



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Regulatory Services

Date: May 16, 2008

To: CM Don Samuels, Chair of Public Safety and Regulatory Services Committee

Subject: Public Safety and Regulatory Services Committee directed staff to report back on the implementation of on-line licensing to increase the number of pets that are licensed in the City of Minneapolis.

Recommendation: Receive and file.

Previous Directives: NA

Prepared by:

Lori Olson, Deputy Director, Environmental Management
Dan Niziolek, Manager Animal Care and Control

Presenters in Committee:

Lori Olson, Deputy Director, Environmental Management
Dan Niziolek, Manager Animal Care and Control

Approved by:

Burt Osborne, Director

Financial Impact

- No financial impact
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the ___ Capital Budget or ___ Operating Budget
- Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase
- Action requires use of contingency or reserves
- Action is within the Business Plan
- Action requires a change to the Business Plan
- Other financial impact – Fine and fee increases for cost recovery.

Community Impact

Neighborhood Notification
City Goals
Comprehensive Plan
Zoning Code
Other

Supporting Information

On March 26th, 2008 Minneapolis Animal Care & Control (ACC) provided the Public Safety and Regulatory Services committee recommendations on strategies to increase the percentage of pets licensed in Minneapolis.

Currently, less than 5% of Minneapolis pets (cats and dogs) are licensed. Of the 107,000 dogs estimated to be living in Minneapolis, 9,007 were licensed in 2007. The numbers are significantly lower for our feline population with only 124 cats licensed out of the 115,000 plus cats in the city.

The following represents the status of the strategies recommended by ACC:

Strategies implemented:

- Senior discount - 50% reduction
- "Sibling Discount" (discount for second pet)
- Lifetime License - keep existing program
- Offer "free ride home" to any pet picked up by Animal Control
- No need to wear tags; required to be in possession by owner/custodian, unless animal microchipped.

Increased Consequences for Violators:

- Increase the penalty for not licensing (\$100 administrative citations)
- "Fix-It Ticket" – portion of fine goes toward license

Marketing/Advertising:

- Work with Communications Department on marketing/educating campaign on the benefits of pet licensing (*press releases issued after ordinance changes*)
- Utility billing insert for December 2009 (*confirmed*)

Strategies in process:

- Licensing offered at Minneapolis Development Review (*final details being worked out*)
- Licensing conducted by Vets and Pet Stores (*ordinance language passed, met with vets and pet stores and developed specifics of program, program agreements being developed*).
- Licensing over the telephone (*Conversation with Finance indicates possible, but would require special considerations in taking payments over the telephone; including clean desk protocol and work station located outside of earshot of the public.*)
- **On-line pet licensing**
 - ***Rocco prioritized as the top Regulatory Services technology project.***
 - ***Provided BIS a Project request more than a month ago – waiting for response on project proposal, including a description of timeline for evaluating the request and providing a timeframe and cost for implementation.***

Future strategies (dependent on additional funding):

- Hire one new FTE dedicated solely to resources, which includes pet licensing, grants, donations, developing partnerships, and education programs. (*Proposal presented to PS&RS and Ways and Means; being considered in 2009 Budget process.*)
- Purchase domain name “license your pet Minneapolis.”
- Shift from January-to-January annual licensing to annual licensing based on the date of purchase

Increased Consequences for Violators:

- Increased enforcement – increase patrols and random stops

Marketing/Advertising:

- Citywide direct mailing campaign
- Develop significant marketing campaign, including radio, newspaper, and bus shelter posters
- Work with other municipalities for metro-wide marketing campaign
- Canvassing with pet license applications and information – door-to-door (houses with visible pet presence)
- Develop holistic animal care and control program, including Responsible Pet Owners Program and youth education programs

In addition, PS&RS Committee members requested information and work on the following items:

- Implementation of micro chip programs that will interact with the City’s wireless program. (*Appropriate technology just being made available. ACC recommends further study of the new technology.*)
- On-line shelter photos for adoptable pets.
 - (*Two options – ACC recommends option #2.*)
 - *Pet Finder – independent web site which allows free posting of adoptable animals. Requires data entry and maintenance of site.*)
 - *Pet harbor – Chameleon module (like on-line pet licensing) – upfront cost; however significantly more efficient. No special entry required for posting and maintaining photos and descriptions of adoptable animals at shelter.*)
- On-line shelter photos for lost pets
 - (*Current ACC policy is to not provide information on available pets over the telephone. Concerned about individuals shopping for inexpensive pets. ACC will continue to research this option.*)