



REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Jason Simpson, City Manager

Prepared by: Jason Simpson, City Manager

Date: September 24, 2024

Subject: Agreement with Animal Friends of the Valleys for Microchipping and Spay and Neuter Vouchers for Lake Elsinore Residents

Recommendation

Approve and authorize the City Manager to execute the Professional Services Agreement with Animal Friends of the Valleys in an amount not to exceed \$25,000.00 for Microchipping and Spay and Neuter Vouchers for Lake Elsinore Residents in such final form as approved by the City Attorney.

Background

For nearly 30 years, the City of Lake Elsinore has partnered with Animal Friends of the Valleys (AFV) to deliver comprehensive animal services, ensuring the health and safety of both residents and their pets. These services encompass a wide range of essential functions, including responsive field services, 24/7 emergency assistance, and humane treatment of animals. Additionally, AFV plays a crucial role in educating the public on responsible pet ownership and enforcing the City's animal control ordinances, contributing to a safer and more compassionate community.

Discussion

In recent years, the City of Lake Elsinore has consistently had the highest number of animals at the shelter among the five-member agencies partnered with AFV. The City's costs for animal sheltering services are directly tied to the proportion of animals it houses. In response, City staff have been actively exploring strategies to reduce the number of animals in the shelter originating from the City of Lake Elsinore and have engaged in multiple discussions with AFV staff.

AFV Voucher Program

One of the key proposals is the introduction of a spay and neuter voucher program modeled after successful initiatives in other cities. This program would offer Lake Elsinore residents the opportunity to apply for a \$200 voucher to cover the cost of spaying or neutering their pets. The voucher could be redeemed either at the AFV clinic or at a participating local veterinary clinic. Given the current long wait times for services at the AFV center, residents could choose to use the voucher's value towards the procedure at a local vet and pay any remaining costs themselves.

AFV would manage the registration and payment process. City staff would oversee the selection of participating veterinary offices and the application review process to ensure that funds are allocated exclusively to Lake Elsinore residents. For the first year of the program, a budget of \$20,000 is proposed, which would allow for 100 animals to be treated. Additionally, to increase the chances of lost animals being reunited with their owners, a further \$5,000 is proposed for a microchipping program for residents' pets.

Staff is proposing to utilize the City's contingency account with AFV to fund this initiative. This account, which accumulates fees and donations collected throughout the fiscal year, has not been used since its creation a decade ago and currently holds a balance of \$89,799. By tapping into this resource, the City can support these vital animal welfare programs without impacting other budgeted services.

Fiscal Impact

The \$25,000.00 for Microchipping and Spay and Neuter Vouchers for Lake Elsinore Residents is funded by the deposit funds held by AFV, which can be refunded to the City. However, the staff believes these funds can be leveraged to reduce the pet population.

Attachments

Attachment 1 - Agreement
Exhibit A - Scope of Work

City Manager's Office