



Contra  
Costa  
County

To: Board of Supervisors  
From: INTERNAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE  
Date: April 19, 2016

Subject: ANIMAL BENEFIT FUND

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**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

1. ACCEPT report from the Animal Services Director on the Animal Benefit Fund;
2. CONSIDER recommendations of the Animal Services Director and PROVIDE direction to staff regarding next steps:
  - authorize the Animal Services Director to accept any monetary donation, gift, bequest, or devise made to or in favor of the Contra Costa County Animal Services Department as allowed under Government Code section 25355 (*NOTE: County policy requires Department Heads to notify the CAO regarding donations exceeding \$1,000 and obtain Board of Supervisors approval for donations exceeding \$10,000*);
  - approve the continued use of the Animal Benefit Fund;
  - establish new programs that receive assistance under that Fund;
  - authorize the Animal Services Director to solicit donations for the benefit of shelter animals;
  - direct the Animal Services Director to file a report with the Board of Supervisors every quarter that describes the source and value of each gift; and

APPROVE

OTHER

RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY ADMINISTRATOR

RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD COMMITTEE

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Action of Board On: **04/19/2016**  APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED  OTHER

Clerks Notes:

**VOTE OF SUPERVISORS**

AYE: John Gioia, District I Supervisor  
Candace Andersen, District II Supervisor  
Mary N. Piepho, District III Supervisor  
Karen Mitchoff, District IV Supervisor  
Federal D. Glover, District V Supervisor

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: April 19, 2016

David J. Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: Stephanie Mello, Deputy

Contact: Beth Ward (925)  
335-8370

- direct the Animal Services Director to submit a report annually to the Internal Operations Committee regarding the impact of the Animal Benefit fund on our community animals and families.

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## RECOMMENDATION(S): (CONT'D)

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### FISCAL IMPACT:

No impact to the General Fund. The Animal Benefit Fund is the repository for community donations that help to fund unmet needs of animals impounded at County shelters. The Animal Services Department anticipates that approximately \$150,000 will be received annually in donations. This estimate is based on the amount of donations received by the animal shelter over the last 3 years.

### BACKGROUND:

On April 21, 2015, the Board of Supervisors received several comments regarding the Animal Benefit Fund from members of the public during fiscal year 2015/16 budget hearings. As part of budget deliberations, the Board directed staff to include a review of the Animal Benefit Fund to a Board Standing Committee for further review.

On May 12, 2015, the Board of Supervisors adopted the fiscal year 2015/16 budget. Included in the Board's action was the formal referral of this issue to the Internal Operations Committee.

On September 14, 2015, the CAO reported to the IOC on the history of the Animal Benefit Fund (**report attached hereto for reference**). With the retirement of former Animal Services Director Glenn Howell, further study on this referral was suspended until the new department director, Beth Ward, could review the history and provide input and advice to the Committee. Following is the report and recommendations presented Ms. Ward to the Internal Operations Committee, and which the IOC approved, on March 28, 2016.

## I. BACKGROUND ON THE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER

The Contra Costa County Animal Shelter (CCCAS) receives approximately 12,000 live domestic and livestock animals annually. CCCAS' budget is designed to cover the basic needs of incoming stray, abandoned, and homeless animals and our County licensing and field services departments. The basic needs include food, prophylactic medical care (spay/neutering), antibiotics and general veterinary supplies, emergency veterinary treatment, sterilization, microchips, and collars/travel boxes for animals.

As an open-door agency, the CCCAS accepts animals suffering from medical or behavioral conditions that while treatable, may initially disqualify the animal from placement into a new home. CCCAS' operating budget is currently not designed to fund extended medical rehabilitation for injured/ill animals, behavior management, foster care supplies for orphaned animals, supplies designed to enhance animal enrichment in the shelter environment, or marketing and outreach efforts aimed at increasing adoptions.

## II. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ANIMAL BENEFIT FUND

In 1988, the CCCAS created the Animal Benefit Fund. The original purpose of the Animal Benefit Fund was to allow the Animal Services Department to receive donations from individuals, animal welfare organizations and businesses, to support animal health and welfare projects that are not funded by departmental or general County revenue. Since the creation of the Animal Benefit Fund, monetary contributions and donations for services and supplies for animal welfare have provided for unfunded needs of the animals impounded in CCCAS. These donations have come in the form of grants or "soft ask" gifts over the counter or from our website.

## III. PROPOSAL TO EXPAND THE 1988 AUTHORIZATION

In order to increase our ability to create more funding opportunities and clarity around how funds will be used, the CCCAS is requesting that the Board increase the authority of the Animal Services Director to accept any monetary donation, gift, bequest, or devise made to or in favor of the Contra Costa County Animal Services Department as allowed under Government Code section 25355, approve the continued use of the Animal Benefit Fund, establish new programs that receive assistance under that Fund, authorize the Animal Services Director to solicit donations for the benefit of shelter animals, and require the Animal Services Director to provide an annual report to the Internal Operations Committee.

