

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 08/08/05		Item Number: <u>A-3</u>					
AGENDA ITEM: Consideration of the Renewal of the Animal Control Contract with Los Angeles County and Canvassing Program							
Contact Person/Dept.: Shelly W. Chagnon		Phone Number: (310) 253-6008					
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐		General Fund: Yes ☒ No ☐					
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒					
Public Notification: Los Angeles County Animal Control (8/3/05) and Master Notification List (8/3/05).							
Department Approval: Jerry B. Fulwood (8/2/05)		CAO Approval: Jerry B. Fulwood (8/3/05)					
City Controller Approval: Marlee Chang (8/3/05)							
<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> That the City Council authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to sign the proposed contract (Attachment 1) with Los Angeles County for animal control services through June 30, 2007 and approve the proposed canvassing recommendation. <u>BACKGROUND:</u> The City has been contracting with Los Angeles County's Department of Animal Care and Control (LACDAC) for the provision of animal control services for the past seven years. Under this contract, LACDAC has rendered field services, sheltering services (in Carson), and licensing services. LACDAC also conducts an annual rabies clinic in Culver City. Each year, costs for LACDAC increase approximately 3-5% based on service needs and cost recovery by the County. LACDAC also conducts an annual rabies clinic in Culver City. LACDAC contracts with the following cities and County areas to provide a combination of licensing and licensing services: <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 25%;"> Acton Agoura Agoura Hills Agua Dulce Alhambra Altadena Arcadia Artesia Azusa Baldwin Park Bassett Bell </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 25%;"> Beverly Hills Bouquet Canyon Bradbury Brea Calabasas Calabasas Canoga Park Canyon Country Carson Castaic Cerritos Charter Oak </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 25%;"> Chatsworth City Terrace Claremont Compton Covina Cudahy Culver City Diamond Bar Duarte El Camino Village El Monte Fernwood </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 25%;"> Florence/Firestone Gardena Glendora Gorman Green Valley Hacienda Heights Harbor City Hawaiian Gardens Hidden Hills Industry Inglewood Irwindale </td> </tr> </table>				Acton Agoura Agoura Hills Agua Dulce Alhambra Altadena Arcadia Artesia Azusa Baldwin Park Bassett Bell	Beverly Hills Bouquet Canyon Bradbury Brea Calabasas Calabasas Canoga Park Canyon Country Carson Castaic Cerritos Charter Oak	Chatsworth City Terrace Claremont Compton Covina Cudahy Culver City Diamond Bar Duarte El Camino Village El Monte Fernwood	Florence/Firestone Gardena Glendora Gorman Green Valley Hacienda Heights Harbor City Hawaiian Gardens Hidden Hills Industry Inglewood Irwindale
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Kagel Canyon	Los Angeles	Palos Verdes	Temple City
La Crescenta	(90001, 90002,	Pasadena	Thousand Oaks
La Habra	90008, 90022,	Pearblossom	Topanga Canyon
Heights	90023, 90063,	Quartz Hill	Torrance
La Mirada	90032, 90043,	Rancho Palos	Tujunga
La Puente	90044, 90047	Verdes	Universal Studios
La Verne	90056, 90061)	Rolling Hills	Valencia
Ladera Heights	Lynwood	Rolling Hills Estates	Valinda
Lake Elizabeth	Malibu	Rosemead	Valyermo
Lake Hughes	Marina Del Rey	Rowland Heights	Walnut
Lake Los	Maywood	San Dimas	Walnut Park
Angeles	Monrovia	San Fernando	West Covina
Lancaster	Montrose	San Gabriel	West Hollywood
Lawndale	Mt. Baldy	San Pedro	Westlake Village
Lennox	Newhall	Santa Clarita	Whittier
Leona Valley	Palmdale	Saugus	Woodland Hills
Llano	Palmdale	South El Monte	
Lomita	Palos Verdes	South San Gabriel	
	Estates	Stevenson Ranch	

On May 10, 2004, the City Council unanimously approved the contract renewal with Los Angeles County for Animal Control Services for one year. On February 28, 2005, the City Council authorized dog license fee increases which have taken effect beginning with the FY 05-06 dog license renewal period set by the County.

