



SOLANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Thomas A. Ferrara, Sheriff-Coroner

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July 29, 2013

Honorable Paul L. Beeman
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
Solano Superior Court
600 Union Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533

Re: Sheriff's Response to FY2012/2013 Solano County Grand Jury Report – Animal Care Services; Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1 – *Fifty-four percent of veterinarians in Solano County are not reporting rabies vaccinations to Solano County Animal Care Services, via its contracting agent, Pet Data, Incorporated, in violation of Solano County Ordinance 4-152.*

Response to Finding 1 – The Sheriff agrees with this finding of the Grand Jury.

Recommendation 1 – *Solano County Sheriff's Office enforce Solano County Ordinance 4-152.*

Response to Recommendation 1 – This recommendation requires further analysis. Most veterinarians operate within the cities. It is not clear from the existing Memorandum of Understanding on the provision of animal care services dated December 30, 2012 between the County and the seven incorporated cities ("MOU") whether the County may enforce Solano County Code § 4-152 – which otherwise only applies "to all unincorporated territory within the county" (Solano County Code § 4-10) – in the incorporated cities. That being said, pursuant to its contract with the County, Pet Data does seek and obtain information about rabies vaccinations from veterinarians in both the unincorporated and incorporated areas.

In the next six months, the County will work with the Cities to clarify the enforcement of the provisions of Solano County Code § 4-152 in the incorporated cities through a revision to the MOU and the Sheriff will work with Pet Data on more effective ways to enforce it in both the cities and the unincorporated county, including, if necessary, the adoption of additional rules and regulations pursuant to Solano County Code § 4-160. The Board of Supervisors may also address the broader policy issue as to whether to criminalize the failure to report.

Dedicated to Community Service

Finding 2 – *Approximately 72 percent of dogs in Solano County are not licensed in accordance with Solano County Ordinance 4-139. This results in a significant loss of revenue that impacts the Animal Care Services budget.*

Response to Finding 2 – The Sheriff agrees with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Recommendation 2 – *Solano County Animal Care Services enforce Solano County Ordinance 4-139.*

Response to Recommendation 2 - This recommendation requires further analysis. Most dogs reside in the cities. As in our response to Recommendation 1, it is not clear from the MOU whether the County may enforce Solano County Code § 4-139 in the incorporated cities. In the next six months, the County will work with the cities to determine whether the Sheriff should be enforcing Solano County Code § 4-139 in the cities. If so, the County will work with the cities to clarify the enforcement of the provisions of Solano County Code § 4-139 in the incorporated cities through a revision to the MOU and the Sheriff will work with Pet Data on more effective ways to enforce it in both the cities and the unincorporated county, including, if necessary, the adoption of additional rules and regulations pursuant to Solano County Code § 4-160.

Finding 3 – *Animal control functions in Solano County are fragmented and confusing to the public.*

Response to Finding 3 – The Sheriff agrees with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Recommendation 3 – *The Solano County Sheriff's Office provide all animal control services for all cities and unincorporated areas of Solano County using funds generated from dog licensing and funds currently being paid by the Cities to private companies for existing animal control contracts.*

Response to Recommendation 3 – This recommendation requires further analysis. The Sheriff does not have the ability to unilaterally impose this recommendation on the Cities. However, as there is great merit to this recommendation, the Sheriff will work with the Cities in the next six months on whether and how the Sheriff might provide all animal control services for all cities and unincorporated areas of Solano County.

I would like to thank the Solano County Grand Jury for their time invested in the review of the County's animal care services and their report of findings and recommendations. As always, the recommendations and comments of the Solano County Grand Jury are greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,



Thomas A. Ferrara
Sheriff-Coroner

cc: Solano County Grand Jury
County Administrator's Office