

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 02/26/07		Item Number: <u>A-1</u>	
AGENDA ITEM: 1) Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$20,000; 2) Approval of an Agreement with Progressive Solutions for Pet Licensing Software and Services; 3) Authorization of an Amendment to the City's Contract with the Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control; and 4) Adoption of a Resolution Establishing a Licensing, Microchipping, and Spay/Neuter Amnesty Program for Dog and Cat Owners			
Contact Person/Dept.: Shelly Wolfberg, Intergovernmental Relations Officer		Phone Number: (310) 253-6008	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐		General Fund: Yes ☒ No ☐	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒	
Public Notification: Friends of Culver City Animals; Friends of Culver City Dog Park; Progressive Solutions, Hiderleiter de Llamas (HdL) and Master Notification List (02/21/07).			
Department Approval: Martin R. Cole (02/21/2007)		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Iker) (02/21/07)	
City Controller Approval: Marlee Chang (02/21/2007)		City Manager Approval: Jerry B. Fulwood (02/21/2007)	
<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> Staff recommends the City Council: 1. Appropriate \$20,000 from the General Fund Reserve; 2. Approve an agreement with Progressive Solutions for Pet Licensing Software and Services; 3. Authorize an amendment to the City's Contract with the Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control (LACDACC); and 4. Adopt a resolution establishing a licensing, microchip, and spay/neuter amnesty opportunity for dog and cat owners who license their pets in accordance with the amnesty requirements during the amnesty period (April 1, 2007 to June 29, 2007); The Budget Amendment requires a 4/5 vote. <u>BACKGROUND:</u> Currently, all Culver City Animal Control services are contracted through LACDACC. In FY 2005-2006, the City of Culver City had a total of 17,130 households with 2,974			

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licensed dogs. The current license fees are \$20.00 for altered dogs and \$40.00 for unaltered dogs. Residents 60 years old and older may be exempt and/or eligible for a reduced license fees if they meet specific income criteria.

LACDACC amended its Animal Control Ordinance (Title 10) in 2006 to include various provisions. On September 11, 2006, the City Council adopted Title 10 in total. At that City Council meeting, the City Council authorized, beginning July 1, 2007, the mandatory microchipping of dogs; mandatory spay and neutering of dogs; and mandatory cat licensing and microchipping - pending the availability of LACDACC to administer such services. Since the September 11th Council meeting, staff has contacted LACDACC which has indicated its ability to support the new requirements for Culver City cats.

Over the past year, the City Council subcommittee of Mayor Silbiger and Councilmember Corlin has met to discuss animal care and control with City staff, the Friends of Culver City Animals, elected officials and staff from other local cities. The Subcommittee has been assessing current animal care and control services and exploring opportunities for the future of the program. Areas evaluated by the Subcommittee included bringing animal licensing in house and creating a subsequent one year amnesty for the mandatory spay and neutering and microchipping of dogs and cats.

DISCUSSION:

In-House Animal Licensing Software

Staff has received some complaints from the community regarding the timeliness of receiving dog licenses from the County of Los Angeles and the occasional mismatched pet licenses in homes with multiple pets. Subsequently, staff researched options to bring animal licensing in house. Some of the benefits of an in-house program include the ability to more closely and efficiently track the receipt of animal license applications and payments, and the direct transfer of funds into the City's revenue accounts. Staff met with two providers of animal licensing software- HdL and Progressive Solutions. HdL's program is currently used to track Culver City business license and property tax information, and Progressive Solutions *Ca\$hierCentral* cash receipting software is used by the City Treasurer's Office and will be used by Parks, Recreation and Community Services. Progressive Solutions' Animal Control software program would include a seamless electronic interface via the City's cash receipting software. HdL's program would provide the electronic interface, however the service would be custom work and would require an additional charge to be determined on a time and materials basis.

