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November 18, 2016

Honorable City Council
c/o Office of the City Clerk
200 North Spring Street
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: FEE STUDY - DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the City Council, subject to approval of the Mayor:

1. APPROVE the augmentation of Department fees as described in this report.
2. DIRECT the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance to amend the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) consistent with the above action.

SUMMARY

The 2015-16 Adopted Budget instructs all City Departments to annually review the fee structures for their respective department services. The last comprehensive review and fee schedule update for the Department of Animal Services (DAS) was conducted and implemented in 2010 (Ordinance No. 181341). During that review process, much emphasis was placed on the concept of cost recovery and ensuring that labor intensive services such as permitting were carefully analyzed and appropriate fees assessed based on the Department's true costs for providing the service. Since then the cost of doing business has increased resulting in a need to review and propose revisions to several of our fees to attain cost recovery on appropriate services.

Even though operational costs are rising, the Department gives consideration to the needs of socio-economically challenged residents. From low-income City residents to the homeless

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population, there must be options in place to assist these residents to be compliant with the law and to give good pet care to their companion animals.

LOW INCOME SPAY/NEUTER REIMBURSEMENT FEES

The Discount and Free Spay/Neuter Certificate Program provides discount coupons for Los Angeles City residents and free vouchers for low income City residents to be redeemed at participating veterinary clinics for the spaying/neutering of companion animals. The discount coupons are available to any City of Los Angeles resident to encourage compliance with the mandatory spay/neuter ordinance in the City. Likewise the free vouchers, which cover the cost of the entire surgery, are available to low-income residents. In May 2016, the City Council adopted a proposal to increase the monetary value of both the discount coupon and the free vouchers. The discount coupons went from \$30 to \$50 for dogs and rabbits while the free vouchers were increased from \$70 to \$125 for dogs and rabbits. Cats remain \$30 and \$70 for the coupons and vouchers, respectively.

ADOPTION FEES

The chart below outlines the Department's current adoption fee schedule with proposed changes highlighted in gray. The total adoption fees are inclusive of adoption cost, spay/neuter, license (dog and horses only) for City residents, and microchipping. In analyzing these fees, the Department considered that increases could deter the adoption of shelter animals costing more in the long run to care for the animal longer. In some cases, decreased fees were more appropriate. The adult cat population continues to grow in our shelters. In past years the Department has received grants from animal welfare organizations such as the ASPCA to underwrite the adoption costs of adult cats. It is anticipated that these monies will no longer be available in coming years. As such the adoption rate for adults cats is expected to decline unless the fees are reduced to a level that encourages their adoption. As such, a fee reduction is proposed for adult cats (over 4 months).

There are, however, a group of animals that are highly desirable and would likely result in an increase in revenue with an increase in fees. Puppies and kittens are sought-after companion animals. The current \$102.00 adoption fee is far below the competitive rate. Some comparable municipalities such as Long Beach charge \$255 for puppy adoptions (3 months and under). Another concern related to the current fee is that the low cost for adopting these animals sometimes results in adoption by retailers that can/do sell the animals to the community at a substantial upcharge. In the way of statistics, in calendar year 2015 the Department adopted out 1,853 puppies to the public. At \$150/each, the additional revenue for puppies would have been nearly \$89K for the year.

In addition to the fee increase proposal for puppies and kittens, the Department is recommending a separate adoption fee for exotic birds. As you will note, the current bird fee is \$17. This fee is the same regardless of the type/species of bird. While \$17 maybe a fair charge for a pigeon or a parakeet, exotic birds such as macaws and African parrots should not be adopted for such a low fee. During the current fiscal year, the Department has had over 100 exotic birds come through the shelter system. With the market value for some of these animals is well over of \$500, it would be wise for the Department consider these animals as separate adoptions with a fair charge for their acquisition.

