

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Agenda Number:**  
**Prepared on:** January 6, 2005  
**Department:** Public Health  
**Budget Unit:** 041  
**Agenda Date:** January 25, 2005  
**Placement:** Administrative  
**Estimate Time:**  
**Continued Item:** NO  
**If Yes, date from:**

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Roger E. Heroux, Director  
Public Health Department

**STAFF  
CONTACT:** Jan E. Glick (681-5284)  
Animal Services Director

**SUBJECT:** Acceptance of Grant Funds

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**Recommendation:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Accept a grant of \$20,000 from PETsMART Charities. The money is given to the County with certain conditions. It is to be used to offset medical and transportation expenses incurred for re-homing horses as the result of the relinquishment of approximately 445 wild horses on the Gardner Ranch in Buellton, from a cruelty investigation that began April 7, 2003.
- B. Accept a grant of \$10,000 from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). The money is given to the County to be used to offset the medical and transportation costs incurred as the result of the adoption program for horses on the Gardner Ranch.
- C. Accept a grant of \$7,660 from PETsMART Charities. The money is given to the County to be used to spay and neuter 100 lost and abandoned rabbits that have been received by the County Animal Services Division.

**Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:**

The recommendations are primarily aligned with:

- Goal No. 1 An Efficient Government Able to Respond Effectively to the Needs of the Community.
- Goal No. 2 Provide a Safe and Healthy Community in Which to Live, Work and Visit.

**Executive Summary and Discussion:**

Grants were written in response to two recent large scale impounds by Santa Barbara County Animal Services that have caused unbudgeted expenses. These grants have been generously funded through the PETsMart Charities and the ASPCA.

### **Wild Horse Adoption Program**

On September 2, 2004, Santa Barbara County Animal Services became responsible for approximately 445 wild horses on the Gardner Ranch in Buellton from which there were an original 600 horses. In addition to the care and handling of the horses, Animal Services and General Fund incurred and continues to incur unbudgeted expenses associated with the care and custody of these animals and the task of finding them homes. The County has partnered with various groups in order to meet the many needs of these animals. WIN (Wild Horses in Need) is a local group that formed in order to help this specific case and to ensure that the horses would be adequately fed and properly cared for. Animal Services efforts to adopt the horses are going well. Staff has re-homed and shipped 365 horses all over the country. The horses that pose the greatest challenge for adoption are the wild stallions. There are currently approximately 80 left to place. Staff has arranged for a team of volunteer veterinarians and handlers to geld the horses to make them more adoptable. Individual grants were submitted to PETsMART Charities (\$20,000) and the ASPCA (\$10,000) and funds were granted specifically to assist with these expenses.

### **Domestic Rabbit Overpopulation Control**

On April 19, 2004, Animal Services staff responded to a complaint about rabbits in the City of Buellton and by July 6, trapped and impounded approximately 100 rabbits at the Lompoc shelter. The animals were lost or abandoned and had been breeding in an empty city lot. The annual average number of rabbits impounded at the Lompoc shelter is five. In Santa Barbara where the average number of rabbits impounded annually is 68, the County has partnered with Bunnies Urgently Needing Shelter (BUNS), who care for, feed and alter the rabbits. BUNS responded quickly to the need in Lompoc, providing hutches, hay, foster homes, and volunteers. It is important to spay and neuter rabbits but it is not mandated that the County do it. Pet overpopulation happens quickly with rabbits as they have an average life span of 8 years, are able to go into heat every 16 days and give birth to 4-12 rabbits in 30 days. A grant was submitted to PETsMART Charities (\$7,660) and was granted specifically for the spay and neutering of County rabbits.

### **Mandates and Service Levels:**

The County is mandated "to maintain or provide for the maintenance of a pound system and a rabies control program..." (Heath & Safety Code Section 121690 {e}). These services will continue to be provided.

### **Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Acceptance of these grants will not increase the General Fund Contribution to Animal Services. These grants are for direct cost of services only and will assist in defraying additional costs incurred with the two situations described in the Executive Summary.

Approving and Accepting Grants A & B will allow Animal Services to offset medical & transportation costs incurred by the Gardner Ranch Horse Adoption Project (MSTANG).

Approving and Accepting Grant C will allow Animal Services to offset the cost of spaying & neutering bunnies from period October 2004 through September 2005.

Acceptance of these grants will not result in any additional staff or need for facilities.

### **Special Instructions:**

Return one (1) copy of the Minute Order to the Public Health Department, attention: Margaret A. Granger

### **Concurrence:**

Not Applicable.