

ANIMAL CONTROL IN MONTEREY COUNTY



SUMMARY

The Department of Health is the third largest department in Monterey County. A review of Grand Jury Reports for the prior five years revealed it had not been investigated during that time. The organization chart indicates there are ten different agencies or bureaus within the Department of Health and there are numerous sub-divisions within each agency and bureau. It is beyond the scope of the Monterey County Civil Grand Jury (Jury) to attempt a comprehensive review of the entire Department of Health. This report focuses on Animal Services, a division within the Environmental Health Bureau.

During the preliminary investigation the Jury learned the Monterey County (County) and the City of Salinas (City) shelters are located within 200 feet of one another. The County shelter is on land leased from the City. The Jury also learned that the Board of Supervisors and the City Council were considering entering into an agreement that could lead to a consolidation of services.

This report addresses the County and City Animal Services budgets and staffing, the number of animals coming into and leaving the shelter, why they come in and how they leave. The Jury also reviewed progress toward consolidation of services at the two shelters and identified areas that should be considered. Finally, all incorporated cities within the county were surveyed to see how they provide animal control services, particularly how impounded animals are sheltered.

BACKGROUND

Both the County and City shelters are located in the City of Salinas. The City shelter is at 144 Hitchcock and the County shelter is at 160 Hitchcock. Access from Hitchcock Road is via a private paved road. The County shelter is approximately a quarter mile from Hitchcock and the City shelter is about 200 feet beyond the County shelter.

City of Salinas Shelter



Courtesy of TerraServer.com 1

County of Monterey Shelter

Adequate signage exists when approaching the private drive from South Davis Road. However, when approaching from South Main Street there is no signage until reaching the intersection. This makes it difficult for the first time visitor to find either shelter.

The County shelter is located on land leased from the City since 12/20/2000. The lease is for an initial term of 55 years at \$1.00 per year with an extension for an additional 44 years at \$1.00 per year to be adjusted for inflation upon extension. The lease required animal shelter improvements to be constructed within 36 months. The improvements will belong to the City at the end of the lease. The City shelter was constructed in 2000, the County shelter in 2002. Although the shelters are located very close together and provide approximately the same services, each is separately staffed and managed.

In August 2015 the County and City agreed to jointly fund a "... collaborative feasibility study for operating the County and City animal shelters as one program." The report was received on June 28, 2016¹. On November 7, 2017 the Monterey County Board of Supervisors and the City of Salinas City Council entered into a Memorandum of Agreement which establishes an Animal Control Services Administration Pilot Project (Pilot Project). The purpose of the Pilot Project is

¹ Monterey County Board Report Legistar File Number 16-816.
<https://monterey.legistar.com/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=493310&GUID=777B363D-4541-4753-BF69-6CC053CA1D8B&Options=info&Search=>

to evaluate the feasibility of consolidating services and develop an operational implementation plan.

APPROACH

Interviews were conducted with management and staff who provide Animal Control Services to the County and City. Additional interviews and written surveys were conducted with management and staff who provide animal control services in all other incorporated cities within Monterey County.

Multiple site visits were made to the County and City animal shelters.

Several contracts involving animal control services were reviewed, including:

- A contract with a vendor to provide animal carcass removal services to the County. The same vendor provides this service to the City of Salinas
- A contract between the County and California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) wherein the County provides bite investigation and rabies services to CSUMB
- A contract between the County and the City of Greenfield wherein the County provides bite investigation, rabies services, shelter services, and animal carcass disposal to the City of Greenfield
- A contract between the County and the City of Carmel-by-the Sea to provide various animal control related services to the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea
- A contract between the City of Salinas and the City of Marina wherein the City of Salinas provides animal shelter services for dogs and cats to the City of Marina.

Various reports regarding the development of an agreement between the County and City to consolidate services at the two Animal Control Facilities were also reviewed. Most notable among these documents is the June 26, 2016 *County of Monterey and City of Salinas Animal Services Consolidation Agreement* by Management Partners.

The Jury also attended the following public meetings during which Animal Control services of the County, the City, or both were discussed:

- Monterey County Board of Supervisors
- Monterey County and City of Salinas Animal Services Ad Hoc Stakeholders Committee
- Monterey County Animal Control Program Advisory Board

DISCUSSION

County of Monterey Animal Services

Budget & Staffing

Animal Services is a division within the County Health Department. The 2017-18 Monterey County Recommended Budget includes the following Unit Description:

“Animal Services provides health protection to the residents of Monterey County through rabies and stray animal control. Animal Services also provides education, field response for dangerous animals, licensing, spay and neuter services and shelter for approximately 4,000 to 4,500 animals annually, which largely consist of animals coming in as stray and roaming animals.”

