

CITY COUNCIL

Pedro "Pete" M. Sanchez, Mayor
Lori Wilson, Mayor Pro-Tem
Jane Day
Mike Hudson
Michael A. Segala



CITY COUNCIL MEETING

First and Third Tuesday
Every Month

CITY OF SUISUN CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

701 Civic Center Blvd.
Suisun City, California 94585

Tim Mattos
Chief of Police

July 25, 2018

Honorable John B. Ellis
Presiding Judge
Solano Superior Court
Department 23, Room 306
600 Union Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533

Dear Judge Ellis:

Subject: 2017-2018 Grand Jury Report Entitled: "Animal Care/Animal Control"

I serve as Chairperson of the Solano Animal Control Authority and provide this correspondence in that capacity. Pursuant to California Penal Code Section 933.05(a), (b), and (c), the following are the responses of the Solano County Animal Control Authority Board of Directors to the findings and recommendations in the above-entitled Grand Jury Report:

FINDING 1

Members of Solano Animal Control Authority (SACA) indicated concern with the contract and lack of cooperation from Humane Animal Services (HAS) in providing appropriate fiscal information.

RESPONSE TO FINDING # 1

Agree.

RECOMMENDATION # 1

SACA, the contracting party, review, renegotiate and rethink the existing contract. SACA send out requests for proposals to find an agency that provides appropriate fiscal information.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION # 1

SACA prepared and posted a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Animal Control Services on December 20, 2017. As part of this process, the existing service contract was reviewed and input from the members was solicited with regards to desired services and terms of a new contract. SACA received two proposals in response to the RFP, both of which included significant cost increases. The SACA Board reviewed both proposals but due to contract renewal timelines elected to continue the contract with Humane Animal Services (HAS) for another year while options are reviewed further. The review of options includes determining whether SACA should exist as a JPA, an MOU or another configuration.

FINDING # 2

Licensing is the law, not a choice. All interviewed enforcement agencies admitted that implementing licensing laws is a low priority.

RESPONSE TO FINDING # 2

Agree.

RECOMMENDATION # 2

Law enforcement agencies review policies and ensure that pet owners are aware of and follow the state, county and city regulations.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION # 2

Humane Animal Services (HAS), the contracted Animal Control service provider, for SACA, enforces animal licensing laws. They are expected to educate pet owners and take enforcement action as the situation dictates. The enforcement of regulations, which would include licensing, were a part of the RFP process and would be examined in any future contract.

The Solano County Animal Shelter is responsible for overall management of the animal licensing program and the collection of fees on behalf of member agencies. The SACA Chairperson participated in the City Managers Animal Licensing Workgroup where strategies for increased animal licensing rates were discussed. The recommendation to improve the online registration system to allow for electronic upload of rabies certificates was recently implemented by Solano County Animal Shelter.

FINDING # 3

Animal Care/Animal Control services in Solano County are not consistent or easily accessed.

RESPONSE TO FINDING # 3

Agree with regards to inconsistent Animal Care/Animal Control services and disagree with ease of access in the areas served by SACA. While jurisdictions have taken different approaches to Animal Care and Animal Control services, we can speak to the accessibility of services in the cities served by SACA. In those cities, calls during business hours are accepted via respective member agency dispatch centers as well as HAS and after-hours calls are handled by the respective member agency dispatch centers. After-hours calls are screened to determine whether an after-hours call out is appropriate and warranted given the situation and the costs. For situations that are not handled by HAS, referrals are made to the appropriate entity.

RECOMMENDATION # 3

The cities in Solano County develop a communication system that connects all responding agencies and allows citizens to access needed assistance with a single call.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION # 3

This recommendation will not be implemented by SACA because it is directed towards the cities. SACA is aware via HAS that a phone-tree type system was implemented by Solano County and resulted in calls being diverted to HAS because individuals had difficulty with the phone tree system or couldn't find the proper routing. HAS staffs their phone during business hours with a live operator who routes calls to the appropriate service provider.

SACA will also take steps for member agencies to post contact information related to animal

services/resources on their respective websites.

FINDING # 4

There is no effective program in Solano County to ensure animal license enforcement and compliance.

RESPONSE TO FINDING # 4

Agree in that licensing rates are low.

RECOMMENDATION # 4

The cities and the county collaborate on a plan to address license enforcement and compliance.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION # 4

This recommendation will not be implemented by SACA as it is directed towards the cities and Solano County. The SACA Board recommends the City Managers Animal Licensing Workgroup continue efforts to address this and present recommendations to the SACA Board. The Animal Licensing Workgroup represents all the impacted jurisdictions as well as the County whereas SACA only has jurisdiction with respect to its five member cities.

FINDING # 5

Veterinarians are the first line of defense in addressing the health and safety of family pets, yet there is no effort to create a collaborative program to ensure that pets in Solano County are licensed.

RESPONSE TO FINDING # 5

Disagree. We are informed that efforts have been made by the Solano County Sheriff Animal Control to collaborate with veterinarians regarding licensing.

RECOMMENDATION # 5

Solano Animal Control Authority (SACA) work with the Napa Solano County Veterinary Medical Association to create a program to increase the number of licensed animals in Solano County.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION # 5

This recommendation will not be implemented as presented. The Solano County Animal Shelter is the primary agency responsible for coordinating Animal Licensing efforts. The City Managers Animal Licensing Workgroup would seem to be the best forum to collaborate with all the entities in Solano County in order to increase animal licensure. They could determine the role of the Napa Solano County Veterinary Medical Association in such efforts. The SACA Board would be open to reviewing recommendations made and supporting efforts contingent upon available budget and resources.

We would like to thank the Grand Jury for their efforts in completing this report and recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Andrew White', with a stylized, flowing script.

Andrew White
Police Commander
SACA Chairperson
On behalf of the SACA Board of Directors