to DPW and the contractor. Quarterly inspections of the facility will be completed by DPW to ensure the animal shelter is in good repair.

**Recommendation 6:**

By December 31, 2017, the County shall identify options for handling the adoption of animals from the shelter.

**Response:**

The recommendation will not be implemented. During 2020 if PHS/SPCA is not awarded the

contract the County, in consultation with the Cities, will consider several options for addressing the community need for adoption services. These could include but are not limited to the following:

- Develop an MOU with PHS/SPCA or other rescues for adoption services.
- Convert office space in the new shelter into adoption rooms and designate kennels and cat areas as adoptions.

Acceptance of the report contributes to the Shared Vision 2025 outcome of a Collaborative Community by ensuring that all Grand Jury findings and recommendations are thoroughly reviewed by the appropriate County departments and that, when appropriate, process improvements are made to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided to the public and other agencies.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no Net County Cost associated with accepting this report.