Agenda Item

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Timothy Wymes, Community Development Director

DATE: December 16, 2019

RE: Spay and Neuter Program Information

Issues

Spay and Neuter programs are put in place to help reduce the unwanted number of domestic animals. Cities throughout the United States are bombarded with sick, stray, and unwanted cats and dogs. Shelters and animal facilities are over populated and struggling with options to relocate animals. Shelters and animal facilities are faced with making tough decision regarding whether or not an animal gets to live. The ultimate goal of shelters and animal facilities is to be 'No-Kill' organizations. This is much easier said than done.

To help reduced the number of unwanted animals, municipalities are teaming up with local veterinarians to help control the animal population. The process can be accomplished through education, vouchers, and working with other agencies to combat the issue. What I have found after discussions with other local municipalities, is other municipalities offer vouchers for qualifying households for free or reduced spay and neuter procedures. I have attached some information from municipalities that offer such spay and neuter programs.

Funding is a major component with the three municipalities. Spay and neuter programs are a joint effort between local veterinarians and municipalities. I have found that some municipalities fund spay and neuter programs through the general fund and grants (if available), while others use a portion of the animal license fees to support spay and neuter programs. Nonetheless, funding for spay and neuter programs is mainly supported through the general fund. Actual amounts allocated for spay and neuter programs vary. The amount of funding can be a determining factor of how successful a program will be. Most generally, larger municipalities will have larger budgets to address animal population control. In addition to the funding, partnerships must also be established with local veterinarians. Attached are summaries of what three other communities do.

Recommendation

City Staff recommends that the City proposes funding a program on a smaller scale. The details of the program will be drafted by city staff for qualifying households. In the beginning, the City of Cameron spay and neuter program will be operated on a trial bases. After a determined period of time, City Staff will review all information and report back to City Council.

City of Albuquerque, NM

- Offer spay and neuter program
- FY2019 $11.5 million (General Fund) animal control budget
- FY2018 and FY2019 $79,000 just for spay and neuter program
- 60% of animal license and permits fees are deposited into spay and neuter fund
- H.E.A.R.T- Humane and Ethical Animal Rules and Treatment
- H.E.A.R.T fund created FY07
- Free micro chip, free spay and neuter for low income residents that meet the criteria
- Offer vouchers to qualified residents to redeem at participating veterinarian clinics

City of Columbia, MO

- Offer spay and neuter program through the Health and Human Services Department
- FY2019 $7.5 million
- FY2019 $692,780 animal control budget
- Spay & Neuter cost of $50.00 dogs and $25.00 cats without a voucher
- Partnership between Central Missouri Humane Society and Animal Control Division
- Offer limited spay and neuter vouchers
- One free voucher per household each year
- Offer vouchers to qualified residents to redeem at Central Humane Society

Saint Louis County, MO

- Offer spay and neuter program through the Department of Health
- FY2019 $5.1 million
- FY2019 $2.5 million animal control budget
- For every rabies tag sold, $1.00 is placed into a special fund to support the spay and neuter program
- Spay and neuter program began in 2005
- Vouchers provide reduce cost to residents
- Cats spay/neuter $50-$60, dogs spay/neuter $70-$80
- 90% of the Veterinarian Clinics participate in Saint Louis County
- Must be a Saint Louis County resident
- Must meet the necessary guidelines to qualify