Tentative Agreement Would Pave Way For New Regional Animal Shelter

Animal Control will remain a regional responsibility shared by the City of Yuba City, County of Sutter, and the City of Live Oak under a tentative agreement hammered out by each agency’s executive officer.

The proposal is a foundation for moving forward on a formal Joint Powers Agreement for the joint operation of animal control services and a new animal shelter.

The tentative agreement will be recommended for approval by each agency’s governing body.

If approved, the City of Yuba City will assume operational control of animal control services after the construction of a new animal shelter, most likely on Live Oak Boulevard near the City’s Water Treatment Plant. Sutter County will remain the lead agency for animal control services until the new animal shelter is constructed.

“Sutter County wants to break ground on a new animal shelter before the end of this year,” said Sutter County Administrative Officer Stephanie Larsen. “This agreement allows for the continuation and orderly transition of animal services, and provides for the construction of the much needed new shelter as soon as possible.”

The Yuba City Council and the Live Oak City Council are scheduled to review the proposal this week, and the Sutter County Board of Supervisors will consider the proposal on Tuesday, May 24.

The proposed agreement represents a reasoned compromise on key points for all parties.

“It is never too late to teach an old dog new tricks,” said Yuba City Manager Steve Jepsen. “Working together has brought about a much better solution for near term and long term animal services for our regional community.”

“Live Oak has a long history of shared service relationships and believes the partnerships benefit everyone,” said Live Oak City Manager Jim Goodwin. “I am encouraged by the progress being made toward preserving the long-standing
collaboration between Sutter County, Yuba City and Live Oak for animal control services.”

Items of key agreement include:

- The level of representation of each agency in a Joint Powers Authority established to run Animal Control services. Each agency will have two voting members, but voting will be weighted proportionally based on annual contributions to the operating budget. Sutter County and Live Oak will have veto authority over budget and major policy decisions.

- Although Yuba City’s population is 68.5 percent of the total population of Sutter County, according to the 2010 census, Yuba City will continue to pay the traditional 66% split as acknowledgement of a “discount” for the lesser number of miles traveled to calls for service inside the Yuba City limits. An analysis using one year’s data will be used to determine a logical cost allocation for future years.

- Sutter County will endeavor to reduce overhead costs and worker’s compensation charges prior to the transition to Yuba City as lead agency, and a Kennel Assistant position shall be restored using savings from the reduction of overhead charges.

- Yuba City and Live Oak will remain involved as can reasonably be accommodated in the completion of the design and construction of the new animal control shelter.

- Yuba City will pay for site plan modifications to accommodate its request that the new animal shelter be built on Live Oak Boulevard rather than on County-owned land off Garden Highway.

- Yuba City will pay for a third party to facilitate agreement on all other terms and conditions of the Joint Powers Agreement.

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