

PERSONNEL AND ANIMAL WELFARE COMMITTEE REPORT relative to changes to the Free and Discount Spay/Neuter Certificate Program.

Recommendations for Council action:

1. APPROVE the inclusion of rabbit sterilizations in the Free Spay/Neuter and Discount Spay/Neuter Certificate Programs.
2. APPROVE the increase of the Free Spay/Neuter and Discount Spay/Neuter Certificate Program voucher from \$70 to \$125 for dogs and rabbits.
3. APPROVE the increase of the discount certificate from \$30 to \$50 for dogs and rabbits.

Fiscal Impact Statement: The Department of Animal Services (DAS) reports that the total amount of funds available for animal sterilization for the DAS varies year to year. Approximately \$1.1 million is allocated to the Animal Sterilization Fund (ASF) as a fixed amount each year with an additional, variable sum added based on donations and licensing surcharges. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15, a total of 3138 (\$219,660) free spay/neuter vouchers were redeemed; 1037 (\$72,590) for cats and 2101 (\$147,070) for dogs. Likewise in FY 2014-15, a total of 2979 discount vouchers were redeemed for a total of \$89,370. Increasing the monetary value as described in this report would have resulted in a \$115,555 increase to the ASF for the same fiscal year.

Community Impact Statement: None submitted.

Summary:

On February 17, 2016 and March 16, 2016, your Committee considered a January 27, 2016 DAS report relative to changes to the Free and Discount Spay/Neuter Certificate Program. According to the DAS, on July 28, 2015, the Board of Animal Services Commissioners (Board) considered the matter of increasing the low income free spay/neuter vouchers from \$70 to \$125. Likewise there was a recommendation to include the sterilization of rabbits in the program. After a lengthy discussion, the Board asked the DAS to report back on the following:

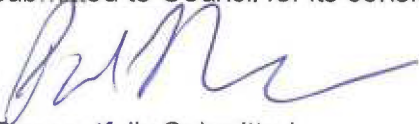
- a. Separation of species (dog and cat sterilizations may require separate pricing)
- b. Increasing the value of the discount vouchers to encourage more participation
- c. Increased payments for animals with pre-existing medical conditions such as crypt orchid, pregnancy, and uterine infections.

Subsequently, on August 11, 2015, the item was reconsidered by the Board. After additional research, staff reported that the cost for altering cats is far less expensive than for dogs and as such, it is not necessary to increase the current \$70 allowance for cats. Conversely, dogs and rabbits require a higher voucher redemption as these surgeries have increased in cost and are currently beyond the \$70 threshold. The \$125 should cover the costs in most cases.

Similarly, the increase in free vouchers creates a need for increasing discount vouchers. While these vouchers are not intended for low income residents, it is the intent of the DAS to encourage residents to spay/neuter their pets. As such, the amount of the discount should be slightly raised from \$30 to \$50 to encourage participation. Animals with pre-existing medical conditions can present complicated, lengthy surgeries. Additionally, medication and post-op care are all areas in which there are associated costs.

In an attempt to address these instances with shelter animals that are altered by contract veterinarians, the DAS recommended to the Board that an additional \$50 voucher be provided to those veterinarians who perform those surgeries. This recommendation was not adopted by the Commission as there are concerns with adequate documentation and verification of pre-existing conditions.

After consideration and having provided an opportunity for public comment, the Committee moved to continue the matter for the February 17, 2016 and March 16, 2016 Committee meetings. Subsequently, this matter was considered again on April 20, 2016 and after having provided an opportunity for public comment, the Committee moved to recommend approval of the recommendations contained in the January 27, 2016 DAS report. This matter is now submitted to Council for its consideration.



Respectfully Submitted,

PERSONNEL AND ANIMAL WELFARE COMMITTEE

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
KORETZ:	YES
RYU:	YES
HARRIS - DAWSON:	YES
ARL	

4/20/16

-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-