SERVICE/ITEM	CLASS	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
ADOPT BIRD	SHELTER	\$17.00	NO CHANGE
ADOPT EXOTIC BIRD	SHELTER	NEW	\$250.00
ADOPT BOVINES/CALVES	SHELTER	\$325.00	NO CHANGE
ADOPT KITTEN (4 mos and under)	SHELTER	NEW	\$50.00
ADOPT CAT	SHELTER	\$76.00	\$25.00
ADOPT PUPPY (4 mos and under)	SHELTER	NEW	\$150.00
ADOPT DOG	SHELTER	\$102.00	NO CHANGE
ADOPT EQUINE	SHELTER	\$325.00	NO CHANGE
ADOPT HOG	SHELTER	\$23.00	NO CHANGE
ADOPT OTHER	SHELTER	\$26.00	NO CHANGE
ADOPT POULTRY	SHELTER	\$17.00	NO CHANGE
ADOPT RABBIT	SHELTER	\$56.00	NO CHANGE
ADOPT REPTILE	SHELTER	\$17.00	NO CHANGE
ADOPT RODENT	SHELTER	\$17.00	NO CHANGE
ADOPT SHEEP	SHELTER	\$23.00	NO CHANGE
ADOPT SIMIAN	SHELTER	\$23.00	NO CHANGE
DISCOUNT CAT ADOPT	SHELTER	\$50.50	\$12.50
DISCOUNT DOG ADOPT	SHELTER	\$63.50	NO CHANGE
DISCOUNT RAB ADOPT	SHELTER	\$48.00	NO CHANGE
NEW HOPE CAT ADOPT	SHELTER	\$50.00	\$25.00
NEW HOPE DOG ADOPT	SHELTER	\$50.00	NO CHANGE
NEW HOPE RABBIT ADOPT	SHELTER	\$50.00	NO CHANGE
NEW HOPE RODENT ADOPT	SHELTER	\$2.00	NO CHANGE

LICENSING FEES

Overall, we do not recommend increasing licensing fees as our fees are consistent with or higher than other municipalities such as the County of Los Angeles. We do not want to decrease the likelihood of compliance with LAMC licensing requirements. As the Department continues with effort to increase licensing compliance through the License Canvassing Program and the Administrative Citation Enforcement Program, we expect to further increase the number of pets with valid licenses and recommend maintaining the current fee structure.

The Department would like to increase the use of microchips in companion animals. While every animal that is adopted from a shelter is outfitted with a microchip, we recommend making the charge for private citizens who come to the shelter to purchase a microchip for their animal consistent with the cost for a shelter pet microchip.

SERVICE/ITEM	CLASS	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
BREEDER'S PERMIT	TAG	\$235.00	NO CHANGE
CIVIL PENALTY 250	TAG2	\$250.00	NO CHANGE
DUPLICATE LICENSE	TAG	\$3.00	\$5.00

HUMANE LICENSE (New Hope only)	TAG	\$5.50	NO CHANGE
LICENSE (DISABLED CITIZEN)	TAG	\$10.00	NO CHANGE
LICENSE (SENIOR CITIZEN)	TAG	\$10.00	NO CHANGE
LICENSE DOG (ALTERED)	TAG	\$20.00	NO CHANGE
LICENSE DOG (UNALTRED)	TAG	\$100.00	NO CHANGE
LICENSE DOG 3 YRS	TAG	\$55.00	NO CHANGE
LICENSE EQUINE	TAG	\$14.00	NO CHANGE
LICENSE EQUINE 2 YRS	TAG	\$22.40	NO CHANGE
LICENSE EQUINE 3 YRS	TAG	\$29.40	NO CHANGE
LICENSE EQUINE 4 YRS	TAG	\$33.60	NO CHANGE
LICENSE EQUINE 5 YRS	TAG	\$35.00	NO CHANGE
LICENSE JUNKYARD DOG	TAG	\$50.00	NO CHANGE
LICENSE SENTRY DOG	TAG	\$50.00	NO CHANGE
MCHIP ADOPT RABBITS	TAG	\$15.00	NO CHANGE
MCHIP OWNER REQUEST	TAG	\$25.00	\$15.00
MICROCHIP REDEMPTION	TAG	\$15.00	NO CHANGE
RESTRICTED DOG PERMIT	TAG	\$120.00	NO CHANGE
TEMP LIC W/O S/N PRF	TAG	\$20.00	NO CHANGE