In addition to providing the above services within the unincorporated area, the County provides limited services to the following:

- California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) - the County provides bite investigation and laboratory services to determine whether an animal had rabies
- Cities of Carmel by the Sea and Greenfield - the County provides shelter services for domestic animals for up to 10-days, veterinary care when necessary, processing redemptions by owners, adoption or humane euthanasia and disposal

A summary of County budgets and anticipated revenue for the current year (CY) as well as the previous three fiscal years (FY) is shown below:

	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 Actual	2016-17 CY Estimate	2017-18 Recommended
Expenditure	1,799,871	1,842,095	2,034,927	2,156,416
Revenue	243,401	335,255	301,580	362,000

Expenditures have trended upward with an increase of 19.8% from the 2014-15 Actual Budget to the 2017-18 FY Recommended Budget. As noted in the chart above, revenue fluctuated from year to year during the same period.

County Staff for FY 2017-18 consists of 12 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) and 7 Part-Time Equivalent (PTE) positions as shown below:

<u>Allocated Positions:</u>	<u>Filled Positions, as of 1/2018</u>
1.0 FTE Operations Manager	0
1.0 FTE Senior Animal Control Officer	1
3.0 FTE Animal Control Officer	2
1.0 FTE Senior Animal Care Technician	1
5.0 FTE Animal Care Technician II	3
1.0 PTE Animal Care Technician I	1
1.0 FTE Office Assistant III	1
2.0 FTE Office Assistant II	1
1.0 PTE Registered Veterinary Technician	1
1.0 PTE Veterinarian	0

Description of Facility

The County facility has the capacity to shelter 81 dogs and 112 cats. The operating room is designed to facilitate two simultaneous examinations, or spay/neutering operations. It is currently underutilized due to staff limitations, i.e. one part-time Veterinarian and one part-time Registered Veterinary Technician. The kennels have heated concrete floors. Dogs are typically assigned to an individual kennel with access to a fenced outside yard. The dog can be confined to either the inside or outside area for cleaning and maintenance of the facility. The shelter maintains separate areas for isolating ill animals and those suspected of being positive for parvovirus infection (parvo) but not yet ill. There are additional separately fenced yard areas where clients seeking to adopt can get acquainted with the dogs. The cat facility is entirely within the building with cats housed in separate cages. Separate rooms are provided for cats available for adoption, feral cats and for isolating ill cats. There is also a 'get acquainted room' where clients can relax and play with potential adoptees. The Jury found the shelter to be well maintained, clean and not overcrowded.

Shelter Population Statistics

The County and the City use Chameleon Software Products for tracking and administration. The software enables both entities to maintain a wide variety of statistics on animals coming into or leaving the shelter. Reliability of the data is dependent upon timely, accurate and complete input by various responsible staff members. Inaccuracies, if any, are not considered significant, especially when comparing data from year to year.²

Intake statistics include whether the animal was voluntarily relinquished by an owner, brought into the shelter by a non-owner or picked up as a stray. Photos of each animal entering the shelter are taken and, together with a brief description, uploaded to a search website.³ The software

² The following shelter data was provided by Monterey County Animal Control from the Chameleon program.

³ The website, which will be described in more detail later in the report, is part of the Chameleon program.

enables staff to track the date an animal was brought in and information gleaned upon intake. Placement and disposal statistics are also maintained for animals returned to owner, transferred to another site, adoption and euthanasia.

The number of dogs, cats and other animals, such as pet rabbits, gerbils, chickens etc. coming into the shelter is shown below:

	TOTAL INTAKE	CATS	DOGS	OTHER
FY 14-15	2,472	1,096	1,326	50
FY 15-16	2,748	1,200	1,462	86
FY 16-17	2,787	1,267	1,440	80

Most animals come into the shelter as strays. Other sources are owner surrender and transfers from other agencies. The number of stray animals entering the shelter, and the percentage of total intake is shown below:

FY 14-15		FY 15-16		FY 16-17	
Strays	% of Total	Strays	% of Total	Strays	% of Total
1,901	77%	2,006	73%	2,173	78%

Most stray animals are brought into the shelter by Animal Control Officers (ACO) but some are brought in by members of the public. In addition to picking up stray animals, ACOs respond to calls from the public that may report animal bites, animal hoarding, animal fights etc. County ACOs patrol the entire unincorporated area of Monterey County.

In addition to intake statistics, output statistics are available. Output statistics record how animals leave the shelter. Please note, the number of intakes and outputs within each fiscal year do not match. The discrepancy is due to the fact that some animals arrive near the end of one fiscal year, yet do not leave the facility until the following fiscal year.

State law⁴ specifies a minimum holding period of 6 business days for stray domestic cats and dogs. However, in recognition of the stress induced in feral cats by being caged, state law specifies stray feral cats need only be held 3 business days. Once the holding period is met or waived, the animal may be adopted, transferred to a “rescue”⁵ agency or euthanized.

Owners may bring their animals to the shelter and sign a release waiving the holding period. The waiver allows immediate adoption, transfer to a “rescue” agency or euthanization. During the

⁴ California Food and Agricultural Code §31752. (holding period for impounded cats), §31752.5 (holding period for feral cats) and §31108 (holding period for impounded dogs).

⁵ A rescue agency is generally a non-profit organized to rescue animals which are not good candidates for adoption. See Appendix B for a representative list from the Pet Harbor website.

Jury inquiry, it was found shelter staff misunderstood County procedures and were requesting waivers from anyone bringing feral cats into the shelter, resulting in immediate, or very nearly immediate, euthanasia. This has been corrected and it is anticipated the average holding period will increase, possibly impacting the number of staff needed to provide minimal daily care as described in the following Shelter and Staffing section of this report.

