



City of Salinas

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July 3, 2018

The Honorable Judge Stephanie E. Hulsey
Superior Court Judge
County of Monterey
240 Church Street
Salinas, California 93901

Re: City of Salinas's Responses to 2017-2018 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final
Report: "Animal Control in Monterey County"

Dear Judge Hulsey:

This letter is the City of Salinas's response to the Findings and Recommendations of the 2017-2018 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final Report: "Animal Control in Monterey County" ("Final Report"). I would first like to thank the members of the Civil Grand Jury for their time and effort taken to assist us in improving our ability to provide services to our community. In the Final Report, the Civil Grand Jury overall made a total of fifteen Findings and fourteen Recommendations, with thirteen Findings and nine Recommendations specific to the City of Salinas.

As requested by the Civil Grand Jury, the City of Salinas respectfully submits the following responses to the Findings and the Recommendations identified for a response in the Final Report.

Findings.

Finding 1. The lack of signage on Hitchcock Road poses a safety hazard for traffic approaching the turn to the animal shelters from South Main Street.

Response:

The City disagrees with this Finding inasmuch as it concludes that the lack of signage "poses a safety hazard." Additional signage may assist visitors to the shelter with respect to its location, but the Final Report does not contain any analysis or study by a licensed traffic engineer with experience in such matters and with qualifications to make conclusions with respect to traffic safety. Without adequate study by a licensed traffic engineer concluding that the lack of signage poses a safety hazard, the City cannot agree with this Finding.

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Finding 2. 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 placement of lost and unclaimed animals. When considering the two shelters as totally separate entities both statements are relevant and appropriate. However, fundamental difference may impede the consolidation process.

Response:

The City disagrees with this finding in that the fundamental differences in the purpose statements of each entity are not significant enough to impede the consolidation process. Each agency focuses on both statements when services and programs are reviewed.

Finding 3. The Pilot Project will impose greater responsibility on the County Operations Manager and the Animal Services Administrator.

Response:

The City agrees with this finding.

Finding 4. The difference in staffing of Animal Control Officers is considered reasonable because the County is patrolling a much larger geographic area than the City.

Response:

The City agrees with this finding as stated; however, both agencies have insufficient staffing levels to meet the needs of the represented jurisdictions.

Finding 5. The City provides services for an animal population 38% greater with an overall staff that is 39% smaller than the County.

Response:

The City agrees with this finding.

Finding 6. It is unlikely that animal care and maintenance at the City shelter could be maintained at an appropriate level without the volunteer program.

Response:

The City agrees with this finding.

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Finding 7. County Animal Control personnel have career ladders providing greater promotional opportunities than the City.

Response:

The City agrees with this finding.

Finding 8. Both shelters have the physical capacity to shelter more animals.

Response:

The City agrees with this finding; however, without adequate staffing to clean, feed, medicate and otherwise care for the animals, it is unwise to keep the shelter at full capacity at all times. As outlined in this report, Salinas does not currently have the proper amount of kennel staff for the current number of animals housed each day. To maximize the full capacity of the shelter, there would need to be an increase of kennel staff.

Finding 11. 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.

Response:

The City agrees with this Finding.

Finding 12. 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.

Response:

The City agrees with this finding.

Finding 13. If successful, the combination of services should result in greater effectiveness, efficiency and consistency of procedures for both the City and the County.

Response:

The City agrees with this finding.

Finding 14. The MOA and resulting Pilot Program are positive steps toward consolidation of Animal Control Services.

Response:

The City agrees with this finding.

Finding 15. 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.

Response:

The City agrees with this finding.

Recommendations.

Recommendation 1. The City and the County should determine responsibility for signage and install a sign on the northeast side of Hitchcock Road an appropriate distance from the intersection with the shelter access road.

Response:

The City agrees with this Recommendation insomuch as additional signage will assist visitors in locating the shelter access road.

Recommendation 2. The City and the County should bring together the entire staff from both shelters for the purpose of developing a single statement of purpose.

Response:

The City agrees with this recommendation.

Recommendation 4. The City should review the duties currently assigned to the Police Services Administrator and, if necessary, reduce the scope of currently assigned duties.

Response:

The City agrees with this recommendation.

Recommendation 5. As part of the Pilot Project, staffing levels at both facilities be reviewed.

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Response:

The City agrees with this recommendation.

Recommendation 6. Future consolidation should include methodology for current employees of either entity to compete in promotional examinations for vacancies at either shelter.

Response:

The City agrees with this recommendation.

Recommendation 7. Regardless of the outcome of the MOA and the Pilot Project, City and County staffing levels and procedures should be reviewed.

Response:

The City agrees with this recommendation.

Recommendation 8. 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.

Response:

The City agrees with this recommendation.

Recommendation 12. A copy of this report should be provided to the Animal Services Administrator.

Response:

The City agrees with this recommendation.

Recommendation 13. 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.

Response:

The City agrees with this recommendation.

Recommendation 14. 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.

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Response:

They City agrees with this Recommendation upon receiving the results of the MOA and the Pilot Project.

Thank You for the opportunity to respond to the Civil Grand Jury's Report.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe Gunter
City of Salinas Mayor

cc: City Manager
City Attorney
Police Chief