DISCUSSION:

LACDAC has provided the following service levels to the City of Culver City during FY 04/05 to date as compared with FY 03/04 (Attachment 2):

Service Provided	7/1/03-6/30/04	7/1/04-6/30/05
Service Request	964	1045
Field Hours (Includes humane education hrs)	822:30	812:30
Dogs Impounded	78	81
Cats Impounded	87	104
Other (Animal) Impounded	128	185
Citations Issued	11	6
Private Veterinarian Care	5	5
Observation	2	0
Dead Animal	172	229
Humane Investigations	14	25
Court Appearances (Hours)	4:00	5:45
Animals Placed in New Homes	21	38
Animals Returned to Owners	28	26
Licenses Sold	1,745	1,900
Animal License Canvassing (Hours)	5:00	0:00

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The number of field hours can vary based on the amount of time required for each service call. The following table shows a history of the total revenues less costs for LACDAC services (Attachment 3).

Fiscal Year	Total Revenue (1)	Field Service Cost (2)	Net Housing Services Cost (3)	Net Animal Control Program Cost (4)
1999-2000	\$61,974.00	\$70,080.27	\$5,436.56	\$13,542.83
2000-2001	\$52,619.00	\$56,012.21	\$8,309.32	\$11,702.53
2001-2002	\$27,987.50	\$33,535.79	\$6,717.19	\$12,265.48
2002-2003 (5)	\$73,210.00	\$100,613.74	\$7,175.49	\$34,579.23
2003-2004	\$31,832.50	\$49,459.87	\$6,480.30	\$24,107.67
2004-2005	\$33,945.00	\$52,313.30	\$9,664.70	\$28,033.00

Notes:

- (1) Revenue: License and Penalty Fees Collected.
- (2) Field Service Cost: License Handling Cost, Canvassing Cost, Animal Control Officer Cost (pick up/transport of animals).
- (3) Housing Services Cost: Shelter and veterinary services less housing fees paid by pet owners.
- (4) Net Animal Control Program Cost = Total Revenue – Field Service Cost – Net Housing Services Cost (Expenditures).
- (5) Very extensive canvassing services were performed.

Although LACDAC had some challenges this year in administering renewal notices with complete updated Culver City license fees, LACDAC addressed its error by mailing out revised notices to Culver City dog owners at LACDAC's expense. Although the City has had some issues overseeing LACDAC's agreement, staff has been able to overcome most of the issues in working with LACDAC staff. LACDAC's program has been cost effective to manage by the City, diverting minimal staff time from other programs and projects.

Survey of Other Cities

The City of Culver City is one of the more than 40 cities in Los Angeles County that contract with LACDAC for animal control services. The following table lists the costs and types of services that are provided for by nearby cities in the County:

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City	FY 04-05 Net Animal Control Program Cost (1)	Comment
Beverly Hills Pop. 35,088	\$20,000	Contracts with County for services. Utilizes County shelter (Carson).
Culver City Pop. 39,896	\$28,033	Contracts with County for services. Utilizes County shelter (Carson).
El Segundo Pop. 16,492 (2)	\$129,450	Has own program. Contracts with Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) (Hawthorne) for shelter services.
Hawthorne Pop. 86,279 (2)	\$265,800	Has own program. Contracts with SPCA (Hawthorne) for shelter services.
Lawndale Pop. 32,436	\$74,250	Has own program. Contracts with SPCA (Hawthorne) for shelter services.
Manhattan Beach Pop. 36,321	\$215,416	Has own program. Utilizes County shelter (Carson).
Santa Monica Pop. 87,823	\$943,202	Has own program. Operates own shelter.
Torrance Pop. 142,841 (2)	\$346,370	Has own program. Utilizes County shelter (Carson).
West Hollywood Pop. 36,933	\$34,800	Contracts with County for services. Utilizes County shelter (Carson) and Contracts with SPCA (Hawthorne) for shelter services.