CAT OUTCOME	FY 14-15	FY 15-16	FY 16-17
Adoption	60	74	121
Disposal	13	31	24
Returned to Field	1	-	-
Returned to Owner	18	14	16
Transfer	298	271	197
Euthanasia	701	791	898
Total	1,091	1,181	1,256

“Disposal” refers to deceased cats. “Returned to Field” refers to feral cats which are released after they have been spayed or neutered provided they were picked up from an area considered appropriate for release and not overly populated with feral cats. Cats transferred out typically go to organizations specializing in rescue and placement of cats. Euthenized cats have typically either entered the shelter from an owner who has consented to euthanasia, or are feral and ill, very young or old and not likely to survive on their own. Approximately 70% of the cats entering the shelter have been euthenized over the past three years.

Given that the preponderance of cats coming into the shelter are strays, and the preponderance of outputs are through euthenasia, it is likely the county would benefit from a more aggressive spay/neuter program coupled with more education and outreach regarding owner responsibility.

Output data for dogs leaving the shelter are shown below:

DOG OUTCOME	FY 14-15	FY 15-16	FY 16-17
Adoption	161	210	245
Disposal	15	21	15
Returned to Owner	266	314	342
Transfer	586	624	485
Euthanasia	315	300	331
Total	1,343	1,469	1,418

Approximately 78% of dogs entering the shelter over the past three years were adopted, returned to their owner or transferred to a rescue facility.

Other than feral cats discussed above, euthanizing animals is generally limited to those that are too ill or too aggressive to be either adopted or transferred to a rescue group. An additional cause is when an animal is showing signs of stress due to being caged for a long period of time.

Shelter Capacity and Staffing

The Jury visited each shelter twice and observed that both shelters had some empty kennels and cages. The Jury noted the shelters were clean, devoid of obnoxious animal odors and appeared to be well maintained. The Jury was told both shelters use volunteers in addition to paid staff.

The Jury did not rely solely on their observations during two visits, or staff comments regarding the sufficiency of shelter capacity or staffing. The National Animal Care and Control Association (NACA) website⁶ provides guidelines for determining necessary shelter capacity and the minimum number of staff needed to provide minimum kennel care (see Appendix A).

The formula for County shelter capacity based on average length⁷ of stay is shown below.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{CATS } 1,188 \div 365 \times 6.5 \text{ days at shelter} &= 22 \\ \text{DOGS } 1,409 \div 365 \times 8.9 \text{ days at shelter} &= 35\end{aligned}$$

The County shelter has 112 cat cages and 81 dog kennels, well above the current number needed.

NACA “recommends that each animal care and control shelter be staffed each day with the appropriate number of kennel personnel to insure that the facility, and every animal within, is maintained at, or in excess of, minimum care standards”. In this formula, daily care is defined only as feeding the animals and cleaning the kennels and cages. It does not account for the additional staff needed for veterinary care, administration, front office help, work done by Animal Control Officers, dispatch, or grounds and building maintenance.

As previously noted, there are 6.5 Animal Care Technicians, including the Senior Technician; 6.0 positions were filled as of January 2018. The shelter is open Tuesday through Saturday noon to 5:00 pm. The morning hours are spent cleaning and feeding the animals. The balance of the workday is necessary for other tasks such as processing animals into or out of the shelter, administrative duties, and providing animal care beyond the requirement of feeding and cleaning etc.

The NACA formula and calculation of kennel staff needed at the County shelter is shown in Appendix A. The indicated result of 4.8 does not account for vacation, sick leave, time needed to fill vacancies or other necessary absences from work. Based on a 40 hour work week with 10 holidays, 10 vacation days and 10 days paid sick leave per year, the above number requires an adjustment of 11.5%. Therefore the minimum kennel staff is estimated to be 5.4 positions. The current staffing of 6.5 full-time equivalent Animal Care Technicians is greater than the minimum

⁶ <http://www.nacanet.org/>

⁷ Average length of stay was extrapolated from the input and output dates of animals released from the shelter in September 2016.

number indicated by the formula. However, as previously noted, feral cat length of stay will likely increase going forward, impacting the number of staff needed for minimum care.

Finding Lost Pets or Pets Suitable for Adoption

Both the County and City websites provide links to Pet Harbor⁸, a segment of the Chameleon program that allows the public to search for lost pets or to look at pictures and descriptions of pets available for adoption. However, the County and City websites leading to the link are configured differently. It is not intuitive or easy to access Pet Harbor from the County website. Entering Monterey County Animal Control into a search engine takes one to a web page which includes, among other things, an A-Z Index of all services provided by the Health Department. The Index provides links to Animal Bite Report, Animal Control Ordinances and Codes, Animal Control Program Advisory Board, Animal Licensing and Animal Services. Selecting Animal Services takes one to a page with a link to finding a lost pet or identifying an adoptable pet. The City website is much more accessible. Entering City of Salinas Animal Control into a search engine takes one directly to the City website; the link to Pet Harbor is on the first page.

