

Date: May 7, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilwoman Jeannine Pearce, District 2
Councilwoman Lena Gonzalez, District 1
Councilwoman Suzie Price, District 3
Councilwoman Stacy Mungo, District 5



Subject: Long Beach Animal Care Services, Compassion Saves Policy Direction

RECOMMENDATION:

Direct the City Manager to work with the Parks, Recreation, and Marine Department to implement the Compassion Saves model as the operational approach for Long Beach Animal Care Services (LBACS) ensure that this direction is reflected in the LBACS Strategic Plan and provide a report on the existing relationship and recommendations for improvements in policies and practices between SLCAa and LBACS to maintain facilities and financial conditions which are most conducive to promoting increased adoptions at the LBACS facility.

DISCUSSION:

Parks, Recreation, and Marine Department (PRM) presented the *Compassion Saves* approach at the April 16th City Council Study Session as the recommended option for the operational direction of the Long Beach Animal Care Services (LBACS). The presentation included a review of audit recommendations, current changes in policy that are underway, and policies to be incorporated in the LBACS Strategic Plan.

The Mayor's Animal Care Visioning Task Force, PRM staff, among other stakeholders involved, have had continuous discussions on the state of our animal care services and have been developing a Long Beach unique approach to further develop LBACS as a forward-looking shelter. These measures include a reduction of euthanasia cases with live release rates that will make LBACS comparable to cities such as San Jose and Sacramento, among others.

The City of Long Beach has the opportunity to affirm this unique *Compassion Saves* Long Beach approach to be implemented by the LBACS. The key principles of this model are:

1. Comply with the state law (California Food and Agriculture Code 17005) regarding animal care and the values of saving every life that is treatable. The *Compassion Saves* approach requires a strong commitment to saving lives through innovative programming.
2. Provide a report on the existing relationship and recommendations for improvements in policies and practices between SLCAa and LBACS to maintain facilities and financial conditions
3. Ensure LBACS remains **open admission** so that every unwanted or homeless pet has a safe place to go for shelter and care.
4. Support innovative **spay and neuter programs** to help control the pet homelessness crisis.
5. Foster a culture of data **transparency**, ethical decision-making, mutual respect, continual learning, and **collaboration** with the community.
6. Develop a strong active LBACS **volunteer program**.
7. Enhance the human-animal bond through a thoughtful sustainable **adoption program**, placements, rescue, foster programs, and post adoption support.
8. Formalize and enhance sustainable LBACS services with all partners including **rescue organizations**.
9. Maximize collaboration and clarity with our **spcaLA** partnership
10. Specifically increase **adoptions** of the City's homeless pets through partnerships and city wide programs
11. Develop ongoing opportunities for **donations** of private monies to go directly to support LBACS.
12. Establish innovative behavior, training, pet retention and education programs.
13. Develop a robust community communication program that uses social media and network effectiveness to advance the effectiveness of LBACS *Compassion Saves* approach.

The City has welcomed a new Director for the Animal Care Services division and this development presents an opportunity for us to review our existing relationships, practices, commitments, and policies and to realign the same as we develop a strategic plan. Accurate information regarding the inner-workings of the agreements between the allied partners will help set the framework for a solid foundation from which to engage in discussion and debate. Without this information, speculation and implication may lead to poor policy and/or a distrust in the direction we determine is the best course of action for the City of Long Beach.

This matter has been reviewed by Budget Manager Grace H. Yoon on April 26, 2019.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The recommendation requests the City Manager to work with the Parks, Recreation, and Marine Department to implement the *Compassion Saves* model as the operational model for Long Beach

Animal Care Services (LBACS) and to ensure that this model is reflected in the LBACS Strategic Plan. There is sufficient budgeted appropriation in the General Fund Group in the Parks, Recreation, and Marine Department (34) for the development of the LBACS Strategic Plan document. It is anticipated that implementing the *Compassion Saves* model will require additional funding and resources. Details of both the implementation plan and any additional costs will be outlined in the LBACS Strategic Plan. This recommendation with regard to preparing the Study will require a moderate level of staff time beyond normal budgeted scope of duties. The development of the study is consistent with existing City Council priorities and consistent with staff's direction to continue developing the *Compassion Saves* approach.