



AGENDA REPORT


TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Ann Dunn
Interim Director, Oakland
Animal Services

SUBJECT: In-Kind Donation from Friends of
Oakland Animal Services

DATE: November 14, 2024

City Administrator Approval


Jestin Johnson (Nov 22, 2024 05:27 PST)

Date: Nov 22, 2024

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator To (1) Accept A Gift Of In-Kind Services Valued At Up To One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars Per Year For A Period Of Five Years From Friends Of Oakland Animal Services (FOAS) To Provide Full-Time Equivalent FOAS Employees To Work At Oakland Animal Services (OAS) To Support OAS's Effort To Facilitate Adoptions of Animals; And (2) Negotiate And Execute A Memorandum Of Understanding Between FOAS And The City Regarding The City's Receipt Of These Services From FOAS.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Adoption of the proposed resolution will authorize the City Administrator to accept a donation of in-kind services from Friends of Animal Services (FOAS), valued at up to \$1,500,000.00 per year, for five years, to fund Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) FOAS employees to increase adoptions of shelter animals from Oakland Animal Services (OAS), and to negotiate and execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the receipt of these services from FOAS. The MOU will address services already provided by FOAS that are separate from and in addition to work of City staff (do not replace union labor) and are essential to the lifesaving of shelter animals and have contributed to OAS achieving the highest live release rate (the percentage of animals with a live outcome) in its history. Accepting this donation from FOAS will allow OAS to improve its services at no increased cost to the City.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

FOAS is a nonprofit created to support OAS by providing resources that are beyond what the City budget can accommodate. Founded in 2005, at a time when over 60% of the animals that entered OAS were euthanized, many for minor medical conditions, the original focus of FOAS was fundraising for veterinary supplies and services.

City Council
December 3, 2024

FOAS currently funds up of 14 FTE FOAS-funded non-City staff positions, all focused on lifesaving of shelter animals and supporting low-income pet guardians to prevent shelter intake as follows:

Adoption Program: In collaboration with the OAS Volunteer Coordinator, and OAS volunteers, FOAS funds three staff positions to support the OAS adoption program. This support has allowed OAS to create an adoption program that is welcoming and focused on matchmaking and removing barriers to adoption, particularly for people who are low-income. Where the trend for California shelters is an overall decrease in adoptions, OAS has seen cat adoptions more than double and dog adoptions more than quadruple since 2020.

Big Dog Foster Program: Launched in June 2020, this program was introduced to save the big dogs at greatest risk for euthanasia when OAS's limited kennel space is over capacity. Supported by three FOAS-funded staff, in just shy of four years, this program has grown from helping 250 dogs in its first year, to being on track to help over 1,300 dogs by the end of 2024. On a typical day, there are more dogs in foster homes than are housed at the shelter. This program directly contributes to the decrease in euthanasia for dogs from 16.5% in 2019 to 5.5% today.

Playgroups for Big Dogs: Utilizing the *Dogs Playing for Life* Model, the FOAS-funded Playgroup Coordinator now oversees over 30 trained OAS volunteers who assist with getting most big dogs in the shelter out to playgroups every day. The dogs are now housed by their playgroup, which means that dogs are in wards with other dogs they play with regularly, which decreases their stress while at the shelter, and greatly assists the City Animal Care Attendants by making it easier for them to clean.

Dog Behavior Program: A FOAS-funded Dog Behavior Coordinator has provided OAS with the support to thoughtfully assess dog behavior, incorporating information from the person who brings the dog to the shelter, staff who care for the dogs, observations from playgroups and from volunteers who walk the dogs. Recognizing that the shelter is an incredibly stressful place for dogs, the Dog Behavior Coordinator has introduced an objective framework to assess the dogs and communicate meaningful information to potential adopters.

Kitten Foster Program: Two FOAS-funded Cat Foster Coordinators manage a foster program that supports approximately 1,500 kittens annually. The overwhelming majority of these are underage kittens who are medically fragile and require intensive support to survive. Due to the limited availability of spay/neuter resources in Oakland and the surrounding region, OAS intake for cats and kittens has grown year over year, putting increasing pressure on this small foster team to keep up with the growing demand for foster and veterinary services for this extremely vulnerable population.

Community Cat Program: The Community Cat Coordinator runs the OAS working cat program for relocation of community cats, resources that are utilized only for urgent situations when removal of the cat from their current home is for the cat's safety or well-being. The Community Cat Coordinator also serves as a liaison to support a partnership between five animal shelters, including OAS, and the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), to support safe removal and relocation of cats from habitats of endangered birds and mice in EBRPD parks.