- (1) Unless otherwise stated, Net Animal Control Program Cost = Total Revenue – Field Service Cost – Net Housing Services Cost (Expenditures).
- (2) Costs represented here do not reflect license and penalty revenues, which were not available at time of report.

As reflected in the table above, some cities in the region operate their own animal care and control programs, often through their Police departments. The City of Santa Monica operates its own program and shelter whereas cities, such as El Segundo, Manhattan Beach and Torrance, operate their own programs and contract for shelter services through LACDAC or SPCA.

As identified in the table above, the cities that operate their own programs have larger operating budgets for animal care and control programs than those cities that contract with LACDAC for services.

Animal Control Service Options

Staff compared LACDAC'S proposed services to those offered by other entities or brought in house. These options fall within the categories of licensing, field services, sheltering services, and dog license canvassing.

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Licensing

One option for animal licensing services is PetData. PetData is a private company headquartered in Irving, Texas that provides dog licensing services for municipalities and animal welfare agencies. PetData mails one or more renewal notices to owners of dogs with expired licenses. The company utilizes whatever data is provided by the municipality at the time of contracting for services, and has experience using LACDAC data. In addition, PetData recommends that they or the City contact local veterinarians to ask them to provide data on their patients with expired licenses and to encourage patients to license their pets.

LACDAC currently retains \$2.97 per license as a handling fee to cover its processing costs. PetData is paid approximately \$3.50-\$3.75 on a per license basis. This fee covers all of PetData's costs, which include mailing, database maintenance and communication to the City on a regular basis regarding licensing revenues and statistics. PetData does not provide the actual dog license tags. Cities must purchase the tags from an outside vendor. PetData advised that these tags typically cost \$0.05-\$0.08 per tag. The City would be responsible for the cost of mailing tags to pet owners.

The City of Torrance has been a client of PetData since June 2004. While Torrance identifies an increased number of licenses, staff believes this is attributable to both PetData and the City's own significant telephone canvassing and field service efforts. To bring PetData's services to Culver City would require additional staff time to coordinate the purchase of dog license tags and implement canvassing services, which are not provided by PetData. Staff recommends keeping LACDAC's pet licensing services.

Field Services

LACDAC's field services for Culver City include, but are not limited to, responding to calls for stray or dead domestic or wild animals, barking dog and vicious dog complaints. County staff are dispatched to pick up pets and whenever possible return them to their owners if the animal is wearing an identification tag. If animals do not have identification tags, they are taken to the LACDAC shelter in Carson while they wait to be claimed by their owners. Staff believes that LACDAC's field services are more cost effective than bringing a program in house.

Shelter Services

At LACDAC's Carson shelter, animals that are injured are cared for by a LACDAC veterinarian and all animals are housed in the facility. Although Culver City currently utilizes LACDAC's Carson Shelter, the City, along with the Cities of West Hollywood

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and Beverly Hills, contracted with SPCA to provide sheltering services at its facility on Jefferson Boulevard in Los Angeles years ago. Although the Jefferson Shelter is now closed, in 2004 City of Beverly Hills staff spoke with SPCA management who indicated that the estimated annual cost to open the Jefferson facility would be approximately \$200,000. This figure would include services for the cities of Beverly Hills, West Hollywood and Culver City. In the past few months, staff has requested information several times regarding a proposed contracted cost for SPCA services and has not received a formal reply from the SPCA. The information requested included the feasibility of reopening the Jefferson Shelter or utilizing the Hawthorne Shelter.

Dog License Canvassing

LACDAC states that door-to-door canvassing of Culver City takes 6 individuals a total of approximately 1,000 hours. LACDAC's canvassers, overseen by a supervisor, go to the residences of pet owners with expired licenses and other households where they notice a food dish out front, or hear a barking dog, or suspect more than one dog in the home not accounted for with a license. Canvassers use a walking index based upon LACDAC records for the purpose of collecting license fees and penalties. LACDAC's canvassers typically work 10-hour days from Wednesday through Saturday and are compensated for mileage for using their personal vehicles. In FY 2002-03, the last time LACDAC performed door-to-door canvassing, it cost \$39,232.50, and resulted in a total program cost of \$34,579.23 to the City for that year.

