

April 11, 2011 Board of Supervisors Meeting on Animal Services – Recap

The Board of Supervisors held their special meeting on Animal Services on April 11, 2011.

Western Slope Shelter Project - Supervisors Santiago and Briggs find latest Phase 1 start estimate unacceptable. The permanent Western Slope Shelter and the status of the project was questioned by Supervisor Santiago. Department of Transportation staff recently underwent a reorganization and the Shelter Project now has a new Project Manager. Kris Payne, Project Manager for only two weeks, identified a Phase 1 construction start date of Spring of 2012. **This date, a full year from now was cited as unacceptable by Supervisor Santiago and Supervisor Briggs.** Recall that direction to proceed with Phase 1 was given on July 20, 2010. The current lease termination date of 12/31/2013 and the Temporary Use Permit termination date of January 1, 2014 were cited as reasons for concern with the lack of progress on this project. (Let me note that 12/31/11 is 32 months away!) DOT staff member Payne was asked to review the schedule and seek a modification that would provide for a much earlier start date. It is important to note that at this meeting, three Board members acknowledged the sense of urgency related to a 12/31/2013 lease termination as well as an understanding that the City of Placerville has other plans for the site of the temporary shelter.

After public comment that included many excellent speakers and further Board Discussion the following motion was passed by the Board of Supervisors:

The Board directed DOT staff to report back to the Board in two weeks (April 26, 2011) with

- a schedule that itemizes:
 - When the agreement on the road realignment will come back to the Board
 - The engineering and construction timeline for the access road
 - The timeframe for getting Phase 1 out to bid and timeframe for the construction of the Phase 1 improvements
 - Parallel track timeline on construction of the facility (Phase 2)
- monthly reports thereafter on project progress.

We are once again hopeful that the newly assigned project manager can move the Shelter project forward. We are not privy to the reasons no progress was made in eight months and the answer is very likely more complicated than simply assigning responsibility to the former project manager. We need to turn the page and now, finally, move forward. We will help in any way we can to support staff's efforts to get this job done. We have tangible indications that we will be able to maintain a line of communication with them and we believe that, after an unexplainable hiatus, we will now see progress on Phase 1 – site improvements. We ask you

to stay tuned and we hope to be able to report tangible accomplishments in the near future. Thank you. You are making a difference in the outcome of this important public endeavor.

Shifting Responsibility for Animal Services dropped-The idea raised by one Supervisor at their last Animal Services meeting that inferred the County should consider “getting out of the Animal Services business” and “turn it over to a non-profit,” was not brought up at all. Likely due to a thorough staff report that once again explained mandates and requirements, and your communications that demonstrated an informed public that understands the essential public safety services provided by the Division, we now seem to have put that notion to rest. Thank you.

Costs of “so called nice to do” Sheltering Services –The Board received information that demonstrated that for West Slope operations, 66.5% of costs are for Field Services while 33.5% are for West Slope sheltering operations. Further, since according to staff the “vast number of animals sheltered come to them Field Operations”, staff believe that only about \$90,000 of Sheltering annual net costs relate to what some people believe are discretionary costs – an extremely small percentage of the Division’s total budget (and their total budget is an extremely tiny “slice” of the General Fund pie).

Some Fee Adjustment “Clean-up” Items – The Board discussed a few items carried over from their February 28th meeting on Animal Services fee adjustments, including an agricultural exemption for multiple working dogs, mandatory micro chipping, and dog licensing compliance incentives. Staff will return with ordinance modification recommendations for these items.

Again, thanks to all of you who emailed or called your Supervisor or came to the meeting. You influenced the course of both the shelter project and continued essential services provided by the Animal Services Division.