



Board Agenda Item 56

DATE: June 10, 2025

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: David Luchini, RN, PHN, Department of Public Health

SUBJECT: Agreement with Fresno Humane Animal Services

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Under Administrative Policy No. 34 for competitive bids or requests for proposals (AP 34), determine that an exception to the competitive bidding requirement under AP 34 is satisfied and a suspension of competition is warranted due to unusual or extraordinary circumstances, and that the best interests of the County would be served by entering into an agreement with Fresno Humane Animal Services as it is a uniquely qualified vendor that possesses the community contacts and breadth of knowledge needed to effectively operate the shelter for animal control services; and**
- 2. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute an Agreement with Fresno Humane Animal Services to provide mandated animal shelter-master and animal control services, effective July 1, 2025, not to exceed five consecutive years, which includes a three-year base contract and two optional one-year extensions, total not to exceed \$25,500,000.**

Approval of the recommended actions will allow the County to continue to contract with Fresno Humane Animal Services (FHAS) for mandated shelter-master and animal control services throughout the unincorporated areas of the County in accordance with California Food and Agricultural Code, sections 311105 and 31106; California Penal Code, section 597(f); and, Fresno County Ordinance Code, Chapters 9.04 through 9.12. The recommended agreement would supersede Agreement No. 24-696 with FHAS that is due to expire on December 31, 2025. The recommended agreement is 100% Net County Cost. While the shelter is located in District 1, services are provided countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Should your Board not approve the recommended actions, the provider will have to terminate the existing agreement due to lack of sufficient County funding to provide the required services. The termination of services would force the Department to immediately release a request for proposal for services and if a qualified provider bids and is selected, enter into contract negotiations and return to the Board at the earliest possible date which could take up to six months. In the intervening period, the County would be solely responsible for the continuity of shelter and animal control services, facing the substantial challenge of staffing these operations with internal personnel who currently lack the specialized expertise required (current County employment classifications lack qualifications and specialized expertise). This critical gap in qualified staffing would severely impact service delivery. Moreover, crucial field operations, life-saving specialty services like rescue transfers, adoptions, medical care, and the intake of new animals would be necessarily halted. Animal care at the shelter during this time would be reduced to only the most basic provisions and only the most fundamental aspects of animal care at the shelter could be sustained under these challenging circumstances.

SUSPENSION OF COMPETITION/SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT:

It is requested that the County find under AP 34 that an exception to the competitive bidding requirement is satisfied, and a suspension of competition is warranted due to unusual or extraordinary circumstances given the fact that during the 2015 RFP process, there were only two qualified respondents. Also, the City of Fresno issued an RFQ in 2019 for animal control services for which they only found one vendor that met the needs. It is unlikely that the Department would find a uniquely qualified vendor such as FHAS that possesses the community contacts and breadth of knowledge needed to effectively operate the shelter. FHAS has extensive experience with animal rescue, sheltering, adoption, and community services and a reliable and supportive contractor for the County. The General Services Department - Purchasing Division concurs with the Department's assessment that this satisfies the exception to the competitive bidding process required by AP 34.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase to Net County Cost (NCC) associated with the recommended action for FY 2024-25. The recommended agreement would be fully funded by NCC. The annual maximum compensation amount payable to the Contractor under this recommended agreement is \$5,100,000. The maximum compensation under this recommended agreement is \$25,500,000 for the entire contract term. Sufficient appropriations will be included in the Department's Org 5620 FY 2025-26 Recommended Budget and will be included within future budget requests for the duration of the term.

DISCUSSION:

On October 22, 2019, your Board approved Agreement A-19-562 with FHAS to serve as the County's shelter-master and animal control agency, including animal care, field service operations (including, but not limited to enforcing leash laws, investigation and quarantine for dangerous dogs and investigation of dog bites), dog licensing and improving outcomes for animals taken into the County shelter. The Agreement was effective January 1, 2020 with a ten-year term through December 31, 2029. When the Agreement was written, animal control operations were housed at the prior County morgue located at 760 W. Nielsen, Fresno, California 93706 while the new County shelter was under construction. The Department projected an increase in operational costs once the new shelter was complete and included language in the Agreement that allowed for a re-evaluation of FHAS' compensation after one year in the new shelter. FHAS moved into the new shelter at 1510 West Dan Ronquillo Drive, Fresno, CA 93706 in April 2022. In addition to operation of the County's animal shelter and animal control requirements, services under the recommended agreement also include a community cat program to address the feral cat population; a spay and neuter outreach program to reduce the unwanted pet population; and preparation of a disaster plan to respond to the care of animals in emergencies, natural disasters, and evacuations.

On June 18, 2024, the Board approved Amendment I to the Agreement with FHAS (No. 19-562) to reduce the contract term by four years from the original term of January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2029 to January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2025, which decreased the overall maximum compensation from \$18,931,792 to \$11,773,686. Additionally, Amendment I increased the FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 maximum compensation by \$1,000,000 to remit more adequate payments to FHAS from January 2024 to December 2025.

On July 9, 2024, the Board approved Agreement No. 24-387 with Hatching LLC (Hatching) to evaluate the County's animal services program, including shelter and field operations, and provide recommendations for appropriate funding and operational efficiencies. Hatching conducted a site visit at the County's animal shelter from September 2, 2024 to September 6, 2024, during which time, Hatching observed shelter operations and field services. On November 6, 2024, Hatching provided the County with their preliminary findings and determined \$260,000 was the minimum necessary monthly payment to reimburse FHAS for costs incurred to fulfill the agreement scope of work. Without intervention, FHAS would face a shortfall in

operating expenses, and would not have adequate County revenue to continue providing crucial animal control, rabies control and shelter services.

On December 17, 2024, the Board approved Amendment II to the Agreement with FHAS (No. 24-696) to increase the monthly payment to FHAS to \$260,000, a maximum compensation increase of \$702,594 in FY 2024-25.

The Department presented the results of the Hatching evaluation to your Board on April 22, 2025. The recommendations by Hatching to increase the annual amount of the contract with FHAS to \$5,100,000 was unanimously supported by your Board and the Department was asked to return to your Board with an agreement for approval as soon as possible.

The animal shelter facility has a capacity of 194 dogs. In 2024, the total animal intake was 4,640. Since 2023, FHAS has adopted out 2,085 dogs and transferred out 5,687 to other rescue programs along the west coast. Stray animals accounted for 10,890 (87.3%) of the intakes at the shelter since 2023.

Approval of the recommended actions will increase the funding made available to FHAS in order to continue operating the animal shelter and animal control services with sufficient services and supplies and allow them to increase outcomes, such as length of stay and live release rate, as well as operational stability for the animals in the shelter.

The Department plans to return to your Board annually with an updated report on services provided by FHAS.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #12, April 22, 2025
BAI #66, December 17, 2024
BAI #51, July 9, 2024
BAI #66, June 18, 2024
BAI #7, October 22, 2019

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Suspension of Competition Acquisition Request Form
On file with Clerk - Agreement with FHAS

CAO ANALYST:

Ron Alexander