REDEMPTION FEES

Redemption fees are charged for the release of an owned animal that has been impounded from the shelter. Redemption fees are not calculated on a cost-recovery basis. Cost recovery would make it too expensive for most pet owners to redeem their animals resulting in more animals being left in the care of the shelter and further raising the overall expense to the City. It is important to ensure that redemption fees are reasonable and feasible for pet owners. Even at the current rates low-income and homeless pet owners require financial assistance. This assistance is available at the three large shelters (North Central, South Los Angeles, and East Valley) through our partnerships with nonprofit intervention groups. These groups provide a variety of assistance to pet owners to help them keep their animals in their homes. The groups receive some assistance for redemption fees for clients from the Animal Welfare Trust Fund as approved by the Board of Animal Services Commissioners in early 2016.

The proposed changes to the redemption fee schedule are the addition of exotic bird redemptions and a modest increase in the penalty fine for second and third time redemption of unaltered animals. Please also be advised that the Department does, in most cases, require that an animal be altered on the third impound.

SERVICE/ITEM	CLASS	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
REDEEM BIRD	SHELTER	\$17.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM EXOTIC BIRD	SHELTER	N/A	\$75.00
REDEEM BOVINES/CALVES	SHELTER	\$325.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM CAT (EVERY TIME)	SHELTER	\$21.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM CAT 2 TIMES	SHELTER	\$13.00	NO CHANGE

REDEEM CAT 3 TIMES	SHELTER	\$26.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM DOG 1 TIME (EVERY TIME)	SHELTER	\$47.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM DOG 2 TIMES	SHELTER	\$25.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM DOG 3 TIMES	SHELTER	\$50.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM HOG	SHELTER	\$23.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM EQUINE	SHELTER	\$325.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM OTHER	SHELTER	\$23.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM POULTRY	SHELTER	\$17.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM RABBIT	SHELTER	\$56.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM REPTILE	SHELTER	\$17.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM RODENT	SHELTER	\$13.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM SHEEP	SHELTER	\$23.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM SIMIAN	SHELTER	\$23.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM CAT FORCE STERILIZATION	SHELTER	\$40.00	NO CHANGE
REDEEM DOG FORCE STERILIZATION	SHELTER	\$40.00	NO CHANGE
REDEMPTION FINE 1 ST (UNALTERED)	SHELTER	\$35.00	NO CHANGE
REDEMPTION FINE 2 ND (UNALTERED)	SHELTER	\$50.00	\$70
REDEMPTION FINE 3 RD (UNALTERED)	SHELTER	\$100.00	\$150

SURRENDER FEES

Owner surrender fees have been a regular topic of conversation over the past several years. Strong opinions have been offered to the Department through Board of Animal Services Commission meetings, Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee meetings, and even through face to face citizen contact that indicate unaffordable owner surrender fees result in stray animals. While the Department is sensitive to this issue and have certainly waived owner surrender fees on a case by case basis to avoid possible abandonment, a permanent fix is necessary to address this very serious issue.

In a meeting of the Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee meeting in mid 2016, Councilmember Harris-Dawson offered a suggestion. He asked whether owner surrender fees could be reclassified as donations rather than fees. In this way, those pet owners who are able to afford a donation toward the care of their animal could do so while those who are unable can still surrender their animals to the shelter. The Department finds this to be an innovative solution and proposes these changes as described. Note that there is no proposal to change the owner surrender fee of equine. This is largely due to level of care required by these animals.

