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(707) 784-6129



County Administrator
BIRGITTA E. CORSELLO
(707) 784-6100
Fax (707) 784-6665

675 Texas Street, Suite 6500
Fairfield, CA 94533-6342
<http://www.co.solano.ca.us>

August 13, 2013

Honorable Paul Beeman
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
Solano Superior Court
600 Union Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533

The Honorable Judge Beeman,

Re: Response to Grand Jury Report of May 31, 2013 – Animal Care Services

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 933(c) and 933.05, the Solano County Board of Supervisors responds to Findings 1 and 5 and Recommendations 1 and 5 contained in the 2012/2013 Grand Jury Report of May 31, 2013 regarding Animal Care Services.

Finding 1

Fifty-four percent of veterinarians in Solano County are not reporting rabies vaccinations to Solano County Animal Care Services, via its contracting agent, Pet Data, Incorporated, in violation of Solano County Ordinance 4-152.

Response to Finding 1

Sheriff: The Sheriff agrees with this finding of the Grand Jury.

Board of Supervisors: The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Sheriff's response.

Recommendation 1

Solano County Sheriff's Office enforce Solano County Ordinance 4-152.

Response to Recommendation 1

Sheriff: This recommendation requires further analysis. Most veterinarians operate within the cities. It is not clear from the existing Memorandum of Understanding on the provision of animal care services dated December 30, 2012 between the County and the seven incorporated cities ("MOU") whether the County may enforce Solano County Code § 4-152 – which otherwise only applies "to all unincorporated territory within the county" (Solano County Code § 4-10) – in the incorporated cities. That being said, pursuant to its contract with the County, Pet Data does seek and obtain information about rabies vaccinations from veterinarians in both the unincorporated and incorporated areas.

In the next six months, the County will work with the Cities to clarify the enforcement of the provisions of Solano County Code § 4-152 in the incorporated cities through a revision to the MOU and the Sheriff will work with Pet Data on more effective ways to enforce it in both the cities and the unincorporated county, including, if necessary, the adoption of additional rules and regulations pursuant to Solano County Code § 4-160. The Board of Supervisors may also address the broader policy issue as to whether to criminalize the failure to report.

Board of Supervisors: The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Sheriff's response to Recommendation 1. Due to the recent execution of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the cities and the County, additional time is need to determine the County's ability to enforce laws pertaining to unincorporated areas and whether they can be incorporated into the existing MOU.

Finding 2

Approximately 72 percent of dogs in Solano County are not licensed in accordance with Solano County Ordinance 4-139. This results in a significant loss of revenue that impacts the Animal Care Services budget.

Response to Finding 2

Sheriff: The Sheriff agrees with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Board of Supervisors: The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Sheriff's response.

Recommendation 2

Solano County Animal Care Services enforce Solano County Ordinance 4-139.

Response to Recommendation 2

Sheriff: This recommendation requires further analysis. Most dogs reside in the cities. As in our response to Recommendation 1, it is not clear from the MOU whether the County may enforce Solano County Code § 4-139 in the incorporated cities. In the next six months, the County will work with the cities to determine whether the Sheriff should be enforcing Solano County Code § 4-139 in the cities. If so, the County will work with the cities to clarify the enforcement of the provisions of Solano County Code § 4-139 in the incorporated cities through a revision to the MOU and the Sheriff will work with Pet Data on more effective ways to enforce it in both the cities and the unincorporated county, including, if necessary, the adoption of additional rules and regulations pursuant to Solano County Code § 4-160.

Board of Supervisors: The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Sheriff's response to Recommendation 2.

Finding 3

Animal control functions in Solano County are fragmented and confusing to the public.

Response to Finding 3

Sheriff: The Sheriff agrees with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Board of Supervisors: The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Sheriff's response.

Recommendation 3

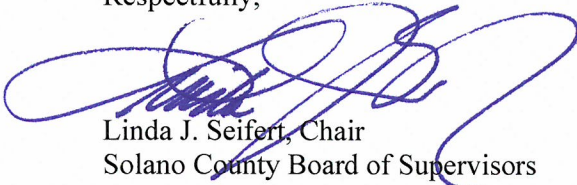
The Solano County Sheriff's Office provide all animal control services for all cities and unincorporated areas of Solano County using funds generated from dog licensing and funds currently being paid by the Cities to private companies for existing animal control contracts.

Response to Recommendation 3

Sheriff: This recommendation requires further analysis. The Sheriff does not have the ability to unilaterally impose this recommendation on the Cities. However, as there is great merit to this recommendation, the Sheriff will work with the Cities in the next six months on whether and how the Sheriff might provide all animal control services for all cities and unincorporated areas of Solano County.

Board of Supervisors: The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Sheriff's response to Recommendation 3 that additional time is required to work with cities for opportunities to consolidate services countywide.

Respectfully,



Linda J. Seifert, Chair
Solano County Board of Supervisors

cc: Clerk of the Board, Solano County Board of Supervisors
Thomas A. Ferrara, Sheriff, Solano County
Birgitta Corsello, Solano County Administrator
Dennis Bunting, County Counsel, Solano County
Mayor, City of Benicia
Mayor, City of Dixon
Mayor, City of Fairfield
Mayor, City of Rio Vista
Mayor, City of Suisun City
Mayor, City of Vacaville
Mayor, City of Vallejo
Grand Jury Office