

Animal Shelter Staff Report Template

Subject: Receive a report on current animal shelter operational and facility planning efforts, and consider future shared governance options, including formation of a joint powers agency (JPA).

Recommendation: It is the recommendation of the interagency animal services working group that the four cities and County begin development of a joint powers agency (JPA), so that future operational and facility options can be explored in a shared governance structure. Staff seeks (Council/Board) approval to proceed with the initial step of developing a joint powers agreement that will outline the scope and governance structure of the proposed JPA.

Background:

Past Efforts:

In 2013, LAFCo contracted with the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program (KSMP) to conduct an analysis which identified programs and staffing needed to support Yolo County's animal population consistent with best practices, modern shelter standards, and the overall goal of reducing animal intake in the long term, thus reducing costs. Based on the LAFCo/KSMP Yolo County Animal Services Governance Study ("2013 Governance Study"), "the physical facility at YCAS is inadequate, outdated, and compromises the program's ability to adequately serve the community." Specifically, the existing shelter, which was built in the 1970's:

- Does not meet current facility standards;
- Does not meet shelter medicine best practices;
- Lacks key program elements for animal health; and
- Is not of sufficient size.

The 2013 Governance Study also identified the establishment of an animal shelter joint powers agency (JPA) as a means to provide participating jurisdictions with increased control over budget and operational decision making. The study identified the minimum program and staffing levels required to meet state mandated legal requirements, provide humane care, and maintain positive outcomes for animals. Although the formation of an animal services JPA could also result in operational cost savings through the potential for lower costs associated with decreased average salary and employee benefits, the study also identified additional "non-core" program and staffing options that are not legally required, but could help leverage outside resources, increase revenue generation, and reduce animal intake over the long term to reduce agency costs. A JPA can provide a greater voice for each member agency, giving them increased control over costs and the development of revenue generating programs.

Indigo Architects, hired by the County in 2016, prepared conceptual designs and cost estimates for two plausible shelter options: one for a new shelter and another converting Woodland's Fire Station #3 into an animal shelter. Both shelter options meet the requirements identified in the 2016 UC Davis KSMP shelter needs report, incorporating best practices for shelter design and operations.

To assist in the development of a new animal shelter, Unleashing the Possibilities (UTP), a California non-profit organization, was created to fundraise for a new animal shelter. UTP has committed to raise \$5 million. However, based on newly identified fundraising strategies, that amount could be \$8 million

or more. The fundraising effort will offset the cost of a new shelter. In addition, funds could be placed in an endowment to help offset the shelter operating costs.

Recent Efforts

On November 5th, 2018, a joint meeting of representatives of the County, Cities of Davis, Woodland, Winters, and West Sacramento, and UC Davis was held to gather information on the status of the shelter. Previously, each entity had selected Board Members, Councilmembers or staff designated to work together on a strategy for the future of the shelter facility and operations, and this was their first meeting. Dr. Kate Hurley of the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program, and Christine Crawford, Executive Director of LAFCo, presented their report on the operational needs and opportunities for the shelter. Candace Harrison and Bruce Playle of Indigo Architects also presented two plausible shelter options that had been considered based on the findings of the Koret Shelter Medicine report.

On November 15th, 2018, the same joint representatives met again to determine the next steps for action on the animal shelter. The recommended action from this meeting was for each jurisdiction's governing board to approve moving forward with the first phase of JPA development, and to receive a check-in from staff at each transition point in the phases. The suggested phases of JPA development include:

- 1.) **Governance Model:** Outlining the charge, scope and governance structure of the JPA, including powers, membership, bylaws and voting structure.
- 2.) **Strategic Planning:** JPA Initial Formation/Planning (Develop shared vision, mission, goals, objectives and strategic plan).
- 3.) **JPA Operational Model:** This phase assumes the JPA Board successfully completes the Strategic Planning phase, and continues to move forward. Here the JPA would consider operational models, staffing, and program options; allowing for updated financial projections before moving forward to consider facility options.

Once an operational model is agreed upon, additional phases might include:

- 1.) **Shelter Location**
- 2.) **Shelter Design**
- 3.) **Financing**
- 4.) **Budget**
- 5.) **Implementation of JPA**

The November workgroup participants all agreed that the JPA start as a planning agency only, and that the operational and program options need to be studied first, before proceeding to consideration of facility options. There are no preconceived plans regarding any type of program model, facility or otherwise.

Summary:

The development of a new animal services model through the formation of a JPA provides the best opportunity to implement programs which in the long run could reduce shelter operation and maintenance costs. Similar to the Valley Clean Energy Alliance (VCEA), the JPA can initially be formed by those agencies interested in participating, leaving on-ramps for additional agencies to join in the future, though agencies not included at the start would miss out on the benefits of exploring a new model through a shared governance approach. For the jurisdictions which choose not to participate, they could continue utilizing animal services provided by the Sheriff's Office until such time as the JPA commences operations. At that time, these jurisdictions would need to either provide for their own animal services, contract with a surrounding county agency, or petition to join the JPA, provided the JPA is able to accommodate new members. Once formed, the JPA will proceed to identify the best operational model for the future, and if there is concurrence with that structure, then begin to identify the best facility option to support the new operational model.