



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:13-964

Agenda Item Number: 24.

Agenda Date: 11/21/2013

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Animal Care Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Kathy Davis

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City Wide

SUBJECT:

Proposed Changes to City Code by Amending Chapter 5 of the City Code

SUMMARY:

An ordinance amending Chapter 5 of the City Code by requiring the spay/neuter of an owned pet following its first impoundment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In FY 2012, ACS began implementing its newly revised strategic plan by incorporating the three (3) strategic priorities of: enhanced enforcement, controlling the stray animal population, and increasing the Live Release rate. As evident in the drastic increase in the Live Release rate from 30% in FY 2011 to 77% in FY 2013, and an the increase in number of spay/neuter surgeries performed by ACS from 11,000 in FY 2012 to 17,500 in FY 2013, ACS continues to improve the services it provides to the community.

It is anticipated that ACS will continue its success in FY 2014 through the implementation of innovative solutions. In particular, ACS anticipates focusing its efforts and resources in FY 2014 by: (1) enhancing field enforcement; (2) increasing community spay/neuter services; (3) maximizing kennel capacity, and (4) maintaining its successful Live Release program. The following FY 2014 initiatives were presented to and recommended by the Quality of Life Committee on October 15 and the Animal Care Advisory Board on October 16.

CONTROLLING THE STRAY POPULATION: Of the nearly 30,000 pets impounded annually at ACS, approximately 40% are under the age of 5 months. It has also been recognized by ACS staff that a large number of these pets are likely to be owned, but roaming pets. Chapter 5 of the City Code currently requires all pets that are returned to their owner following their second impoundment to be spayed/neutered; the owner of any roaming pet that was impounded for the first time by an officer, and then returned, is currently not required to

spay/neuter their pet.

By changing Chapter 5 of the City Code to require pets to be spayed/neutered following the first impoundment, ACS will be able to help ensure that the chronically roaming pets are not breeding and adding more litters to the neighborhoods. The requirement to spay/neuter a pet following its first impoundment would not be applied to a pet that qualifies for a certified medical exception, an exhibition or competition animal, or a police or military service dog. Based upon the number of pets returned in FY 2013, this change could result in the spay/neuter of an additional 1,000 pets annually.

ISSUE:

This amendment to the Chapter 5 Code will require any pets returned to their owner following the 1st impoundment to be spayed/neutered. By making this change, ACS will have an additional tool to require responsible pet ownership and help ensure that the chronically roaming pets are no longer breeding and adding more stray litters to the neighborhood. Based upon the number of pets returned in FY 2013, this change could result in the spay/neuter of an additional 1,000 pets annually.

ALTERNATIVES:

If this amendment to the Chapter 5 Code is not approved, Animal Care Services would continue to function as is by waiting until the second impoundment to require the pet to be spayed/neutered.

FISCAL IMPACT:

ACS anticipates no fiscal impact associated with this change to Chapter 5 Code of the City Code.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of this ordinance which will enable Animal Care Services to continue to support the Strategic Plan on Controlling the Stray Population and Enhanced Enforcement.