Small Animal Program: Introduced in 2022, FOAS funds the first ever Small Animal Program Coordinator, who oversees the foster program for rabbits as well as adoption of rabbits, guinea pigs, pigeons and other birds and small animals.

Transfer Program: The FOAS-funded Transfer Coordinator facilitated the transfer of approximately 2,500 animals annually to be adopted by other shelters or rescue organizations.

Community Programs: The FOAS-funded Community Programs Coordinator facilitates grant-funded monthly veterinary clinics for pet guardians who are low-income and/or experiencing homelessness. Approximately 1,200 animals are helped through this program, annually, most who had never received veterinary care. An additional 1,176 grant-funded spay/neuter surgeries were provided for community cats and pets of low-income Oakland residents.

The Oakland City Council previously approved four resolutions to accept donations from FOAS to fund City staff positions as follows:

On March 6, 2018, by Resolution No. [87079 CMS](#), the Oakland City Council approved the acceptance of \$225,000.00 from FOAS to fund a Volunteer Program Specialist position from July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2020.

On May 19, 2020, by Resolution No. [88128 CMS](#), the Oakland City Council approved the acceptance of \$96,000.00 from FOAS to fund a Temporary Contract Service Employee (TCSE) Veterinarian from April 18, 2020, to June 30, 2021.

On May 18, 2021, by Resolution No. [88642 CMS](#), the Oakland City Council approved the acceptance of \$96,000.00 from FOAS to fund a TCSE Veterinarian from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022.

On June 26, 2021, by Resolution No. [88769 CMS](#), the Oakland City Council approved the acceptance of \$225,000.00 from FOAS to fund a Volunteer Program Specialist position from October 21, 2021, to June 30, 2023.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

The proposed resolution would align with the Citywide priorities of holistically ensuring community safety and a responsive and trustworthy government. Accepting the in-kind donation of up to \$1,500,000.00 from FOAS annually, for up to five years, allows the continued increase in lifesaving of shelter animals, making it possible for OAS to achieve and maintain a greater than 90% live release rate for shelter animals, which is extraordinarily high for an open admission municipal shelter. The duties provided by FOAS-funded staff are similar to those provided by volunteers. The roles are not similar to City classifications and do not replace union positions.

As noted above, FOAS currently contributes over \$900,000 per year to directly support OAS by funding up of 14 FTE FOAS-funded non-City staff positions. It's anticipated the number of funded positions and the cost associated with each position is likely to increase over time.

Therefore, the request is to authorize the City Administrator to accept up to \$1,500,000 annually from FOAS to allow for these anticipated increases.

If the donation is not accepted, OAS will have significantly reduced capacity to save shelter animals. Based on the intake experienced in 2024, were the FOAS funded programs eliminated, particularly the foster and adoption program, it's estimated the overall live release rate would decrease from the current 94% to 80% or below.

FISCAL IMPACT

Adoption of this resolution has no negative impact on the City as the donated funds substantially increase the lifesaving of shelter animals without increased personnel costs.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

There are no public outreach opportunities associated with this report.

COORDINATION

Development of this report was coordinated with internal OAS staff, the Budget Bureau and Controller's Bureau in the Department of Finance, City Attorney's Office, and City Administrator's Office.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: There are no economic opportunities associated with this report.

Environmental: There are no environmental opportunities associated with this report.

Race & Equity: The FOAS-funded adoption program intentionally removes barriers to adoption, particularly for families and individuals who are low-income. community outreach program, funded primarily through grants to FOAS, hosts access to veterinary care clinics at the City's cabin and safe RV sites, at homeless encampments and in neighborhoods in West and East Oakland, to make it possible for low-income pet guardians to have and keep their pets.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator To (1) Accept A Gift Of In-Kind Services Valued At Up To One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars Per Year For A Period Of Five Years From Friends Of Oakland Animal Services (FOAS) To Provide Full-Time Equivalent FOAS Employees To Work At Oakland Animal Services (OAS) To Support OAS's Effort To Facilitate Adoptions of Animals; And (2) Negotiate And Execute A Memorandum Of Understanding Between FOAS And The City Regarding The City's Receipt Of These Services From FOAS.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Ann Dunn, Director, at (510) 535-5604.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Dunn  Digitally signed by Ann Dunn
Date: 2024.11.19 08:22:09 -08'00'

ANN DUNN
Interim Director, Oakland Animal Services

Reviewed by: Betsy Lake
Assistant City Administrator