



Board Agenda Item 51

DATE: July 9, 2024
TO: Board of Supervisors
SUBMITTED BY: David Luchini, RN, PHN, Director, Department of Public Health
SUBJECT: Agreement with Hatching LLC

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 Hatching LLC as Hatching LLC is the only vendor suited and equipped to evaluate the County's animal control program; and**
- 2. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute an Agreement with Hatching LLC for consultation services for the County's animal control program, effective upon execution, not to exceed one year, total not to exceed \$40,000.**

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with approval of the recommended actions, which will authorize the County to contract with Hatching LLC (Hatching) to evaluate animal control program operations, provide advisory support and develop recommendations in support of program efficacy and efficiency. Although the animal shelter is located in District 1, this item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

There are no viable alternative actions. If your Board does not approve the recommended actions, the County will not be able to enter into an agreement with Hatching for animal control consultation services.

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, as Hatching is the only vendor suited and equipped to evaluate animal control program operations, provide advisory support and develop recommendations in support of program efficacy and efficiency.

Hatching is a recognized consultant group specializing in animal sheltering and control operations. The City of Fresno Animal Shelter utilized Hatching to provide consultation services for their animal shelter and control operations while still under contract with Fresno Humane Animal Services (FHAS). During their evaluation, Hatching became very familiar with FHAS' operations, the community and its needs. Since FHAS is also the animal shelter and control services vendor for the County, Hatching has a unique advantage of understanding how FHAS operates as well as their organizational strengths and areas of improvement. Hatching has extensive experience addressing animal welfare needs in communities similar to Fresno County with different organizational structures and management philosophies, which demonstrates the

vendor's understanding of relevant demographics, community needs and challenges. The Internal Services Department - Purchasing 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 in Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. The maximum compensation for the recommended agreement is \$40,000. Sufficient appropriations and estimated revenues will be included in the Department's Org 5620 FY 2024-25 Recommended Budget and future budget requests for the duration of the term.

DISCUSSION:

On October 22, 2019, your Board approved Agreement A-19-562 with Fresno Humane Animal Services (FHAS) to assume comprehensive management of the County's animal sheltering and control services. This critical partnership encompassed a wide range of responsibilities, including:

- Animal Care: Providing high-quality housing, medical care, enrichment, and adoption services for animals taken into the County shelter.
- Field Service Operations: Responding to animal control calls, investigating animal cruelty complaints, and enforcing county ordinances related to animal welfare (e.g., leash laws).
- Dog Licensing: Administering the County's dog licensing program, ensuring compliance, and generating revenue to support animal services.
- Animal Outcome Improvement: Implementing strategies to increase live release rates, adoptions, and responsible pet ownership within the County.

The Agreement commenced on January 1, 2020, with a term extending through December 31, 2029. At the time of agreement execution, the County's animal control operations were temporarily housed at the former County morgue located at 760 W. Nielsen, Fresno, CA 93706 due to the ongoing construction of a new animal shelter facility.

FHAS successfully relocated to the new County shelter located at 1510 West Dan Ronquillo Drive, Fresno, CA 93706 in April 2022. In anticipation of the increased operational demands and costs associated with the new shelter, the Agreement incorporated language allowing for the reevaluation of FHAS's compensation one year after the transition to the new facility. Since January 2024, the Department has collaborated closely with FHAS to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of program costs and outcomes within the framework of the Agreement. This collaborative review confirmed that the current compensation structure outlined in the Agreement is no longer sufficient to enable FHAS to fully meet all contractual obligations.

On June 18, 2024, your Board approved Amendment I to the Agreement with FHAS to increase the FY 2024 funding by \$500,000, FY 2025 funding by \$500,000, and decrease the term by four years to January 1, 2020, through December 31, 2025, to provide financial assistance to FHAS while the County establishes a contractual relationship with an experienced consultant to conduct an assessment of the County's animal control program.

Approval of the recommended actions will allow the County, through its Department of Public Health, to engage Hatching, a recognized consultant group specialized in animal sheltering and control operations, to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the County's animal control program and identify strengths and potential areas for improvement. This evaluation will encompass a review of:

- Shelter Operations: Assessing efficiency, animal welfare standards, and potential opportunities for optimization.
- Field Service Operations: Evaluating response times, resource allocation, and effectiveness of animal control activities.
- Funding Recommendations: Maximizing existing funding sources and exploring grant opportunities.

- Efficiency Improvements: Recommending strategies to streamline operations and effectively use available resources.

Following the completion of Hatching's evaluation, the Department will present a comprehensive report with recommendations to your Board for approval before December 31, 2025.

This proactive approach will ensure the continued success of the County's animal control program, while also maximizing efficiency and achieving the best possible outcomes for the animals entrusted to the County's care.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #69, June 18, 2024
BAI #7, October 22, 2019

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Suspension of Competition
On file with Clerk - Agreement with Hatching LLC

CAO ANALYST:

Ronald W. Alexander, Jr.