The Pet Harbor website is designed to allow the public to search for lost and adoptable pets by the categories of dog, cat or other. The search area is defined by zip code or city name and can be adjusted to a search radius of 10, 25, 50 or other miles. Reaching Pet Harbor from either the County or the City link results in an initial search of either the County or the City shelter. The website also provides the ability to select multiple shelters or local private rescue groups. A list of shelters and local private rescue groups that can be searched, and a sample of pictures and descriptions are included in Appendix B. Persons identifying a lost animal or interested in adopting can communicate their intent to the agency directly from the website. The animal will be held until the owner or the party interested in adoption can come into the shelter.

⁸ <http://petharbor.com/>

City of Salinas Animal Services

Budget & Staffing

In Salinas, Animal Services is a division of the Police Department. The purpose of the division is described in the 2017-18 Adopted Budget as:

“Provide effective animal control, licensing, lost/found and adoption programs for all stray and unwanted animals within the city.”

In addition to providing animal services within the City of Salinas (City), the City also contracts with the City of Marina. The contract is for shelter services only; it does not include licensing, patrol, or investigation of bite reports or other animal violations.

A summary of City of Salinas budgets and revenue⁹ is shown below:

	Actual 2014-15	Actual 2014-15	Amended 2016-17	Proposed 2017-18
Expenditures	852,849	893,322	1,067,269	1,099,620
Revenue	186,283	202,090	192,600	192,600

Like the County, City expenditures have trended upward over the past four years with an increase of 28.9% from the actual expenditures in FY 2014-15 to proposed expenditures in 2017-18. Similar to the County, City revenue has not kept pace with expenditures over the same period.

Salinas’ animal services staffing for FY 2017-18 consists of a combination of 7 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) and 5 Part-Time Equivalent (PTE) positions as shown below:

<u>Allocated Positions:</u>	<u>Filled Positions:</u>
2 FTE Animal Control Officers	2
3 FTE Kennel Staff	3
2 PTE Kennel Staff	2
2 FTE Front Office/Administration	2
3 PTE Front Office/Administration	2

The City contracts with a private veterinarian. The veterinarian comes to the shelter two days per week and spends 1.5 to 3.0 hours, depending upon the services needed. The City does not have a licensed veterinary technician. Kennel staff move animals to and from the kennels or cages, and provide general assistance that does not require training as a veterinary technician. Kennel staff are trained and authorized to perform euthanasia.

⁹ 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 Operating Budget Documents.

Description of Facility & Shelter Population

The shelter has 93 dog kennels and 92 cat cages. The Jury noted that not all of the dog kennels are useable at all times as the concrete floors do not completely dry out after the kennel is washed. During wet weather, ground water tends to seep into the kennels. Approximately ten kennels are thus affected and kennel capacity is reduced. Staff reported that significant efforts to correct this problem have not been successful. As noted later in this report, shelter capacity exceeds the number of kennels needed.

Dogs are housed individually in kennels with an attached, fenced, outside area. Dogs can be isolated either inside or outside when cleaning or maintenance is required. The shelter maintains separate areas for isolating ill animals and those suspected of being positive for parvovirus infection (parvo) but not yet ill. There are also multiple outside yards where clients seeking to adopt can get acquainted with the dogs.

The cat cages were replaced in 2013-14 with cages that have removable partitions allowing easy reconfiguration. This is beneficial, not only for moving an inhabitant cat from a portion of the cage while it is cleaned, but also for housing multiple cats in the same enlarged cage when, for example, it is known they are from the same litter or home. Adoptable cats are housed in a separate room from feral cats. Another room is used to isolate ill cats.

Evidence of rodent control measures was observed when the Jury visited the shelter. Staff indicated it is kept under control by regular visits from a commercial extermination company. When visited, the Jury noted the shelter appeared to be well maintained, clean and not overcrowded.

The City uses Chameleon Software Products¹⁰ to record and maintain statistics on animals coming into (intake) and leaving (output) the shelter. The chart below shows the total animal intake over the past three years broken out by cats, dogs and other types of animals.

	TOTAL INTAKE	CATS	DOGS	OTHER
FY 14-15	3,899	1,981	1,792	126
FY 15-16	3,559	1,749	1,725	85
FY 16-17	3,616	1,712	1,811	93

City statistics show most animals come into the shelter as strays. Other sources are owner surrender and transfers from other agencies. Like the County, most strays are picked up by the two City ACOs. The ACOs are also responsible for responding to calls from the public related to

¹⁰ Statistical data provided by City of Salinas staff from the Chameleon program.

animal control issues. The number of strays and their percentage of the total intake are shown below:

FY 14-15		FY 15-16		FY 16-17	
Strays	% of Total	Strays	% of Total	Strays	% of Total
3,295	85%	2,891	81%	3,020	84%

In addition to intake statistics, statistics are also available on the reason animals leave the shelter. Once again, the number of intakes and outputs within each fiscal year do not match due to the fact that some animal come in near the end of one fiscal year and go out in the following fiscal year.

