

**COUNTY OF SONOMA  
AGENDA ITEM  
SUMMARY REPORT**

**Clerk of the Board Use Only**  
**Meeting Date** / / **Held Until** / /  
**Agenda Item No:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Agenda Item No:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Department:** Agricultural Commissioner

( ) **4/5 Vote Required**

**Contact:**

Cathy V. Neville

**Phone:**

(707) 565-2371

**Board Date:**

8/4/09

**Deadline for Board Action:**

**AGENDA SHORT TITLE:** Animal Care and Control Division Update - August 2009

**REQUESTED BOARD ACTION:**

Review the Animal Care and Control Strategic Plan and accept new Mission and Vision Statements.

Accept report and staff recommendations on implementation of management audit recommendations.

**CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT**

**EXPENDITURES**

**Estimated Cost**

\$

**Amount Budgeted**

\$

**Other Avail Approp.**

\$

(Explain below)

**Additional Requested:**

\$

**Explanation (if required):**

**ADD'L FUNDS REQUIRING BOARD APPROVAL**

**Contingencies**

\$

(Fund Name:)

**Unanticipated Revenue**

\$

(Source:)

**Other Transfer(s)**

\$

(Source:)

**Add'l Funds Requested:**

\$

**Prior Board Action(s):** FY 04-05: Board provided \$41,000 in general funds to enhance spay/neuter program. 06/13/06: Board received the Citygate Management Audit Report and recommendations. 12/15/06: Board received and accepted the 90-Day Report; recommendations implemented to date, various changes, and authorized budgetary adjustments. FY 05-07: Animal Care and Control Division Summary Report and Implementation Plan. FY 08-09: Board approved that \$1 from each County animal license issued be used for spay/neuter and animal welfare programs

**Alternatives - Results of Non-Approval:** Continuing improvement in the Animal Care and Control Division based on recommendations from the management audit report and new strategic plan would not be accomplished as directed by the Board.

**Background:**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the activities and accomplishments of the Sonoma County Animal Care and Control Division (ACC) since May 2007. This is also an opportunity for the new department head, Cathy V. Neville, to discuss future strategic planning, and future priorities for ACC, written in the Strategic Plan report. The report includes: a two-year strategic plan with new Vision and Mission statements; an update on the final/remaining 31 of 60 management audit recommendations; and an overview of the Grand Jury report. A report on the spay/neuter program will be brought to the Board at a later date.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING**

With the appointment of a new department head in 2009, ACC staff began a strategic planning process. This process evaluated the Strengths, Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) within the ACC Division. First steps were to establish new Vision and Mission statements and to identify eight critical areas that, through ongoing implementation, will allow the shelter to achieve the goals of the Mission and Vision statement.

The new Vision Statement is a roadmap for the future to: *“Create a balance between the population of domestic animals and responsible homes to care for them within the County of Sonoma.”*

*The new Mission Statement covers current and future goals of the organization to::*

- Protect the health and safety of people and animals.
- Investigate and prosecute animal cruelty, abuse and neglect.
- Educate the public about responsible domestic animal ownership.
- Reduce pet overpopulation through spay/neuter programs.
- Provide a safe environment for animals in need.
- Place adoptable animals into caring homes.

The eight critical areas reviewed include:

- Fiscal Stability (review of what are the funding sources)
- Customer Service (how are we serving our internal and external customers)
- Regional Leadership (how can we become leaders in our field)
- Skilled, Competent and Diverse Workforce (how are we improving our skills)
- Essential Infrastructure
- Accountability/ Transparency
- Continuous Improvement
- Information Technology (Chameleon technology).

During the strategic planning process, the following challenges were discovered and reviewed:

▪ A lack of long-term, consistent leadership. To address this challenge, a new shelter director was hired effective July 14, 2009, with a background in shelter management that emphasizes administration, team-building, and customer service. The new director will provide leadership by working with staff in implementing the Strategic Plan.

▪ A need to review and revamp processes and procedures. To address this challenge the new director will be looking at the processes and procedures starting with the licensing program under the continuous improvement, customer service and fiscal stability within the Strategic Plan.

▪ A lack of transparency to the public. To address this challenge, the new director will work with staff in making sure statistical reports are published on the website for the public to review. This will be corrected through Information Technology area of the strategic planning process.

▪ The inability to produce adequate statistical reports for internal and external use and distribution. The Chameleon computer program was implemented in 2007, prior to being programmed to produce adequate reports. To address this challenge, the Department requested an audit by ISD to determine training, accuracy and reporting needs through the Chameleon program. The Department will continue to work closely with ISD on this project.

The attached Strategic Plan Overview provides further detail regarding the specific goals for the next two fiscal years that will enable ACC to achieve its mission and vision.

**Background:** (Continued)

MANAGEMENT AUDIT REPORT

From September 2005 through January 2006, Citygate Associates, a management consulting firm, performed a management review of the Animal Regulation Division (now known as the ACC). The scope of the study included analyses of all major program areas, comparisons to other well-run public shelters, stakeholder feedback, and an employee survey. The subsequent report included 60 recommendations for improvement, among which were recommendations regarding management "culture," staffing, and programmatic improvements. In June 2006, the Board received and accepted the Citygate report and the Board directed staff to implement the Quick-Start Action Plan and prepare a long-term implementation plan and return to the Board. The report details actions accomplished on 31 remaining recommendations that were not completed as of May 1, 2007. While many of the items are completed many require on-going implementation efforts. Many of these good management principles will be added to the Strategic Plan for ACC. Some of the highlighted items completed include:

- Implementation of Phone Tree - both English and Spanish versions are operational.
- Sensitivity, Diversity and Customer Service trainings conducted and ongoing.
- Increase veterinarian hours from 15 to 27 hours/week.
- Replacement of cat and small animal cages.
- Rotation of Animal Control Officer staff dedicated to dispatching.

There were nine recommendations where the status is ongoing:

- The computer based tracking system was upgraded to Chameleon software program in July 2007. Unfortunately, none of the mandated, required or needed reports were created prior to this program going live. As noted above, the Division is working with ISD to address the outstanding issues associated with this program.
- Three of the recommendations are pending the "Facilities Needs Assessment Report" along with funding needs.
- Inmate labor was reduced from 12 to six inmates. Phase out of inmate labor will be evaluated by the new director.
- A public education plan will be developed under the strategic plan by the new director.

A detailed update of the Citygate Management Audit report is attached.

GRAND JURY REPORT

The 2008-2009 Grand Jury Report was recently published. The FY 08-09 Grand Jury report investigated practices at ACC. They identified areas for improvement associated with bi-lingual availability of information, staffing the dispatch function, eliminating the use of inmate labor, investigating the cost/benefit of retaining the Mobile Animal Center and engaging public input. The Department's response to the Grand Jury report will be submitted by August 28, 2009. Further, all of these components are included in the Department's strategic plan. The Department is also pleased to highlight that the Grand Jury found that the Division is doing good work and has a dedicated team of hard-working, caring individuals serving the needs of the community. There was no evidence of animal abuse or use of unqualified rescue agencies. The report found that ACC staff has made great strides in the quality of service.

**Attachments:** The Strategic Plan (including new Mission and Vision Statements); Update of Implementation of Citygate Recommendations

**On File With Clerk:** Citygate Management Audit Report; May 2007 Implementation Plan; December 2006 Implementation Plan

**CLERK OF THE BOARD USE ONLY**

**Board Action (If other than "Requested")**

**Vote:**