The following are the program descriptions:

**Animal Benefit Fund:** Animals have a variety of needs, and CCCAS does not always have the funds to address those needs. The Animal Benefit Fund may be used for such needs as medical treatment of a sick/injured dog, orthopedic repair for a damaged limb, veterinary diagnostic tests, kennel enrichment in the form of toys and beds, upgraded dog training supplies for volunteers such as training collars/harnesses, nutritional supplies for orphaned puppies and kittens, print or radio advertising to promote adoptions, and spay/neuter efforts. In addition to monetary donations to the Animal Benefit Fund, wish lists, in-kind gifts, Amazon Smile gifts, and gift cards to pet stores, home improvement stores, and other big box stores can also help us with these needs.

The Animal Benefit Fund would support the following seven new programs:

**(1) Panda's Gift Program:** This program is for emergency vet care and goes to help animals like Panda, a dog who was brought to us in distress, in labor with a deceased puppy stuck inside, an old injury to her left eye and in overall poor condition. Our medical team acted quickly, rushing her into surgery, removed the puppy from the birth canal, performed an Ovariohysterectomy, and did a third eyelid flap to protect her injured eye. Panda quickly recovered from her surgery and acted like a new pup, snuggling with her foster family and learning what it felt like to be safe and loved. A family met and fell in love with Panda and took her home to join their household. Without donations to this fund, happy endings like Panda's would not be possible.

**(2) Education Program:** This program is to help pet owners resolve behavioral problems that might cause them to give up their pet, to help shelter animals with behavioral issues that might keep them from being easily adopted, and to create education programs for school age children. CCCAS will be creating a program where local trainers will work with pet owners, shelter dogs, volunteers and foster homes on reducing various behavioral problems, resulting in fewer surrenders and more successful adoptions. This program can also help to support humane education in our communities.

**(3) Shelter Intervention Program:** Often times families get into a crisis situation where they turn to surrendering their pet to a shelter. Our intervention program would help to provide resources to keep animals in their homes. Examples of intervention tools: spay/neuter, behavior/training assistance, and grooming.

**(4) Transfer Partner Assistance Program:** This program would provide support to our smaller transfer partners, who help save the lives of animals with medical concerns or basic Spay/Neuter support for animals pulled from CCASD.

**(5) Spay and Neuter Program:** This program would make spay and neuter more affordable and accessible in our County by establishing a donation subsidized voucher program to provide free or low cost spay/neuter surgeries in collaboration with local veterinarians.

**(6) Pets for Seniors Program:** A pet is sometimes the only companion our community's elders have, and the health and psychological benefits of having a pet are well-documented. This program pays a portion of the adoption fee for qualifying seniors, allowing them to use the money they saved to help pay for the initial items necessary for keeping a pet. This program may also be used to help seniors on limited incomes to keep animals in their lives when they may have had to give up their furry companion due to lack of money for basic daily needs or medical concerns.

**(7) Discounted Adoption Program:** Sometimes, we are critically full of pets waiting for new homes. Rather than euthanize healthy adoptable or treatable animals, CCCAS discounts the adoption of pets to give people even more of an incentive to adopt. CCCAS also participates in national adoption events, promoting the placement of shelter animals. We are only able to offer reduced-fee adoptions when we have donated funding available.

#### IV. OTHER PROPOSALS COVERED IN THE EXPANDED AUTHORIZATION

In addition to approving the formation of the new programs described above, the expanded authorization would delegate to the Animal Services Director the power to accept any gift, bequest, or devise made for the benefit of animals in the shelter through programs such as a car donation and planned giving programs pursuant to Government Code section 25355. In keeping with this code section, the Director will file a report with the Board every quarter that describes the source and value of each gift. An annual report will also be provided that shares the impact of the Animal Benefit fund on our community animals and families. As is required by statute, any gifted funds or assets will be used for those purposes as are prescribed in the terms of the gift, bequest, or devise. The monies in these funds are not intended to replace General Funds, rather they are intended to supplement and enhance our care for animals and support of the public.

CCCAS is also requesting that the Director be authorized to solicit monetary contributions through methods such as request forms included in dog license mailing, website information, and adopters and owners surrendering pets being given the opportunity to assist other shelter animals by contributing at the time of their transaction. Donations will be tax-deductible and acknowledged in writing to the donor.

Gifts by donors may be designated directly to a specific gift fund or program. Gifts received with no instruction as to the use for a specific area or program or funds donated for "general animal welfare" will be considered as part of the general Animal Benefit Fund. Monies raised through in-house donations, and/or general fund raising activities shall be considered undesignated gift funds.

The Director will utilize these funds in a manner that is consistent with the specific purpose for which they were donated. It is also important to recognize that these are donated funds and as such the use of the funds to pay businesses, organizations and fund voucher programs for various services to support the CCCASD programs would not be considered "gifts of County funds".

Each year, the Director will recommend expenditures from the Animal Benefit Fund through the budgetary process. Grants and designated funds shall be expended according to the grant or designated gift. Designated balances of \$50 or less will be rolled back into the undesignated gift funds.

Should the CCCAS wish to expend more than \$25,000 per purchase order, CCCAS must submit a request in writing for approval by the Board of Supervisors.

The CCCAS anticipates that approximately \$150,000 will be received annually in donations. This estimate is based on the amount of donations received by the animal shelter over the last 3 years.

ATTACHMENTS

Public Comment Received at the 3/28/16 IOC Meeting

9/14/15 Archived Report to IOC on the Animal Benefit Fund

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