LACDAC staff indicated it is ideal to conduct canvassing efforts biannually to bring pet owners current on their license fees through collection door-to-door. Therefore, the benefits and cost would be spread over a two-year period. Staff believes it is important for canvassing to be performed to keep records updated and enforce the requirement to have dogs licensed in Culver City.

Other cities have utilized LACDAC to perform canvassing services. This spring, LACDAC performed canvassing for the City of West Hollywood at a cost of \$32,348.52, irrespective of additional revenues collected as a result of the canvassing.

Staff looked at opportunities to implement a new in-house door-to-door canvassing program. Several cities, such as Torrance, utilize an in-house door-to-door canvassing program through its Police Department. This type of program would be costly to implement when considering the additional hiring of a Community Service Officer and utilizing the services of sworn Police management on an overtime basis to supervise this individual and this program. There would also be additional costs and considerations for vehicle usage, cash handling through the collection of fees

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and penalties, training, turnover and any additional liability borne by the City of Culver City to implement an in-house program.

This type of program would not be practical to implement through Culver City's Police Department, because of current staffing reductions due to budget cuts in FY 2002-03 and FY 2003-04. Staffing levels in the Police Department have not been brought up to past levels. Currently several duties previously performed by non-sworn personnel are being handled by sworn officers. Staff does not recommend bringing the canvassing program in-house because of current and future budget considerations, which may not provide the opportunity to increase personnel. Some of the benefits to having canvassing conducted by LACDAC staff include individuals who are trained and supervised to conduct canvassing, handle cash, continue with program consistency, and ensure that liability and legal services are covered within the auspices of the County of Los Angeles.

Proposed Program Recommendation

Culver City's newly adopted dog license fees could result in an approximate \$12,710 increase in revenues to offset the existing program. However, it does not appear that there would be sufficient funds to cover an increase in costs for a new animal care and control program, if for example the City of Manhattan Beach model was implemented. Manhattan Beach, a City with a population size similar to Culver City, employs three Community Service Officers and contracts with LACDAC for sheltering services. Manhattan Beach's budget, after licensing revenues are collected, totals \$215,416.

In keeping with City's practice of implementing projects and programs with ongoing reliable funding sources, the most cost effective method to continue Culver City's animal care and control program would be to continue to contract with LACDAC. Additionally, staff recommends requesting LACDAC to conduct dog license canvassing for the City during this fiscal year at a projected cost of \$27,000, a figure which estimates a net cost after additional revenues are collected through canvassing.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

\$30,000 was approved for Animal Control Services Approved in the FY 05-06 Budget. Staff recommends the proposed licensing and canvassing program to be budgeted in the following manner:

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Estimated Increased Costs Canvassing Program as offset by increased revenues for collection of fees and penalties:	\$27,000
Less projected increase in license fee revenues:	<u>\$12,710</u>
Total Net New Program Costs to include LACDAC Canvassing for FY 2005-2006	\$14,290

Staff proposes a one-time General Fund expenditure request of an amount not to exceed \$15,000 for additional Animal Control Costs. The benefit of this expenditure will include a two-year period of FY 05-06 and FY 06-07. The additional money will allow for any contingencies. Staff proposes using Appropriated Reserves to pay for this program increase.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Animal Control Services Agreement (Los Angeles County - The City of Culver City)
2. Fiscal Year 2004-2005 Animal Control Program Cost
3. County of Los Angeles Department of Animal Care and Control – Animal Control Program Cost for Fiscal Year 1999-2000 through Fiscal Year 2003-2004

MOTION:

That the City Council:

1. Authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to execute the proposed contract with Los Angeles County for animal control services through June 30, 2007; and
2. Recommend conducting increasing Animal Control Services to include canvassing program provided by LACDAC at a cost not to exceed \$15,000 for FY 2005-06; or
3. Provide other direction to staff.