



MEMORANDUM

Date: March 17, 2017

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "CH Huckelberry", is written over the typed name and title.

Re: **Provision of Regional Animal Care Services in Marana**

As recently reported by the media, the Town of Marana has elected to discontinue their Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the County for the provision of animal care services. Based on action by the Mayor and Council, Marana will cease being a member of the regional system effective July 1, 2017.

In order to ensure the remaining regional partners pay only their share of services, we will prepare, and request that the Board of Supervisors adopt, ordinance and code amendments related to animal care. These ordinances will ensure other participating jurisdictions do not inadvertently pay for animal care service costs that should be paid by Marana residents.

In discussions with Marana staff, Marana's concerns were initially expressed as fiscal in nature, meaning simply that their contribution was more than they were willing to pay. Their contribution has increased in recent years because of the County's commitment to humane animal care services. This commitment has evolved over the past several years, and these humane animal care policies have resulted in increased costs. Our live release rate has increased from a historic low of 29 percent to 49 percent in 2008 and 90 percent today. We also provide extensive and high-quality veterinary care, which is costly, as anyone who has taken his/her pet to a private veterinarian can attest. The County will not retreat from our policy to humanely care for animals, provide the necessary veterinary care for them, and decrease our euthanasia rate to the lowest possible – hopefully, near zero.

During the Marana hearing where the Mayor and Council decided to terminate their IGA, the issue seemed to shift from cost to level of service. The level of service issue is a surprise to the County; since in fall 2014, the County considered adding four additional animal field enforcement officers as requested by the Pima Animal Care Advisory Committee (PACAC). Since we knew the fiscal impact would increase our partners' costs in animal care services, I met with city and town managers at the Pima Animal Care Partners Meeting on April 16, 2015 to discuss the PACAC's request for additional staff. The city and town managers shared their concerns over the existing animal services expenses and did not support any increase at that time.

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In addition, I knew that on July 1, 2015, the Governor and Arizona Legislature would be transferring approximately \$23 million in new State cost shifts to the County. Hence, there was little the County could do to increase the level of field services.

It is unfortunate Marana has decided to terminate their IGA with the County due to a perceived lack of adequate field services; especially since Marana previously rejected the option to increase the level of field services by refusing to pay their proportionate share of these costs.

Marana's exit from the regional animal care partnership will not adversely impact the level of service we provide to our other partners, as Marana's contribution of \$225,825 last year amounted to just 2.6 percent of our overall animal care budget of \$8,624,113.

CHH/lab

c: Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Dr. Francisco Garcia, Assistant County Administrator