CAT OUTCOME	FY 14-15	FY 15-16	FY 16-17
Adoption	144	137	230
Died/Disposal	149	195	134
Returned to Field	309	269	225
Returned to Owner	36	23	39
Transfer	265	252	228
Euthanasia	1,071	872	839
Total	1,974	1,748	1,695

The City has a program for returning feral cats to the field after they have been spayed/neutered. A total of 803 feral cats were returned to the field over the three year period, compared to only one returned to the field from the County shelter. The number of cats euthenized over the past three years is approximately 50% compared to the County cat euthenization of approximately 70%.

Output data for dogs leaving the shelter are shown below:

DOG OUTCOME	FY 14-15	FY 15-16	FY 16-17
Adoption	309	259	278
Died/Disposal	84	109	83
Returned to Owner	410	494	569
Transfer	640	583	589
Euthanasia	382	277	296
Total	1,825	1,722	1,815

Approximately 77% of dogs entering the shelter over the past three years were adopted, returned to their owner or transferred to a rescue facility, very nearly equal to the County shelter outcome of 78%.

As noted earlier, euthanizing animals is generally limited to those that are too ill or aggressive to be adopted or transferred to a rescue organization. An additional cause is when an animal is showing signs of stress due to being caged for a long period of time.

Shelter Capacity and Staffing

As more fully described earlier in this report, the Jury used the formulas developed by The National Care and Control Association (NACA) to estimate shelter capacity and the minimum number of staff required for kennel care.

The calculation for the City shelter capacity based on average length of stay¹¹ is shown below.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{CATS } 1,814 \div 365 \times 9.7 \text{ days at shelter} &= 49 \\ \text{DOGS } 1,776 \div 365 \times 10.43 \text{ days at shelter} &= 51\end{aligned}$$

The City shelter has 92 cat cages and 93 dog kennels, well above the current number needed.

As previously noted, the NACA website also provides guidance for estimating the number of staff necessary to provide minimal daily care. The calculation for the City Shelter is shown in Appendix A. The indicated result of 7.5 kennel staff does not account for vacation, sick leave, time needed to fill vacancies or other necessary absences from work. Based on a 40 hour work week with 10 holidays, 10 vacation days and 10 days of paid sick leave per year, the above number requires an adjustment of 11.5%. Therefore the minimum kennel staff is estimated to be 8.4 positions.

City shelter kennel staffing currently consists of 3 full-time and 2 part-time positions. The Jury's observation was that the animals are well cared for and the premises are clean and devoid of obnoxious odors. Upon inquiry, the Jury learned that the City shelter has a very active volunteer program. Based on the foregoing it is considered unlikely that animal care and maintenance could be maintained without the volunteer program.

Finding Lost Pets or Pets Suitable for Adoption

The City provides a link to find lost and adoptable pets through the same Pet Harbor software as the County, described earlier in this report.

¹¹ Average length of stay was extrapolated from the input and output dates of animals released from the shelter in September 2016.

Other Municipalities' Animal Services

The County and the City are the only public agencies providing mid- to long-term shelter, adoption and euthanasia services. The SPCA, a private non-profit agency, also provides some or all of those services as do a number of private rescue groups.

All of the incorporated cities within Monterey County were either surveyed by mail or visited to determine what animal control services they provide.

Unlike the County, virtually all city animal services are located within City Police Departments. Most cities have Animal Control Officers (ACO) on staff; the exception being the cities of Del Rey Oaks, Sand City and Monterey. Animal control in those three cities is provided by Community Service Officers or Police Officers. Even in jurisdictions with ACOs (including the City of Salinas and the County) coverage by ACOs cannot be provided 24/7. When ACOs are not available, Sheriff's Deputies, Police Officers or Community Service Officers provide coverage, particularly in situations where an animal is injured, has become dangerous, or is a public nuisance. Injured animals are generally treated at local veterinary clinics. Most cities have temporary holding cages which are used to confine animals prior to transport.

Jurisdictions uniformly attempt to reunite stray animals with their owners when microchip, license tag or other owner information is available. Unidentifiable strays are generally held for a limited period prior to transport to the Salinas, County or SPCA shelter. The city which picked up the stray is responsible for transport of the animal.

Statistics for city ACOs, temporary holding kennels, holding periods prior to transport, and transfers to other agencies, are shown below:

	ACOs	Kennel	Retention Prior to Transfer	Transfer to
Carmel-by-the-Sea	2	dogs & cats	8 hours	County or SPCA
Del Rey Oaks	0	none	n/a	SPCA
Gonzales	1	dogs		SPCA
Greenfield	1FTE & 1 PTE	dogs & cats	3-4 days	County
King City	1	none	n/a	SPCA or SCAR
Marina	2	dogs	24 hours	Salinas Animal Shelter
Monterey	0	dogs & cats	few days	SPCA
Pacific Grove	1	dogs, cats, birds	1-3 days	SPCA
Sand City	0	dogs	1-2 days	SPCA
Seaside	1	dogs	24 hours	SPCA
Soledad	1	none	transfers twice/week	SPCA

Opportunities for Consolidation of Services

Historically, the County of Monterey and the City of Salinas have not contracted with one another to jointly provide animal services. Discussion of combining services at the two shelters began in 2015.

