Board of Supervisors Memorandum

November 5, 2013

Contingency Allocation for Expanding Shelter Facilities at the Pima Animal Care Center

Introduction

The Pima Animal Care Center (PACC) is presently undergoing substantial facility overcrowding with animals housed, in many cases, two or three to a kennel. This is creating an unhealthy environment for the animals and a chaotic operation of the PACC. This overcrowding is due to staff caring for rescuable pets longer in an effort to find homes for them. These efforts have resulted in a 72 percent live release rate in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2013/14, compared to a 49 percent rate during the same period two years ago. This positive dynamic is expected to continue.

The options available to help resolve the current overcrowding include increasing euthanasia or increasing kennel capacity. Minor staff increases to achieve appropriate and proper staffing for additional kennel capacity and increased efforts to find homes more quickly would be required if such increased capacity is provided.

Clearly, increased euthanasia is the least desirable option. To provide an emergency expansion of kennel capacity and shorten hold times will require a midyear Contingency allocation to the PACC budget, which will then be proportionately recovered by chargebacks to participating jurisdictions in the subsequent fiscal year, Fiscal Year 2014/15.

A long-term solution to this problem is on the horizon but not readily available. Contained in the possible bond program for 2015 is a substantially expanded and essentially replacement animal care facility to be constructed on the present PACC property on Silverbell Road. Approximately $22 million in bonds have been allocated for this purpose. However, if bonds were approved by voters in 2015, it is unlikely a facility would be available to relieve the present conditions until 2017 or 2018.

Deputy County Administrator Jan Lesher and Facilities Management Director Reid Spaulding have recommended a short-term solution to the immediate overcrowding problem. This solution is to increase kennel capacity by approximately 50 percent by employing a tent and newly constructed kennels. The cost of a concrete slab, the tent, kennels, utilities and supplies is estimated to be not more than $280,000.

Staffing increases are also necessary to efficiently operate the additional kennel capacity. Staffing is estimated to cost another $242,400 annually. Since it is unlikely staff can be

hired before December 1, only one half-year of staffing cost will need to be budgeted from Contingency.

The total cost of this immediate, emergency shelter overcrowding proposal is $401,200. I would recommend the Board of Supervisors fund this amount from Contingency with the assumption that they would be increased in the PACC budget for Fiscal Year 2014/15 and shared by all participating jurisdictions.

It should be noted that the community is the substantial support of PACC facilities, and there is an apparent recognition of the need to significantly invest in these facilities. During the recent bond survey, where 17,000 responses were received, PACC facilities were given the top project rating compared to the 18 other public health and governmental facilities.

Recommendation

I recommend the Board of Supervisors approve a Contingency allocation in the amount of $401,200 to provide additional kennel capacity to respond to the current overcrowding at the Pima Animal Care Center.

Respectfully submitted,

C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

CHH/mjk – October 31, 2013

c: Jan Lesher, Deputy County Administrator for Medical & Health Services
Dr. Francisco Garcia, Director, Health Department
Reid Spaulding, Director, Facilities Management
Kim Janes, Manager, Pima Animal Care Center