SERVICE/ITEM	CLASS	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
OWNER SURRENDER FEE CAT	SHELTER	\$22.00	Donation only
OWNER SURRENDER FEE DOG	SHELTER	\$25.00	Donation only
OWNER SURRENDER FEE EQUINE	SHELTER	\$237.00	
OWNER SURRENDER FEE OTHER ANIMAL	SHELTER	\$24.00	Donation only
OWNER SURRENDER FEE RABBT	SHELTER	\$18.00	Donation only

OWNER SURRENDER FEE SML ANIMAL	SHELTER	\$11.00	Donation only
OWNER SURRENDER PICKUP (Cat)	KENNEL	\$56.00	NO CHANGE
OWNER SURRENDER PICKUP (Dog)	KENNEL	\$59.00	NO CHANGE
OWNER SURRENDER PICKUP (Equine/Livestock)	KENNEL	\$333.00	NO CHANGE
OWNER SURRENDER PICKUP (Other)	KENNEL	\$55.00	NO CHANGE

LIEN/QUARANTINE FEES

Lien and quarantine fees are those charged to redeem animals that are in the Department's custody as a result of a mandatory quarantine associated with a bite/attack or animals that are a part of an open investigation pending possible legal action. These rates are the average daily costs for staff time, food, and materials for providing basic services including routine medical intake and exit exams, daily feeding, and periodic kennel cleaning; and, do not include costs for providing additional medications that may be required to treat a sick or diseased animal or surgery for an injured animal.

SERVICE/ITEM	CLASS	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
QUARANTINE OR EVIDENCE 1 TO 7 DAY (CAT)	SHELTER	\$25.87/day	\$29.57/day
QUARANTINE OR EVIDENCE 1 TO 7 DAY (DOG)	SHELTER	\$29.52/day	\$29.57/day
QUARANTINE OR EVIDENCE 8+ DAYS (CAT)	SHELTER	\$13.19/day	\$16.39/day
QUARANTINE OR EVIDENCE 8+ DAYS (DOG)	SHELTER	\$16.84/day	\$16.39/day

PERMIT FEES

Permits is a major fee program for the department and is one area of the Department's service that can be arranged to obtain full cost recovery. The permitting process can be long and require a great deal of staff time. In assessing that staff time and making updates since the last fee review in 2010, there are four permits for which we are currently charging less than is spent in the process. As such it is recommended that these permits be appropriately adjusted as indicated to recover all costs associated with the service.

The last proposed change is the addition of a Circus Permit with Veterinarian Review. In past years, the Department has paid the out-of-pocket expense associated with veterinarian review of circus animals. This cost can range from \$5000 to \$8000 depending upon length of circus and travel expenses for the veterinarian. This proposal seeks to recover these costs through the permitting process. In some case, a veterinarian review may not be necessary. The Department will take this issue to the Board of Animal Services Commission to set policy on which circuses will need the veterinarian review and which will not.

SERVICE/ITEM	CLASS	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
PERMIT ALLIG, OSTRICH, WILD	SHELTER	\$290.00	NO CHANGE
PERMIT AML ACTS AND EXHIBIT	SHELTER	\$425.00	NO CHANGE
PERMIT ANIMAL RENTAL EST	SHELTER	\$265.00	\$290.00
PERMIT AVIARY	SHELTER	\$130.00	NO CHANGE

PERMIT CARRIER, HOMING PIGE	SHELTER	\$290.00	NO CHANGE
PERMIT CAT KENNEL	SHELTER	\$290.00	NO CHANGE
PERMIT CIRCUS (WITH VET REVIEW)	SHELTER	N/A	\$8,600.00
PERMIT CIRCUS (WITHOUT VET REVIEW)	SHELTER	\$4,000.00	NO CHANGE
PERMIT DOG KENNEL	SHELTER	\$305.00	NO CHANGE
PERMIT DOG, CAT, PET SHOW	SHELTER	\$425.00	NO CHANGE
PERMIT FILM, TV, THEATRICAL	SHELTER	\$300.00	\$680.00
PERMIT GROOMING PARLOR	SHELTER	\$160.00	\$180.00
PERMIT MISC AML OR RPTL EST	SHELTER	\$205.00	NO CHANGE
PERMIT PET SHOP	SHELTER	\$290.00	NO CHANGE
PERMIT RIDING ACADEMY ETC	SHELTER	\$325.00	NO CHANGE
PERMIT RODEO	SHELTER	\$1,660.00	NO CHANGE
PERMIT ZOO	SHELTER	\$185.00	\$220.00

