

REPORT FROM

OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER


Date: July 30, 2015

CAO File No. 0130-02059-0000

Council File No. 15-0469

Council District: --

To: The Mayor
The Council

From: Miguel A. Santana, City Administrative Officer 

Reference: Board of Animal Services Commissioners Transmittal dated April 15, 2015

Subject: **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH FOUND ANIMALS FOUNDATION
TO ACCEPT DONATION OF ANIMAL MICROCHIPS AND SCANNERS**

SUMMARY

The Los Angeles Animal Services Department (LAAS) requests authority to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Found Animals Foundation, Inc. (Found Animals) for a period of two years to accept annual donations of animal microchips and microchip scanners valued in excess of \$125,000. There is no cost to the City.

BACKGROUND

LAAS is required to implant each dog, cat and rabbit adopted from the Department's shelters with an electronic animal identification device (microchip), per Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 53.15.5. The microchip, with the use of a scanner, may help the Department identify lost pets and return them to their owners. LAAS implants approximately 25,000 microchips per year in animals adopted from its shelters.

Found Animals is a non-profit organization dedicated to minimizing shelter euthanasia. One of its initiatives is the Found Animals Microchip Registry, which helps reunify lost pets with their owners using implanted microchip technology. The proposed MOU stipulates that Found Animals will provide LAAS a maximum of 26,000 microchips and 60 universal microchip scanners per year for a period of two years, at no cost to the City.

Found Animals Microchip Registry

The MOU also requires LAAS to submit to Found Animals the adopter contact and pet identifying information for each microchip implanted in animals adopted from City shelters. This information will be directly submitted to the Found Animals Microchip Registry, which offers free access to the public and for the Department. Under the MOU, Found Animals also strongly encourages LAAS to upload to the Registry adopter and microchip information from its records for the past 10 years. Found

Animals will contact all pet owners to confirm their microchip registration, and will ask owners to "opt-in" to further communications or marketing information. Found Animals will not be able to use owner information for communication or marketing outside of contacting owners regarding pet registration unless positive consent is provided.

The Department currently has an internal database to track microchip and pet registration information, but does not regularly provide the service of updating contact information or ownership. Found Animals will provide this service free of charge to the public, and Registry lookup access to the Department. This access is intended to continue even after the conclusion of the MOU. It is recommended that language be included in the final MOU to specify continuing Registry access to LAAS, free of charge.

Donation In-Lieu of Purchase Contract

The Department previously utilized a contract process to purchase microchips and microchip scanners. LAAS currently has a contract with Avid Identification Systems, Inc. (Avid) to purchase microchips for \$4.61 apiece. The Department has exercised all options to extend the Avid contract (C-115350), which expires on August 6, 2015.

LAAS originally issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) on September 26, 2013 to procure a new contract for microchip purchase. After the review process, Found Animals was selected as the lowest responsive bidder and LAAS sent the contract award recommendation to the Board of Animal Services Commissioners (Board) for approval. On September 23, 2014, The Board approved the recommendation to contract with Found Animals for a period of two years, with three one-year extension options, at an annual cost not-to-exceed \$400,000. Under the contract, Found Animals would provide up to 38,000 microchips per year at a cost of \$3.74 each, and up to 190 microchip scanners of various types at an average cost of \$483 each. Funding for the contract would be provided from the Electronic Animal Identification Device (Microchip) Fund 41C and the Department's annual General Fund appropriation. However, after further discussions with the Department, Found Animals decided to forgo the contract and to donate microchips and scanners instead. The donated microchips and scanners will still meet the specification requirements provided in the RFP and proposed contract, and Found Animals may elect to donate more equipment and supplies based on the needs of the Department.

Additionally, during the original contract approval process, the Board expressed concern about providing sufficient outreach to underserved communities regarding the benefits of pet registration and the accessibility of the free Registry services. Found Animals emphasized the Registry website and email address as the most reliable manner of communication. However, many City residents do not have reliable access to the internet, so accessibility to the Registry services by phone is equally as important. The MOU indicates that Found Animals will provide a phone number with 24/7 service to facilitate phone access to Registry services. It is also recommended that the final MOU specify that printed informational materials provided by Found Animals about their Registry services prominently include this service phone number.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor, authorize the General Manager of the Animal Services Department (LAAS), or her designee, to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Found Animals Foundation, Inc. (Found Animals) to partner with the Found Animals Microchip Registry and receive up to 26,000 microchips and 60 microchip scanners per year, for a period of two years at no cost to the City, in order to meet the microchipping requirements of the Los Angeles Municipal Code and to assist in reuniting owners with their lost pets, with the following inclusions:

1. Found Animals will provide LAAS access to the Found Animals Microchip Registry free of charge. This access will continue beyond the conclusion of the MOU; and,
2. Found Animals will emphasize a 24/7 access telephone number for pet owners to obtain information regarding their lost pet in informational, promotional, and communication materials.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Approval of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Found Animals Foundation, Inc. and the Los Angeles Animal Services Department (LAAS) on behalf of the City and the recommendations in this report will provide 26,000 microchips and 60 microchip scanners per year to LAAS at no cost for a period of two years. Approval of the MOU is anticipated to generate savings in the Electronic Animal Identification Device (Microchip) Fund and the General Fund in excess of \$125,000. There is no additional impact on the General Fund.

MAS:JCY:04160007