



King County

**Metropolitan King County Council
Committee of the Whole**

Staff Report

Agenda item No: **6**
Proposed Motion No: **2009-0594**

Date: **November 2, 2009**
Prepared by: **Mike Alvine,
Marilyn Cope,
Jennifer Giambattista**

SUBJECT

A MOTION establishing King County policy for the provision of animal shelter and control services.

SUMMARY

The motion establishes King County policy regarding the provision of animal shelter and animal control services, and requests the Executive to undertake actions to accomplish the policy direction.

Background

For the past two and one-half years King County has worked very hard to identify the best way to deliver animal shelter and control services that protect the public, provide humane care for animals, increase adoption rates and lower euthanasia rates, all within limited resources. An advisory committee was reconstituted and presented a report, an inter-branch work group was formed, two consultant studies were completed and two audits were conducted. Based on this body of work, the King County Council provided policy direction in the 2009 adopted budget that the County should move toward a community-based model of animal shelter.

For an extended period of time, King County has performed pet licensing services, animal shelter and animal control services. These services have been provided for unincorporated King County as well as for (currently) 32 cities. Services for contract cities are based on a financial arrangement whereby King County collects pet license fees and certain other fees for contract cities, and in return provides pet shelter and animal control services. The County also responds to reports of dangerous dogs and investigates possible crimes related to dangerous dogs.

Revenues from pet licenses and other fees have historically fallen short of the cost of providing services to contract cities in the amount of approximately \$2 million annually.

Analysis

The analysis of this motion will focus on the change in policy direction that the subject motion makes from a long history of past practice that has evolved without the benefit of purposeful policy direction from the Council.

The proposed motion would establish a policy framework that will change many of the County's past practices related to pet licensing as well as the provision of animal shelter and control services. Some services and practices would not change. The proposed motion would:

- End the provision of animal shelter services for unincorporated King County and for contract cities by April 1, 2010.
- Continue pet licensing and animal control services for unincorporated King County;
- Request the Executive to conduct a study of ways to make animal control services self supporting. The report is due March 1, 2010;
- Set a date of April 1, 2010 for contract cities to enter into full cost-recovery contracts with King County for the provision of animal control services. Contract cities that do not enter into amended or new contracts with the County will need to find alternatives to provide animal control services or cities have the option not to provide control services. Washington State does not mandate animal control services for cities or counties.
- Articulate King County's intent to will work cooperatively with contract cities to ensure a smooth transition in provision of animals shelter services;
- Calls on contract cities to actively work with King County starting immediately to establish a King County animal response team to prepare for the event of a disaster, based on the best standards, practices and concepts of operations established by the Pierce county animal response team.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Motion 2009-0594

INVITED

- David Eldred, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- Noel Treat, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive
- Carolyn Ableman, Director, Records and Licensing Services Division, DES



Signature Report

October 30, 2009

Motion

Proposed No. 2009-0594.1

Sponsors Patterson, Ferguson, Constantine,
Lambert, Hague and Phillips

1 A MOTION establishing King County policy for the
2 provision of animal shelter and control services.

3
4 WHEREAS, for the last two and one-half years King County has worked
5 diligently to find the best way to provide high-quality, humane care and control services
6 for animals, including high adoption rates and low euthanasia rates, and

7 WHEREAS, an advisory committee was reconstituted and presented a report, two
8 consultant studies were completed, and approximately one million dollars in
9 supplemental funding for animal shelter staffing, equipment and supplies was provided in
10 2008, and

11 WHEREAS, the King County general fund has historically supported animal
12 shelter and control services for certain cities through discretionary contracts for services
13 at a cost of approximately two million dollars per year, and

14 WHEREAS, King County is facing an ongoing financial crisis and does not have
15 a sufficient, stable source of revenue to continue to manage and maintain the animal
16 services at a level which would result in King County providing a model program, and

17 WHEREAS, King County has performed a diligent evaluation and analysis of
18 alternative ways to provide humane animal shelter services for the county and cities that
19 contract with the county for shelter services, and King County has determined that
20 successful alternative models are available and warrant further exploration, evaluation
21 and potential implementation, and

22 WHEREAS, in 2003, the budget advisory task force made a number of
23 recommendations in county finances including a policy that King County should be
24 "Ensuring that discretionary service contracts provide full cost recovery to the county
25 including overhead, operation and capital costs," and

26 WHEREAS, on October 13, 2003, the King County council approved Motion
27 11820 establishing the policy that all county discretionary contracts shall be full cost
28 recovery, and

29 WHEREAS, the 2009 King County Budget Ordinance, Ordinance 16312,
30 included a finding setting the policy direction that "King County shall continue to explore
31 the community-based services model as defined by the Operational Master Plan," and

32 WHEREAS, the King County auditor's office recently conducted an audit of
33 animal shelter and control services provided by King County's records and licensing
34 services division. The audit findings regarding management deficiencies include,
35 "...inconsistent leadership, shifts in management direction, and sustained organizational
36 uncertainty have limited ACC's [Animal Care and Control's] ability to make needed
37 improvements in population monitoring and management and to use technology
38 effectively to improve shelter operations" and

Motion

39 WHEREAS, King County values the employees who perform animal shelter and
40 control services and encourages contract cities and other organizations to consider them
41 in providing animal services in the future.

42 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

43 The executive is requested to take all actions necessary to effect the following
44 outcomes.

45 A. End the provision of animal shelter services provided by King County for
46 contract cities and for unincorporated King County by April 1, 2010;

47 B. End the provision of animal control services for contract cities by April 1,
48 2010 unless individual cities enter into new full cost-recovery contracts with King
49 County for animal control services. Cities that decide to contract with King County for
50 animal control services will make direct payments to King County for the full cost of
51 services provided by King County. Cities may choose to operate their own pet licensing
52 service and retain all city pet license revenues. King County will continue to provide
53 animal control services for unincorporated areas;

54 C. King County will work cooperatively with our city partners to ensure that a
55 smooth transition in the care of animals occurs;

56 D. Actively work with contract cities starting immediately to establish a King
57 County animal response team to prepare for the event of a disaster, based on the best
58 standards, practices and concepts of operations established by the Pierce county animal
59 response team; and

Motion

60 E. Conduct a study and make recommendations to the King County council by
61 March 1, 2010, on alternatives for animal control services in unincorporated areas of
62 King County. The study should examine, but not be limited to, the following elements:

63 1. An analysis of revenues, expenditures and business activities necessary to
64 meet the county's mandatory animal control responsibilities as required by state law.

65 This analysis should include an evaluation of the potential effects and outcomes of
66 implementing models used in other metropolitan areas including Multnomah county,
67 Oregon;

68 2. An analysis and presentation of historical records on pet license revenues
69 from unincorporated areas as well as historical cost estimates to provide animal control
70 services for unincorporated areas; and

71 3. Presentation of potential options to provide animal control services in
72 unincorporated areas that are fully supported by animal license fee revenues or other
73

Motion

74 revenue generating options that do not involve general fund support. This element should
75 include a staffing analysis.

76

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

ATTEST:

Attachments None
