



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:15-5894

Agenda Item Number: 4.

Agenda Date: 11/12/2015

In Control: Criminal Justice, Public Safety and Services Committee

DEPARTMENT: Animal Care Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Kathy Davis

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City Wide

SUBJECT:

Staff will provide a briefing to the Criminal Justice, Public Safety and Services Committee regarding the City's animal transport program.

SUMMARY:

A briefing to the Criminal Justice, Public Safety and Services Committee regarding the City's animal transport program.

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. In FY 2015, ACS added a 4th strategic priority to "engage and educate the community." As evident in the drastic increase in the Live Release rate from 30% in FY 2011 to 85% in FY 2015, while maintaining an annual intake of 30,000 pets, ACS continues to improve the services it provides to the community.

A major component to ACS's ability to increase its Live Release rate is due to the rescue partnerships that were established and/or strengthened over the last few years. For example, since FY 2011, ACS increased the number of pets being rescued by 343% (from 2,995 rescues in FY 2011 to 13,260 in FY 2015). Today, the work performed by the rescue community contributed to 46% of the Department's current 85% Live Release rate.

By working with Rescue agencies, ACS is able to utilize other markets to find "Forever Homes" for the pets impounded

at ACS. For example, In FY 2015 ACS worked with 120 rescue agencies. Of these organizations, five (5) rescue partners utilized a Pet Transport Program to find forever homes for the majority of the 1,565 pets they pulled from ACS. Pet Transport Programs will take rescued pets from areas of low demand and transport them to areas within the United States that have a higher level of demand for specific types of pets. The five transport agencies that are currently working with ACS and the number of pets they rescued from ACS in FY 2015 are:

- A.R.F. (Alamo Rescue Friends) rescued 232 pets
- AWSBC (Alamo Welfare Society of Bandera County) rescued 531 pets
- God's Dogs rescued 387 pets
- C.A.R.E (Cressie Animal Refuge and Enrichment) rescued 292 pets
- Tracy's Dogs rescued 123 pets

While Pet Transport Programs can greatly benefit the City by sending pets to areas of higher demand, they can be harder to manage and require additional time and resources than other rescue programs. For example, many receiving agencies that work with Transport Recue groups require a longer observation period to ensure that the pets are free from disease. Therefore, Transport agencies are required to hold a pet for 2 to 4 weeks before the pet can be transported and often require additional medical evaluations prior to being transported. The time requirement to hold pets in preparation for transport is a major reason why ACS chooses to partner with transport agencies rather than performing the services in-house.

Existing transport vehicles are also limited in the number and size of pets that can be transported. When taking into consideration the limited number of pets that can be transported per trip and the various costs associated with a transport program, costs could exceed \$150.00 per pet.

In summary, transport programs are an important tool that is utilized by ACS through many of its partnerships. While there are opportunities to grow these programs, doing so will require additional commitment and resources such as medical services, or the purchase of larger vehicles and additional cages.

ISSUE:

This is a briefing for informational purposes only.

ALTERNATIVES:

This is a briefing for informational purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this briefing.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is a briefing for informational purposes only.

