



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORT NO. 2105

"Improving Animal Services in Contra Costa County"

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' RESPONSE

FINDINGS – *California Penal Code Section 933.05(a) requires a response to the designated findings of the Grand Jury.*

F1. There is a need for improved animal services throughout the County.

Response: Agree. The County plans to implement a new service agreement with the cities in Fiscal Year 2022/23. The County anticipates that under the new city agreements, there will be a greater level of service throughout the County.

F5. In some of the contracted municipalities, residents are not aware of CCAS provided services, especially wildlife retrieval.

Response: Agree. Based on a 2021 survey provided to the County's 18 contracted cities and the standard customer service surveys provided to patrons of Contra Costa Animal Services (CCAS), there is a need for increased community outreach and education about all services provided.

F6. Funding reductions to the CCAS budget have hindered live wildlife retrieval and rescue.

Response: Partially disagree. The retrieval and rescue of wildlife is not a locally mandated service, nor is local funding provided by the State for this function. Although the County provided this service in the past, the service has been discontinued as it placed undue stress on mandated services. As retrieval and rescue of live wildlife falls under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the County is unable to speak to the State's ability to provide this service.

F7. A satisfaction survey of the 18 CCAS-contracted cities revealed 40% satisfied, 40% somewhat satisfied, and 20% unsatisfied with the quality of

overall CCAS services supplied.

Response: Agree.

- F8. All CCAS contracts with municipalities provide identical services at the same cost per capita.**

Response: Agree.

- F9. Additional vaccination and spay and neuter clinics would reduce the number of homeless and surrendered animals in the shelters.**

Response: Agree.

- F10. There are private animal shelter facilities, The Milo Foundation and ARF, in the western and central parts of the County, respectively.**

Response: Agree.

- F11. A private animal shelter in Alameda County, East Bay SPCA, is located near the southern part of Contra Costa County.**

Response: **Agree.** It should be noted the EBSPCA serves Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

- F12. Measure X funding has not been allocated for CCAS operations.**

Response: Agree.

RECOMMENDATIONS - *California Penal Code Section 933.05(b) requires a response to the designated recommendations of the Grand Jury.*

- R3. The County Board of Supervisors allocate additional funding to provide outreach to educate residents about available CCAS services.**

Response: **The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.** Additional funding will not be provided because funding for other mandated services takes precedence over funding of discretionary services.

- R4. CCAS explore embedding Animal Control Officers at selected police stations to expand services, such as wildlife retrieval, throughout the county.**

Response: **The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.** Based on the cost and logistical complexities, it is not feasible to implement this. Additionally, it would be

difficult to identify appropriate locations for facilities to house animals and provide adequate veterinary care. The department cannot function without a multidisciplinary facility (e.g., field services, husbandry, medical care, animal enrichment programs, etc.).

R5. CCAS engage a consulting firm to obtain guidance on the possible redistribution of animal services within the County.

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. The County completed a consulting engagement within the last 5 years with findings that supported the County's current efforts, including the needed rate increases to cities.

R6. CCAS pursue a Memorandum of Understanding with ARF to coordinate resource "sharing".

Response: The recommendation requires further analysis. By June 2022, the County will evaluate if such an arrangement would be mutually beneficial. Partnerships may affect the County's limited resources and impact existing operations. It should be noted that as a nonprofit in Contra Costa County, ARF currently has an important role within the animal adoption system. ARF assists by placing animals from CCAS into their adoption programs.

R7. CCAS pursue a Memorandum of Understanding with the Milo Foundation to coordinate resource sharing.

Response: The recommendation requires further analysis. By June 2022, the County will evaluate if such an arrangement would be mutually beneficial.

R8. CCAS pursue a Memorandum of Understanding with East Bay SPCA to coordinate resource sharing.

Response: The recommendation requires further analysis. By June 2022, the County will evaluate if such an arrangement would be mutually beneficial.

R9. CCAS management and City Managers pursue customization of the Animal Services contracts to include basic service plus extended services for an additional fee.

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. The County is developing animal services agreement with our contract cities that will provide improved services. We disagree that individual cities should be able to contract for services that are beyond the scope of the service provided to all contracted cities. Over the last two years, CCAS administration has been working with the City Managers and Police Chiefs from the 18 contracted cities to develop a more equitable and sustainable service agreement. The proposed new

agreement will reflect and clearly define the services that our contract cities have identified as priorities. The process has gone through various stages of review and feedback and will be adopted for Fiscal Year 2022/23.

R10. AAS and CCAS explore sharing of resources for low-cost animal care clinics in the eastern part of the County.

Response: **The recommendation requires further analysis.** By June 2022, the county will evaluate if this feasible. There is a need for low-cost animal care clinics in the eastern part of the County. The County would need to identify additional funding to partner with the City of Antioch for resource sharing and to provide low-cost animal care clinics in the eastern part of the County. The Contra Costa Animal Services Director plans to discuss these services with the City of Antioch.

R11. The County Board of Supervisors request that CCAS apply for Measure X funding to lower the projected increased financial cost to CCAS-contracted cities and to support additional low-cost spay and neuter services.

Response: **The recommendation will not be implemented.** The Board of Supervisors has already allocated Measure X funding and did not allocate Measure X funding to Animal Services.