PENALTY/LATE FEES

Currently the Department charges very little penalty and late fees for expired licenses and permits. This is largely due to the ideal that large penalties discourage renewals and it is far more important to have licenses and permits renewed. The below listed fees are adequate at this time.

SERVICE/ITEM	CLASS	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
LATE FEE DOG LICENSE (ALTERED)	TAG2	\$5.00	NO CHANGE
LATE FEE DOG LICENSE (DISABLED CITIZEN)	TAG2	\$2.50	NO CHANGE
LATE FEE DOG LICENSE (SR. CITIZEN)	TAG2	\$2.50	NO CHANGE
LATE FEE DOG LICENSE (UNALTERED)	TAG2	\$25.00	NO CHANGE
LATE FEE HORSE LICENSE	TAG2	\$5.00	NO CHANGE
LATE FEE JNKYARD DOG LICENSE (ALTERED)	TAG2	\$12.50	NO CHANGE
LATE FEE JNKYARD DOG LICENSE (UNALTERED)	TAG2	\$37.50	NO CHANGE
LATE FEE SENTRY DOG LICENSE	TAG2	\$12.50	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT ALLIG,OSTR,WLD	SHELTER	\$43.50	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT AML ACTS &EXHBT	SHELTER	\$63.75	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT AML RENTAL EST	SHELTER	\$39.75	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT AVIARY PERMIT	SHELTER	\$19.50	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT CAR,HMNG PIGEN	SHELTER	\$43.50	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT CIRCS PERMIT	SHELTER	\$600.00	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT CT KNL PMT	SHELTER	\$43.50	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT D KNL PERMIT	SHELTER	\$45.75	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT DG,CT,PET SHOP	SHELTER	\$43.50	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT DG,CT,PET SHOW	SHELTER	\$63.75	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT FLM,TV,THEATRC	SHELTER	\$45.00	NO CHANGE

PENALTY PERMIT GRMING PARLOR	SHELTER	\$24.00	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT MS AML/RPTL EST	SHELTER	\$30.75	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT NLTY RD ACADEMY ETC	SHELTER	\$48.75	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT NON CITY AMLS	SHELTER	\$18.50	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT PET SHOP PERMIT	SHELTER	\$43.50	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT RODEO PERMIT	SHELTER	\$249.00	NO CHANGE
PENALTY PERMIT ZOO PERMIT	SHELTER	\$27.75	NO CHANGE

MISCELLANEOUS FEES

Traps are requested from members of the public largely to lure and/or retrieve their own personal pets. These traps come in two sizes and are charged a daily rate. Citizens come into the shelters and leave a deposit and upon return of the trap, the deposit is returned less the daily rate for the equipment. These proposed fee increases cover the rising costs of replacing lost, damaged, and stolen equipment.

SERVICE/ITEM	CLASS	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
TRAP FEE (Small Trap/Daily)	KENNEL	\$3.00	\$7.50
TRAP FEE (Large Trap/Daily)	KENNEL	\$5.00	\$15.00
TRAP DEPOSIT (Small)	KENNEL	\$30.00	\$75.00
TRAP DEPOSIT (Large)	KENNEL	\$50.00	\$150.00

The Department of Animal Services request approval, in accordance with the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 53.12(a), to update the existing fees charged for costs incurred by the City in connection with animal impoundment and adoption activities. The proposed fees, are in compliance with the City's policies requiring full cost recovery for special services.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda F. Barnette

Brenda F. Barnette
 General Manager
 Department of Animal Services