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HdL's fee for the basic program is \$13,078 and the annual maintenance fee is \$2,495. Progressive Solutions' fee is \$17,600 (including maintenance until June 30, 2007). The annual maintenance fee of \$2,600 would be due on July 1, 2007 and would be included in the budget request for Fiscal Year 2007/2008 should the City Council approve purchase of this software. Because Progressive Solutions' software is already being implemented in processing City receipts, staff is recommending the use of this program for greater efficiency in processing license payments. Animal licensure software is provided by only a limited number of vendors. Additionally, when the compatibility issue is factored into the decision, HdL and Progressive remain the only software packages that meet the City's requirements. Under the City's Purchasing Ordinance, because the purchase amount is less than \$20,000, formal bidding is not required,

With the use of an in house animal licensing system, staff has identified an opportunity to improve the licensing process. Staff believes through the use of an improved system, the number of pet licenses in Culver City will increase while also improving customer service to Culver City residents. Based on Veterinary Market Statistics, the national average number of dogs per dog owning households represents an estimated 7,500 dogs in Culver City. And, there may also be an estimated 6,500 cats in Culver City. In FY 2005-06, under the current contract with LACDACC, 2,860 dogs were licensed resulting in gross revenues of \$70,314.50, which included license fees and penalties. Staff believes that an increased amount of revenue will be realized through an in house licensing program and the new requirement of cat licensing.

To implement the new software program, Progressive Solutions would import LACDACC's data into the system. The new in-house license system would be managed by existing staff in the City Manager's office with payments made through the interfaced software in coordination with the City Treasurer's Office.

Amnesty Process

In an effort to increase the number of dogs licensed in Culver City, staff has contacted LACDACC who has agreed to expand its annual rabies vaccination clinic to include dog licensing and free dog microchipping. This clinic will be held on April 21, 2007 from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Culver City Armory. The first 500 pet owners desiring a free microchip for their dog must show proof of the dog's spay or neuter status and show proof of license and vaccination-or obtain one at the event. Further, the County of Los Angeles offers free microchipping clinics throughout the County. These free microchipping clinics represent a step forward to bring Culver City dog owners into compliance.

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Yet, staff believes the process to bring pet owners into compliance relative to mandatory microchipping and spay and neutering will be an adjustment for community members. In order to increase the effectiveness of this new ordinance, staff recommends the offering on an amnesty to all dog and cat owners under the following conditions:

- Amnesty Period is April 1, 2007 to June 29, 2007
- Dog and Cat owners who license their pets during the Amnesty Period will have all prior license fees and penalties waived
- To qualify for amnesty licensing, pets must follow all of the requirements of Title 10 and the additional Culver City requirements (including licensing, alteration and microchipping of dogs and licensing and microchipping of cats).

Should this proposal be adopted by City Council, staff proposes to send postcards to every household informing them of the amnesty, the requirements to qualify for the amnesty, and the opportunity to come to the City's microchipping/vaccination event and other events in the County.

By purchasing an in-house animal licensing program and providing for the amnesty, staff will have an opportunity to maximize the benefit of an in house licensing program to update pet license data and bring more pet owners into compliance. Further, using the data gathered in-house, staff would be able to provide the City Council with more accurate revenue figures for use by the City Council in considering what, if any, enhancements the Council may deem appropriate. To that end, staff will complete its analysis of the April – June licensure data and provide the City Council with an update at the City Council meeting of July 23, 2007.

While the licensing program is brought in-house, the City will still be in need of animal control and sheltering services. The current contract with the County will be amended to delete the licensing requirement effective April 1, 2007. Animal Control and sheltering would continue to be provided through LACDACC.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

While staff will present to Council in July a very accurate estimation of annual licensure revenues based upon actual receipts during the amnesty period, it is conservatively estimated that through implementation of the new licensure program, an additional 20% (or 570 dogs) would be licensed. This equates to an increase in annual revenue of \$11,400 (570 x \$20). Under the new cat licensing requirements,

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staff conservatively estimates at least 500 cats would be licensed, generating an additional \$10,000 in licensing revenues.

The cost of the software from Progressive Solutions is \$17,400. Staff recommends the City Council appropriate \$20,000 (to allow for the advertisement(s) for the amnesty program and any unexpected contingencies) from the General Fund Reserve and allocate this amount to an operating budget account, The City Controller's Office will be working with the City Treasurer's Office to established appropriate accounts for this approved program, including the revenue and appropriation accounts.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Progressive Solutions Proposal for Pet Licensing Software and Services to the City of Culver City.
2. Proposed resolution.

MOTION:

That the City Council:

1. Appropriate \$20,000 from the General Fund reserve to an operating budget account; and,
2. Approve an Agreement with Progressive Solutions for Pet Licensing Software and associated services at a cost of \$17,600; and
3. Direct the City Attorney to draft and/or approve the Agreement as to form and authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City; Authorize the City Manager to execute an amendment to the City's Agreement with LACDACC; and,
4. Adopt a resolution establishing a licensing, microchip, and spay/neuter amnesty program for dog and cat owners

The budget amendment requires a 4/5ths vote.