



MEMORANDUM

Date: October 22, 2014

To: The Honorable Ally Miller, Member
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator 

Re: **Pima Animal Care Center Information Request**

Your office requested specific answers to a number of questions that were posed regarding the Pima Animal Care Center (PACC). Enclosed are the answers and supporting data.

It should be noted that the response to Question 1 has been left blank. It relates to increased investment in spay/neuter programs and public education, both of which have been stressed by the County in recent years. The table below shows the positive correlation between increasing investment in spay/neuter programs and decreasing animals entering PACC.

Fiscal Year	County/Community Spay Neuter Support	Animal Intakes
2010/11	\$220,000	29,516
2011/12	\$220,000	28,193
2012/13	\$220,000	26,593
2013/14	\$220,000	24,332
2014/15	\$600,000	----

I believe the solution to animal overpopulation will be a combination of increased investment in spay/neuter programs and public education regarding the need to spay and neuter pets. This is why during this budget year, the spay/neuter program budget was increased to \$600,000 per year versus the amount previously allocated. In the past, the amount of \$220,000 was a voluntary contribution of the difference between licensing fee of \$12 and the increase to \$15 that occurred a few years ago. We attempted to have other jurisdictions voluntarily contribute this amount; unfortunately, only Pima County and the Town of Oro Valley did so. It is for this reason I directed the spay/neuter program be an operating expense in this year's budget. It is my belief this increased investment will be a primary driver in helping the County manage the pet overpopulation that is now occurring.

Regarding Question 2, it has been demonstrated that the combination of the Integrative Design Process and the LEED Process will yield lower operation and maintenance costs.

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These processes were used by successfully by the County's Facilities Management Director for the Larimer County (Colorado) Alternative Sentencing Department (ASD) Building, which resulted in a building 46 percent more energy and utility efficient than a building built to the building code. Also, the new ASD facility was more than three times the size of original ASD building but was designed to not increase their staff.

PACC has focused significant effort on improving their processes, which will also benefit the design process.

It is also important to note that PACC is our community's largest adoption agency. Since the summer, PACC has been housing about 1,000 animals per day. Despite adopting out dozens of animals each week, dozens more continue to come in, as PACC is the only open shelter in the County that accepts any animal brought to its doors.

Staff continues to develop and implement strategies to increase adoption such as this past weekend's "Empty the Shelter" event. PetSmart Charities donated \$8,000 to host free adoptions at its four metro area stores, as well as at PACC. The goal was to find homes for 200 animals, and 231 animals were adopted during the event. These adoptions helped briefly relieve the large population of animals at PACC.

I hope the information provided in response to these questions is sufficient to respond to your constituent.

CHH/anc

Attachment

c: The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors
Chair and Members, Animal Care Advisory Committee
Jan Leshner, Deputy County Administrator for Medical and Health Services
Dr. Francisco Garcia, Director, Health Department
Kim Janes, External Operations Manager, Pima Animal Care Center
Jose Ocaño, Shelter Manager, Pima Animal Care Center

To: Kristin Barney
Subject: Policy Request

Hi Ms. Barney,

We received an email requesting factual information about the following:

Animal Care Center

Missing Data

Dear Supervisor Miller: How does one obtain the actual "FACTS" about the county's animal welfare program? As you well know, all we get are percentages, generalities and biased conclusions. making it impossible as well as Politically Incorrect to vote NO on Proposition 415.

The Pima Animal Care Center Advisory Committee meeting minutes including PACC statistical data for this and last calendar year are posted on the Boards and Commissions link on the PACC website at www.pima.gov/animacare. Additionally, such information can be requested from the Committee coordinators, Mike Schlueter or Kim Janes, at 724-7729 or by emailing Mike at Michael.schlueter@pima.gov.

1. Our real problems are irresponsible pet ownership and irresponsible pet breeding, yet Prop 415 doesn't address either.
2. No alternative cost for remodeling the PACC facility is provided; only the \$22 million for abandoning the old and building the new. No cost to maintain the abandoned building (similar to abandoned schools?) is provided nor is a comparison of staffing and other costs, particularly veterinarian fees for sterilization and medical treatments as well as euthanization (perhaps on a per animal basis, Dogs, Cats, Others) available re the new policy.

Between FY 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, the average cost to shelter and care for each pet has gone up from \$105.22 per pet to \$106.75 per pet due to the new policy of providing humane care and treatment. Average length of stay has also gone up from 8.6 days per pet to 12.4 days per pet increasing the total number of pet days from 209,255 to 328,689.

