

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS  
AGENDA ITEM  
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM**

**DEPARTMENT:** Department of Public Health

**AGENDA DATE:** October 19, 2010

**CONTACT PERSON/PHONE:** John Neal, Interim Chief Budget Officer, OMB (915) 541-4777  
Michael Hill – Director, Department of Public Health (915) 771-5702

**DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED:** All

**SUBJECT:**

Budget Transfer to ratify Council direction for the Department of Public Health.

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:**

On October 5<sup>th</sup>, the Department of Public Health presented to Council a collaborative model to change the focus of animal services. Per that discussion and Council's direction this budget transfer will fund two Health Education positions, two Animal Services positions and the opening of an off-site animal adoption center

**PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:**

**AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

Transfer \$250,000 from General Fund reserve to Department of Public Health

**BOARD / COMMISSION ACTION:**

N/A.

---

\*\*\*\*\*AUTHORIZATION\*\*\*\*\*

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Animal Services in El Paso... Going Forward



*Responsive  
Public Policy*

*Effective  
Programs*



*Community  
Engagement*

*Added  
Value*

# Trends in Animal Services



- **Divest public health of animal welfare services (retain disease investigation and control in public health)**

## Why?

With the shift of emphasis from disease control (protection of humans from rabies) to animal welfare, fewer health departments are operating animal services programs:

44% in 1992

19% in 2008

# Trends Continued...



- *Field*: Assign field activities to code enforcement, law enforcement, or independent animal services department
- *Shelter*: Out-source animal shelter operations to non-profit
- *Adoption*: Out-source animal adoption services to non-profit(s)
- Conduct animal adoptions at off campus locations
  - Pet stores
  - Community store front center(s)
- *Education*: Provide intensive community education on pet ownership. Reframe animal control as civic responsibility

# Model Programs

## Who manages animal services in nearby jurisdictions?



- San Diego – Stand alone animal agency
- Albuquerque – Stand alone animal agency
- Austin – Health department now, moving to stand alone agency in October (PD conducts cruelty investigations)
- Fort Worth – Code Compliance Department

# Research Results

## How are nearby jurisdictions funded and staffed?



<b>Service Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Animal Intake</b>	<b>Annual Budget</b>	<b>FTEs</b>
San Diego County	2,002,000	25,000	\$15,006,000	125
Albuquerque	528,000	27,000	\$9,500,000	140
Austin/Travis County	999,000	23,000	\$5,500,000	85
Ft. Worth	535,000	23,000	\$3,100,000	50 (181 in code)
El Paso Area	751,000	23,000	\$2,780,863	56

# Animal Services in El Paso...Going Forward



## *Current Centralized Model*

### Health Dept Animal Services

Disease Control

Community Education

Field Enforcement

Shelter Operations

### Non-profit Organizations

Adoption Services

# Existing Animal Services for El Paso



- **Divided into three major functions**

- **Field Operations** **Sub-total Field    \$1,290,254**
  - ✦ 22 Animal Services Officers
  - ✦ 2 Sr. Animal Services Officers
  - ✦ 2 Shift Supervisors
  - ✦ 1 Operations Supervisor
- **Shelter Operations** **Sub-total Shelter    \$1,443,441**
  - ✦ 12 Animal Services Attendants
  - ✦ 1 Sr. Animal Services Attendant
  - ✦ 9 Customer Relations Clerks
  - ✦ 1 Accounting/Payroll Specialist
  - ✦ 2 Veterinary Technicians
  - ✦ 2 Shift Supervisors
- **Education** **Sub-total Education    \$47,198**
  - ✦ 1 Health Education Specialist

**Grand Total                    \$2,780,863**

# Animal Services in El Paso...Going Forward



## Current Centralized Model

### Health Dept Animal Services

Disease Control  
Community Education  
Field Enforcement  
Shelter Operations

### Non-profit Organizations

Adoption Services

## Proposed Collaborative Model

### Health Dept Animal Services

Disease Control  
Community Education

### Environmental Services/ Code Compliance

Field Enforcement

### Non-profit Organizations

Adoption Services  
Shelter Operations

# Short Term: Proposed for Current Fiscal Year (2011)



- Change focus of animal services from *reactive* (dog pickup and sheltering) to *proactive* (enforcement of ordinance: tags, litter permits, sales) (Cost: None)
- Respond to calls only when a person or pet is in danger, spend more time enforcing ordinance (Cost: None)
- Add two health educators (Cost: \$110,443)
  - Educate the community on Title 7 requirements
  - Promote responsible pet ownership through print, radio, and television venues; internet-based social media; and partnering with non-profits, businesses, and neighborhood organizations
  - Conduct high profile community events, e.g., FETCHapalooza, Pet Wash Days at local businesses, Mayor's Dog Ball, to raise community awareness and build support for policy

# Short Term: Proposed for Current Fiscal Year (2011)



- RFQ all existing animal services contracts (adoption; spay/neuter voucher, clinic, van) to get best value (No additional cost---potential to save up to \$100,000)
- Open off-site adoption center to increase adoption numbers and raise public awareness (Cost: \$66,000/\$1M savings on shelter expansion budget)
- Modify ordinance so code compliance inspectors can cite for animal violations (tags, litters, puppy selling). No animal pickup (Cost: None)
- Add two more Animal Services Officers to be dedicated solely to enforcement activities, not to respond to service calls (Cost: \$76,442)

Maximum additional cost \$252,885

# Long Term: Proposed for Next Fiscal Year (2012)



- **Plan to transfer animal services field operations/personnel to Environmental Services Code Compliance Section**
  - Code compliance inspectors would enforce ordinance but not detain animals
  - Animal Control Officers (transferred from the Health Department) would enforce ordinance AND pickup animals
  - \$1.3 M expense budget and all related revenue would be moved from Health Department to Environmental Services
  - Nearly triples capacity for field activity from 26 to 73 staff
- **Pursue outsourcing options for shelter management**
  - Outsource shelter operations to non-profit for staffing flexibility, cost savings, and enhanced care for impounded animals.

**Maximum additional cost \$0**

# Conclusion



Changes are needed to enforce Title 7 requirements:

- Greater emphasis on enforcement of registration and litter permit requirements v. capturing of animals
- Greater emphasis on educating the public to be community partners in proper pet ownership
- Increase adoption of impounded animals
- Increase access to spay/neuter services