Consolidation Report

In June 2016 Management Partners, a consulting firm jointly engaged by the County and City, published their report “County of Monterey and City of Salinas Animal Services Consolidation Agreement” (Consolidation Report). The Consolidation Report is a comprehensive study of the feasibility of operating both Animal Shelters as one program. The Consolidation Report identified and detailed the following four Options for consolidating services:

“Option A: Share an Animal Services Director to Oversee both Operations.”

The proposed Director would not replace the two Animal Services Managers; leadership and supervision would still be separately provided at each operation. This option was considered relatively easy to implement as the impact on employees would be minimal. They would continue employment with either the County or the City and separate supervisorial structures would be maintained. It was thought the Director could facilitate resolution of misunderstandings and bring the two animal shelter policies, procedures and practices into closer alignment. Cost savings were not anticipated; additional expense for the additional position was considered likely.

“Option B: Share an Animal Services Director and Consolidate Field Services.”

At the time of the report the County had three Animal Control Officers (ACOs) and one Senior Animal Control Officer. The City has two ACOs. The County ACOs patrol a significantly larger geographic area while the City ACOs patrol a larger population. As with option A, the proposal was for the ACOs to continue to report to either the county or the city. The Director would be expected to mediate conflicts and develop standard procedures to be followed by both agencies. The proposal also called for consolidating dispatch into a single unit. It could improve response time as calls from unincorporated areas near Salinas could be handled by either Salinas or County ACOs. The geographic areas of each ACO could be modified to maximize coverage without increasing ACO staff.

“Option C: Share a Director and Consolidate Field Services, Administrative Support and Licensing Functions.”

This option is considered to be an outgrowth of implementation of options A and B. It was envisioned that the consolidation of services would provide a “one stop shop” for adoptions and inquiries about lost animals. Public Service would be enhanced if both entities used the same licensing software, maintained the same fee schedules and shared staff at both facilities.

Some identified obstacles were the need to identify service levels, costs to each entity, and labor concerns, particularly due to differences in salary and benefits.

“Option D: Fully Consolidate Animal Services Functions.”

Full consolidation into a single entity would likely require a contractual arrangement whereby one entity assumes full responsibility, or through the formation of a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA).

The formation of a JPA was described as having the greatest opportunity for economies of scale. It also acknowledged it would be the most difficult to achieve. Primary among the difficulties would be governance, financial contribution from each entity, labor issues related to salary and benefits, and standardization of procedures.

Memorandum of Agreement

On November 7, 2017 the Monterey County Board of Supervisors and the Salinas City Council entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)¹² for an Animal Control Services Administration Pilot Project. The MOA is the result of the efforts of County staff, City Staff, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and other interested parties. The terms of the agreement include the following:

- The County shall provide an Animal Services Administrator who will spend at least 18 hours per week on-site at the Salinas Animal Shelter and the remainder of the week at the County Shelter. The Administrator will receive general direction from the County Director of Health, or designee, and work with the Salinas Police Services Administrator regarding communication and on-going Salinas shelter activities.
- “The Administrator shall provide overall direction, management and control regarding the provision of Consolidated Services. The Administrator shall provide direct management and supervision of County personnel with respect to such services. The City shall have direct management and supervision of City personnel with respect to such services.”
- The City shall reimburse the County for 45% of the costs of the Administrator.
- The term of the MOA begins on the date the Administrator begins performance of duties.¹³

¹² <https://monterey.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx> - open Agenda for 11/7/2017; the Agreement is attached to agenda item 11.

¹³ Recruitment for the position was scheduled to close on January 31, 2018.

- “The personnel performing services under this MOA on behalf of County shall at all times be under the County’s exclusive direction and control. The personnel performing services under this MOA on behalf of City shall at all times be under City’s exclusive direction and control. Neither City, nor any of its officers, employees or agents shall have control over the conduct of the Administrator or any other County personnel. Neither the County nor any of its officers, employees or agents shall have control over the conduct of the Animal Services Supervisor or any other City personnel.”
- “Within five (5) months from the beginning date of this MOA, County shall provide City with a written evaluation and recommendations regarding all opportunities for shared animal services.”
- “Within eight (8) months from the beginning date of this MOA, County shall provide a written proposal for an operational implementation plan, such plan to identify next steps, effective dates, and needed resources to support implementation of additional shared animal services.”

FACTS

- (1) The County and City shelters are located within 200 feet of one another.
- (2) Signage on Hitchcock Road is inadequate when approaching the shelter access road from South Main Street.
- (3) Both the County and City provide Statements of purpose in their respective annual budgets.
- (4) The County has more staff than the City and serves a smaller population of shelter animals.
- (5) The County has 12 full-time (FTE) and 5 part-time (PTE) allocated positions. The average number of animals brought into the shelter over the past three years is 2,669 per year.
- (6) The City has 7 FTE and 5 PTE allocated positions. The average number of animals brought into the shelter over the past three years is 3,691 per year. The City relies on volunteers to perform tasks ordinarily assigned to paid personnel.
- (7) The County has a full time Operations Manager, currently vacant. The City Shelter is managed by a Police Services Administrator, a member of the Police Department.
- (8) The County has 1 Senior and 3 Animal Control Officers (ACO). The City has 2 ACOs. All positions are full time.
- (9) The County processed an average of 2,027 strays per year and the City processed an average of 3,069. Most strays are picked up by ACOs.

