



Sheila de la Guerra

Public Comment

From: Kendra Duncan O'Connor <koconnor@bunssb.org>
Sent: Sunday, April 12, 2026 4:12 AM
To: sbcob
Cc: Laura Capps
Subject: Re: Santa Barbara County Animal Services Proposed 2026/27 Budget
Attachments: SBCAS .pdf

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April 9, 2026

Dear Chair Nelson and Supervisors,

Please reconsider the reduction of 4.5 FTE and shelter operational hours at Santa Barbara County Animal Services (SBCAS) in your 2026/27 budget. This department is currently understaffed and underfunded. Staff already rely on hundreds of volunteers who spend thousands of hours a year assisting with animal care & welfare. Local rescue partners contribute hundreds of thousands of dollars a year to help fill gaps. SBCAS is stretched to the limit. Passing the current budget proposal as is will result in:

Delays reuniting lost pets with their family

Fewer adoptions - longer shelter stays

Delayed officer response time

Delayed veterinary care (officers transport animals in need of medical care)

Less day foster outings for dogs to have time away from the shelter.

Fewer options for community members in crisis

It is also important to ask what impact diminished services will have on future contracts with local jurisdictions? Will the cities of Santa Maria, Goleta and Santa Barbara continue to work with SBCAS or will they take those millions of contracted dollars somewhere else?

Please reconsider reducing funding for County Animal Services. This department plays a critical role in our community and cannot afford to lose 4.5 FTE or have fewer shelter hours. Sarah Aguilar should be commended for the work she is doing on an already constrained budget. Let her continue to do her job with appropriate funding for the wellbeing of sheltered animals and the people in the trenches doing a job most people simply could not do.

Sincerely,

Kendra Duncan O'Connor
Santa Barbara