

To: Honorable Joseph Centeno, Chair
Board Members

From: Michele Mickiewicz, Interim Director
Public Health Department

Date: 11/6/2009

Subject: Responses to Questions from November 3 Board Hearing

CC: Michael F. Brown, CEO
Terri Maus-Nisich, Assistant CEO
Celeste Andersen, County Counsel

A number of questions were raised by Board members at the November 3 Board Meeting. This memo provides responses to these questions. Also attached are 2 ordinance options—one that addresses cat licensing for unaltered cats only and one that addresses both cat licensing for unaltered cats only and exemptions for agricultural lands. Both these issues were requested by the Board at the hearing.

- 1. Will a veterinarian consultation be available at the County rabies clinics?**
Yes, Animal Services will have a veterinarian available at consult with owners. In addition, Animal Services will also identify partner volunteer organizations and veterinarians throughout the county willing to assure owners will have the consultations available to all animal owners at low or no cost.
- 2. Can we modify the ordinance proposal so that cat licensing will only apply to unaltered cats?**
Yes, Attachment 7 shows this change in red.
- 3. Can we exclude Agricultural parcels of 40 acres or more?**
Yes, Attachment 8 shows this added language in red, letter (d). Agricultural status is verified through the Assessors database, which is used routinely by Animal Services. Attachment 8 also includes the changes regarding cat licenses shown in Attachment 7.
- 4. How does this affect irresponsible owners living in cities that have not adopted the ordinance?**
Animal Control still has tools to work with owners in all of the cities within the County. Dog licensing is required by state law and local ordinances. All cities have leash laws and ordinances regarding dangerous dogs and other animal control laws. City Councils have the option of adopting ordinances that they feel are applicable in their locality.

For example, if a situation occurred within the city of Santa Maria where a dog had to be impounded because it was a dangerous dog, County Animal Services officers would proceed with the impoundment pursuant to the contract in place, but following the requirements of the Santa Maria Municipal Code.

The following table outlines how animal services programs are delivered within Santa Barbara County.

JURISDICTION	FIELD SERVICES	ANIMAL SHELTERING	ANIMAL ORDINANCE
Buellton	Contract with County	Contract with County	Adopt County Code ¹
Goleta	Contract with County	Contract with County	Adopt County Code
Guadalupe	Contract with County	Contract with County	Guadalupe Municipal Code
Lompoc	Contract with County	Contract with County	Lompoc Municipal Code
Santa Maria	Contract with County	Contract with County	Santa Maria Municipal Code
Solvang	Contract with County	Contract with County	Solvang Municipal Code
Unincorporated County	County Animal Services	County Animal Services	County Code
Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara PD	Contract with County	Santa Barbara Municipal Code
Carpinteria	Carpinteria Code Enforcement	Private Contract	Carpinteria Municipal Code

5. Other Information on dog license differentials

- *Dog license differentials are mandated by state law which requires that licenses for unaltered dogs must be at least twice the cost of the license fee for an altered dog (greater differentials are allowed). {Authority: Food & Ag Code. section 30804.5}*
- *Current SB county dog license fees are \$20 for altered dogs and \$50 for unaltered dogs.*
- *Proposed change is to add a \$10 surcharge to Unaltered Animal Licenses, bringing the fee up to \$60.*
- *Surcharge revenues would be used to subsidize spay and neuter costs for hardships and low income clients*

Additional information: Attachments 7 and 8 include revisions to the Fee Ordinance. A category for a discounted senior rate for an Unaltered Animal License for a cat has been added for consistency with the dog licensing fees. The fee changes in the current recommendation are the inclusion of license fees for unaltered cats, a \$10 surcharge for Unaltered Animal Licenses and a penalty of \$250 for an unlicensed dog or an unlicensed, unaltered cat.

¹ Each amendment to the County Code needs to be approved by the City Council. If the ordinance were to be amended by the County, cities that adopt the County Code must take action to accept any amendments.