- (10) The unincorporated area of Monterey County is approximately 3,700 square miles. The area within the Salinas city limits is 23 square miles.
- (11) The County has 1 full-time Sr. Animal Care Technician, 5 full-time Animal Care Technician IIs and 1 part-time Animal Care Technician I. The NACA formula indicates minimum animal care personnel for the shelter population is 5.4 positions.
- (12) The equivalent City positions are identified as Kennel Staff with 3 full-time and 2 part-time positions. The NACA formula indicates minimum animal care personnel for the shelter population is 8.4 positions.
- (13) The County has 3 full-time Front Office/Administration positions; the City has 3 full-time and 2 part-time positions.
- (14) The County has one part-time Veterinarian on staff and one part-time Registered Veterinary Technician.
- (15) The City contracts with a Veterinarian to provide services 3 to 6 hours per week but does not have a Registered Veterinary Technician on staff nor do they contract for this position.
- (16) The County has career ladders in three personnel classifications; Animal Control Officer and Senior Animal Control Officer; Animal Care Technician I, Animal Care Technician II and Senior Animal Care Technician; and, Office Assistant II and Senior Office Assistant.
- (17) The County has 81 dog kennels and cages for 112 cats or other small animals. The City has 93 kennels and 92 cages.
- (18) Over the past three fiscal years, the County returned only 1 feral cat to the field. During the same period, the City returned 803 feral cats to the field after they were spay/neutered.
- (19) 67% of all cats entering the County shelter are euthanized. 51% of all cats entering the City shelter are euthanized.
- (20) Approximately 78% of the dogs entering the County shelter, and 77% of the dogs entering the City shelter, were adopted, returned to their owner or transferred to a rescue facility over the past three years.
- (21) Both the County and City provide links to Pet Harbor, a website for the public to locate lost pets or to look at pictures and descriptions of pets available for adoption.
- (22) City shelter cat cages were replaced in 2013-14. The replacement cages have removable partitions which allow them to be easily reconfigured.
- (23) The County and City have entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to explore combining services at the two animal shelters.

- (24) The MOA provides for an 18 month Pilot Project, hiring an Animal Services Administrator and production of reports at 5 and 8 months into the project. The 5-month report is to be a written evaluation and recommendation for combining services. The 8-month report is to be a written proposed operational implementation plan.

FINDINGS

- F1. The lack of signage on Hitchcock Road poses a safety hazard for traffic approaching the turn to the animal shelters from South Main Street.
- F2. The purpose statements included in the budgets of the two entities are appropriate and recognize the importance of public service. The County statement focuses on rabies control and health concerns. The City statement focuses on return and placement of lost and unclaimed animals. When considering the two shelters as totally separate entities both statements are relevant and appropriate. However, fundamental differences may impede the consolidation process.
- F3. The Pilot Project will impose greater responsibility on the County Operations Manager and the Animal Services Administrator.
- F4. The difference in staffing of Animal Control Officers is considered reasonable because the County is patrolling a much larger geographic area than the City.
- F5. The City provides services for an animal population 38% greater with an overall staff that is 39% smaller than the County.
- F6. It is unlikely that animal care and maintenance at the City shelter could be maintained at an appropriate level without the volunteer program.
- F7. County Animal Control personnel have career ladders providing greater promotional opportunities than the City.
- F8. Both shelters have the physical capacity to shelter more animals.
- F9. Given that the preponderance of cats coming into the County shelter are strays, and the preponderance of outputs are through euthanasia, it is likely the county would benefit from a more aggressive spay/neuter program coupled with more education and outreach regarding owner responsibility.
- F10. Access to the Pet Harbor website is much simpler from the City website than from the County website.
- F11. Cat cages at the City shelter, which were replaced in 2013-14, provide greater cleaning efficiency and less stress on the cat than the older-style County cat cages.

- F12. If successful, the combination of services at the two shelters should result in less public confusion when looking for a lost animal or preparing to adopt one.
- F13. If successful, the combination of services should result in greater effectiveness, efficiency and consistency of procedures for both the City and County.
- F14. The MOA and resulting Pilot Program are positive steps toward consolidation of Animal Control Services.
- F15. Success of the Pilot Project will be dependent, at least in part, on having the day-to-day operations of the separate shelters handled efficiently with sufficient time available to support the efforts of the Animal Services Administrator throughout the period of the Pilot Project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The City and the County should determine responsibility¹⁴ for signage and install a sign on the northeast side of Hitchcock Road an appropriate distance from the intersection with the shelter access road.
- R2. The City and the County should bring together the entire staff from both shelters for the purpose of developing a single statement of purpose.
- R3. The County should fill the position of Operations Manager.
- R4. The City should review the duties currently assigned to the Police Services Administrator and, if necessary, reduce the scope of currently assigned duties.
- R5. As part of the Pilot Project, staffing levels at both facilities be reviewed.
- R6. Future consolidation should include methodology for current employees of either entity to compete in promotional examinations for vacancies at either shelter.
- R7. Regardless of the outcome of the MOA and the Pilot Project, City and County staffing levels and procedures should be reviewed
- R8. Regardless of the outcome of the MOA and Pilot Project, the City and the County should contact incorporated cities which are not currently under contract, to determine if their animal shelter needs could be met by either entity. If so, contracts should be pursued.