3. No numbers are provided for annual intake of animals with a breakdown for Cats, Dogs, and Others.

The attached Animal Care Advisory Committee June 2014 Operational Report available at the above listed website includes intake and disposition of the pets to include adoption, return to owner (RTO), rescue, euthanasia and other statistics for the most recently completed fiscal year FY 2013-2014 and the previous fiscal year 2012-2013. The other category include mostly deceased animals picked up by or dropped of to staff, missing pets and those few pets due to their serious injury or late stage of illness pass away in transit or during care.

There is no annual number of adoptions (for each category). The difference would then have to be explained as either a euthanization, or indefinite housing of unadoptable animals.

The average length of stay per pet is currently about 12.5 days per pet and no pet remains

indefinitely. Staff is most aware that PACC is not a sanctuary and is committed to placing every saveable pet in a suitable home as soon as possible.

4. No numbers/breakdown or definition is given for "adoptions". I don't consider there to be a successful adoption unless the responsible family remains responsible at least 3 years later. This information should be available in the licensing/registration records of the County. I suspect their adoption definition also includes mere transfers from one temporary housing source to another as an adoption as well as unsuccessful "short-termers".

Transfers are not counted as adoptions but are recorded as rescues. Adoptions are only counted if the pet is adopted by the new owner. In FY 2013-2014, PACC records show 74 pets per thousand adopted were returned within 30 days of adoption by the new owners. Historically, half of pets returned in a three year period are returned within the first 30 days. As a comparison, in FY 2010-2011, 66 pets per thousand were returned in the first 30 days. Staff is very aware of this and has initiated a new adoption screening program to better match pets with new owners.

5. They acknowledge a former 25% adoption rate but claim a current ("miraculous" and probably temporary during a "freebie" campaign) rate of 80%. They also claim PACC takes in an average of 2,000 animals per month (24,000 per year?). Even at 80% there are 4,800 new "residents" each year with 18,000 at 25%. How can this potentially "save lives"? (Dogs live 10-14 years and cats substantially longer). Once "capacity" has been reached (within 1-2 years gives a least an added 9,600?) we will once again need to euthanize 4,800-18,000 animals every year.

Staff is well aware we cannot adopt or euthanize out of this problem. It must take a humane community wide effort to mitigate the community's pet overpopulation challenge. Fortunately, our community has many willing, resourceful individuals and agencies participating in the multifaceted approach to solve the problem. Successful programs which have proven to reduce the number of unwanted pets in other communities include:

- Owner education and assistance programs. No cost partnerships with local non-profit animal welfare organizations, donors, volunteers and local community businesses has established small owner assistance and education programs to assist owners to keep their pets when they may not have otherwise been able to.
- Available comprehensive spay neuter program. The County's nominal \$220,000 per year program over the last three years has significantly contributed to reducing PACC intake by 1000 to 1500 animals per year over the same time period. A more aggressive program will further reduce the number of pets needing shelter each day and each year.
- A comprehensive adoption and rescue program
- A humane shelter with efficient and effective disease control, isolation and veterinary medical facilities, kenneling to meet shelter care standards, open and friendly dog and cat designed adoption areas and people friendly service spaces.
- Supportive volunteer program
- Foster program
- Rescue program
- Fund development program
- Mandatory spay neuter for pets that leave shelters

- And many other programs and resources.

Effective collaborations and coordination to maximize these efforts also generate philanthropic and donor support providing significant resourcing to the efforts of reducing unwanted animals, their associated costs and adoption needs.

6. They hide (I believe intentionally) the bigger irresponsibility problem. Are you aware that of the dogs listed by PACC for adoption (PetHarbor.com) almost 50% are identified as Pit Bull Terrier offspring (and the pictures suggest even more are part Pit Bull but not identified as such).

7. Logically, it is important to identify non-adoptable pets ASAP and then euthanize them promptly. Determinations are never going to be perfect. However, sterilizing them, giving them medical attention and caging them (for how long?) before euthanizing them anyway is not my idea of "kindness" to animals nor service to our community.

Staff has established procedures to assess a pet within the mandatory hold time required by law. Additionally, staff has found that taking advantage of social networking along with partnering with volunteers, rescue organizations, other shelters, animal welfare organizations and local businesses, nearly every pet that is not too sick, too injured or has proven to be dangerous can be united with a new family. In FY 2013-2014, PACC sheltered, rehabilitated when necessary, and rehomed 13745 pets in an average of 12.4 days.

8. Are agencies required to pick up Feral Cats? (They are a terrible nuisance wandering on private property and leave unpleasant messes, even if they arguably do not pose a "danger"). If not, why would they be picked up (and sterilized) in the first place, much less at public expense? If they are required to pick them up, why would they ever be released only to be picked up again???

