

STATEMENT TO THE INTERNAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

March 28, 2016

Linda C Rodgers

Walnut Creek, CA 94598

I am here to speak in support of the report, recommendations and proposal from Animal Services Director Beth Ward (Agenda Item #6) to expand the 1988 Resolution which established the Animal Benefit Fund by repealing it and replacing it with a new Resolution as described in the Agenda Item.

Those of us who have spent time in Contra Costa County working or volunteering in the animal management and rescue arena know we face a crisis. Our county had an explosion in human population in the early 2000's which also brought an explosion in the number of cats and dogs families brought with them, or whom later brought into their new homes. And then our county experienced the debacle of the financial failure in toxic home mortgages and those same families were forced to choose between spending resources needed for food for their children or the cost of S/N for their beloved companion animals. Clearly they choose to feed their human family, I understand that. But nonetheless, their once beloved companion animals became our county's "collateral damage". Those companion animals were abandoned in empty homes left to feed themselves, most were cats. Most were not S/N. And now these cats and their progeny are our county's responsibility. They do not deserve to be abandoned yet again. They did not ask "please do not S/N me". They did not ask "please leave me to fend for myself".

Additionally, literally thousands of animals would go uncared for and untreated were it not for the Animal Services Department and its associates, the professional animal clinics and transfer partners, such as the Contra Costa Humane Society and Outcast Cat Help and HALO, SNIP, Community Concern 4 Cats and others with whom I volunteer.

An important emphasis in the new Resolution is on using resources generated through the Animal Benefit Fund to bring these rescue groups into closer collaboration with the Animal Services Department and each other. While the Department tries valiantly to fulfill its Mission through the insufficient General Funds now available to it, it has no hope of expending its limited budget on critical programs which the Animal Benefit Fund would support.

I strongly urge this committee to approve the proposal Director Ward and her staff have put forward, and ask you to recommend it to the entire Board of Supervisors that they unanimously approve it.

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March 28, 2016

Peter A. Wilson

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Walnut Creek, CA 94598

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I come before you to speak in support of the report, recommendations and proposal from Animal Services Director Beth Ward (Agenda Item #6) to expand the 1988 Resolution which established the Animal Benefit Fund by repealing it and replacing it with a new Resolution as described in the Agenda Item.

Anyone who has spent any time in Contra Costa County working or volunteering in the animal management and rescue arena knows what a crisis we face. Literally thousands of animals would go uncared for and untreated were it not for the Animal Services Department and its associates, the professional animal clinics and transfer partners, such as the Contra Costa Humane Society and Outcast Cat with whom I have volunteered.

I will not go into detail regarding the programs outlined other than to say I agree with them all and hope you and the entire Board of Supervisors will support them. I will, however, make one point in concluding.

My wife and I have volunteered in animal rescue for a number of years. When we began we immediately realized that a major challenge facing the County was bringing together the many small, volunteer driven rescue groups found throughout the area. An important emphasis in the new Resolution is on using resources generated through the Animal Benefit Fund to bring these rescue groups into closer collaboration with the Animal Services Department and each other. While the Department tries valiantly to fulfill its Mission through General Funds now available to it, it has no hope of expending its limited budget on critical programs which the Animal Benefit Fund would support.

I applaud the proposal put forth by Director Ward and her staff, and urge you to recommend it be supported by the Board of Supervisors.