¹⁴ While both shelters are within the City limits; it is unclear what part of Hitchcock Road is within the City limits, if any.

- R9. The County should consider the advantages and disadvantages of a feral cat spay/neuter program, and begin returning neutered feral cats to the field when appropriate.
- R10. The County should review and streamline access to the Animal Services website.
- R11. When County cat cages require replacement, the County should purchase reconfigurable cages.
- R12. A copy of this report should be provided to the Animal Services Administrator.
- R13. The Jury requests that copies of both the 5 and 8-month written reports be provided to the Monterey County Civil Grand Jury impaneled as of the date of the release of the reports.
- R14. The Jury requests the County and City invite other incorporated cities to join with them in developing a Joint Powers Agreement or Joint Powers Authority so that a separate legal entity could be established to provide animal control services to all jurisdictions within the County.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code section 933.05, the Monterey County Civil Grand Jury requests a response to Findings and Recommendations as follows:

- County of Monterey Board of Supervisors: F1-F4, F7-F17 and R1-R3, R5-R14.
- City of Salinas: F1-F8, F11-F15 and R1-R2, R4-8, R12-R14.

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.

INVITED RESPONSES

Service Employees International Union (SEIU): F5-F7 and R5-R7.

APPENDIX A

“FORMULA FOR DETERMINING STAFFING NEEDS

(Incoming Animals Per Year)	Divided by 365 (days per year)	(Incoming Animals Per Day)
(Incoming Animals Per Day)	Times Four* Day Holding Period =	(Animals in Shelter Per Day)
(Animals in Shelter Per Day)	Times 15 minutes** per animal =	(Number of Minutes Needed)
(Minutes Needed)	Divided by 60 (minutes) =	(Number of Hours Needed)
(Number of Hours Needed)	Divided by 3 *** (hours for cleaning/feeding) =	Staff Needed Per Day

* The HSUS is using the average holding period of four days as a basis for this study. Some animals may be held for a much shorter period; however, many animals may be held for a period exceeding the four day requirement.

** This formula is based on a per-animal time of 9 minutes for cleaning and 6 minutes for feeding.

*** These 3 hours are solely for the performance of these two tasks, but allowing for further time in the day to perform routine maintenance tasks such as laundry, dishes, lost and found checks, etc.”¹⁵

The calculation shown below are for the number of positions needed for minimal daily care at each of the two shelters. It is based upon the averages intake over the prior three years. The average number of animals to be cared for per day was extrapolated from the input and output dates of animals released from each shelter in September 2016.

COUNTY SHELTER

2,669.0	÷	365.0	=	7.3	Average animal intake per day based on prior 3-yr
7.3	x	7.9	=	57.7	Average number to be cared for per day
57.7	x	15.0	=	865.5	Minutes required per day to provide for minimum daily care
865.5	÷	60.0	=	14.4	Hours required per day
14.4	÷	3.0	=	4.8	Positions

CITY SHELTER

3,691.3	÷	365.0	=	10.1	Average animal intake per day based on prior 3-year average
10.1	x	8.9	=	89.9	Average number to be cared for per day
89.9	x	15.0	=	1,348.5	Minutes required per day to provide minimum daily care
1,348.5	÷	60.0	=	22.5	Hours required per day
22.5	÷	3.0	=	7.5	Positions

¹⁵ National Animal Care and Control Association.

APPENDIX B

PET HARBOR LISTS THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES AS PROVIDING DATA ON ANIMALS SHELTERED AT THEIR SITES (As of December 4, 2017):

Monterey County Animal Services: Salinas, CA 74 animals

Salinas Animal Shelter: Salinas, CA: 90 animals

Adoptable Pets **ONLY** (Includes Many Rescue Groups):

Animal Friends Rescue Project: Pacific Grove, CA 95 animals

Brandy Sleddogs Rescue of Central California: Pacific Grove, CA 6 animals

Monterey County Animal Services: Salinas, CA 23 animals

Peace of Mind Dog Rescue: Pacific Grove, CA 67 animals

The SPCA for Monterey County: Monterey, CA 74 animals

Thulani Senior German Shephard Rescue: San Juan Bautista, CA 9 animals

THE FOLLOWING PETS WERE DISPLAYED ON THEIR WEBSITE AS OF JANUARY 5, 2018



This CAT - ID#A104413

I am a cream tabby Domestic Shorthair
The shelter staff think I am about 1 year old.
I have been at the shelter since Jan 23, 2018
This information is less than 1 hour old.



This DOG - ID#A104445

I am a male, black and tan Chihuahua - Smooth Coated
The shelter staff think I am about 1 year old.
I have been at the shelter since Jan 25, 2018
This information is less than 1 hour old.