

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 18, 2004

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL TO CHANGE ANIMAL CONTROL FEES AND LICENSING AND REQUEST TO THE CITY ATTORNEY TO PREPARE THE NECESSARY ORDINANCE CHANGES FOR CONSIDERATION IN SEPTEMBER

ISSUE: Proposal to change animal control fees and licensing and request to the City Attorney to prepare the necessary ordinance changes for consideration in September.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Approve in concept changing animal licensing in the City to make dog and cat licenses effective for either three years or one year instead of for one year only; and
- (2) Request staff to work with the City Attorney to prepare the necessary ordinance changes for consideration in September to address multiple year licensing and increasing the fees for dog and cat licensing well as the fees for impounding and holding stray animals.

DISCUSSION: The City issues about 4,500 dog and cat licenses each calendar year. The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria sends out renewal notices on behalf of the City each November and pet owners must have a new license for their pet by January 31. The City and the League have received requests that the licenses be issued for multiple years instead of annually.

In addition to a reduction in the cost to administer the licensing system, one of the benefits of a multiple year licensing system is that the license period could coincide with the time that a dog or cat's rabies vaccination is valid. Since such vaccinations are good for three years, a three year dog or cat license makes sense and assists in ensuring the licensed dogs and cats have up to date rabies vaccinations.

Other jurisdictions in the area offer both one year and multiple year licenses for dogs (Arlington Fairfax, Fauquier, Montgomery Counties), and we recommend that the City offer both a one year and three year dog and cat license. This enables the pet owner to chose between a one or three year license. If Council approves the multi-year licensing in concept on June 22 subject to the

adoption of an ordinance in September, the Animal Welfare League can order the multi-year licenses this summer so that they arrive in time for the licensing period of November-January.

We also recommend that the ordinance prepared by the City Attorney address the increasing fees for dog and cat licenses as well as the fees for holding and impounding stray animals. We will return with recommendations on increasing those fees in September.

STAFF:

Michele R. Evans, Assistant City Manager

Tara Blot, Director, Vola Lawson Animal Shelter