Agencies are not required to pick up feral cats and PACC does not expend resources to pick up healthy feral cats or healthy cats in general. However, an effective, aggressive feral cat trap, neuter and return program will reduce the number of these cats thus reducing the associated problems and expenses they cause. Therefore, the County does provide spay and neuter funding to local veterinarians to assist local trap, neuter and return program practitioners help local residents, neighborhoods and jurisdictions better control the feral cat population and reduce the number of injured and sick ones brought to our shelters.

Frankly, if I represented the City of Tucson or other municipality, I would seriously consider opting out of the County's overpriced program. How can you ask for \$22 million without first knowing the answers? Thank you for wading through all this, Henry Rosenbaum

We would appreciate your help in providing our constituent these answers. Also please attach any material (or links) that might help us understand the current policy in place on what an OPEN ADMISSION shelter is for PIMA COUNTY and what standard or protocol we are using for all animals including those DEEMED DANGEROUS.

Respectfully,

Naomi Oku-Alonzo

PIMA ANIMAL CARE CENTER
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JUNE 2014 OPERATIONAL REPORT

	THIS MONTH		THIS YEAR TO DATE		LAST YEAR TO DATE		YEAR TO YEAR	
	TUCSON	COUNTY	TUCSON	COUNTY	TUCSON	COUNTY	DELTA	%+/-
SHELTER OPERATIONS								
ALL ANIMALS HANDLED								
DOGS	736	589	1,325	8,220	7,314	15,534	8,586	7,816
CATS	457	277	734	4,923	3,128	8,051	5,963	3,456
OTHERS	43	32	75	308	439	747	243	529
TOTAL ANIMALS HANDLED	1,236	898	2,134	13,451	10,881	24,332	14,792	11,801
Live Animals Handled	1,128	837	1,965	11,998	9,813	21,811	13,160	10,484
IMPOUNDED ANIMALS								
ADOPTED								
DOGS	292	277	569	2,883	2,582	5,465	2,387	2,271
CATS	202	92	294	1,243	905	2,148	872	617
OTHER	9	0	9	43	14	57	30	3
TOTAL ADOPTED	503	369	872	4,169	3,501	7,670	3,289	2,891
RETURNED TO OWNER								
DOGS	75	46	121	880	665	1,545	960	847
CATS	6	2	8	73	61	134	93	69
OTHER	0	0	0	7	13	20	4	9
TOTAL RETURNED	81	48	129	960	739	1,699	1,057	925
RESCUED								
DOGS	67	54	121	1,171	1,360	2,531	1,338	1,165
CATS	65	40	105	1,072	665	1,737	1,110	577
OTHER	1	3	4	67	48	115	9	43
TOTAL RESCUED	133	97	230	2,310	2,073	4,383	2,457	1,785
*TOTAL LIVE RELEASES	717	514	1,231	7,439	6,313	13,752	6,803	5,601
**TOTAL LIVE RELEASE RATE			80%			76%		64%
EUTHANIZED								
DOGS	137	119	256	1,915	1,724	3,639	2,783	2,503
CATS	106	71	177	1,532	1,009	2,541	2,909	1,774
OTHER	3	7	10	37	78	115	54	84
TOTAL EUTHANIZED	246	197	443	3,484	2,811	6,295	5,746	4,361
(-)Owner Requested Euthanasia			142			2,047		10,107
Adjusted Total Euthanasia			301			4,248		3,084
***EUTHANASIA RATE			20%			24%		36%
OTHER								
	384	275	659	1,720	1,260	2,980	1,840	1,488
ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS								
Welfare Responses	268	114	382	2552	1170	3722	3173	1514
ENFORCEMENT CALLS FOR SERVICE	1,410	844	2,254	17,853	11,075	28,928	19,438	12,300
LICENSING OPERATIONS								
ALTERED	3,856	4,296	8,152	43,226	54,787	98,013	44,072	57,294
UNALTERED	264	305	569	2,947	3,882	6,829	3,387	4,496
OTHER	89	93	182	860	1,169	2,029	1,099	1,333
TOTAL SOLD	4,209	4,694	8,903	47,033	59,838	106,871	48,558	63,123
DELTA							-348	-10%
YEAR TO YEAR							-865	-21%
							-2,810	-9%
							-1833	-8%

*Total Live Releases(TLR)=Total Adopted+Total Returned+Total Rescued
 **Live Release Rate=TLR/(TLR+Adjusted Total Euthanasia)
 ***Euthanasia Rate=(Adjusted Total Euthanasia)/(TLR+Adjusted Total Euthanasia)