



Legislation Text

File #: 20-1199, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to receive and file a report on the Long Beach Animal Care Services' Strategic Plan. (Citywide)

In 2017, the City Auditor retained the services of JVR Shelter Strategies (JVR), a management consulting firm specializing in large open-intake municipal animal shelters including the City of Irvine and County of Orange, to review the operations of the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department (Department) Long Beach Animal Care Services (LBACS) shelter. This review was in response to growing concern regarding the management of the LBACS shelter and to determine what operation efforts might be enhanced to bring about desired outcomes for shelter animals. The review was conducted over two phases. Phase One focused on LBACS shelter operations and Phase Two focused on shelter staffing and resources. Nearly 200 recommendations were made based on these reviews.

In 2018, Mayor Robert Garcia convened the Mayor's Animal Care Visioning Task Force (Task Force) represented by various stakeholders including animal rescue organizations, shelter volunteers, and animal advocates. This 20-member Task Force would help establish a mission and vision for LBACS. The Task Force met monthly in a public forum to discuss what kind of shelter LBACS would become and would be led by the recommendations made by the audit as well as their collective expertise and input from the public and staff.

In 2019, the Department hired JVR to lead the strategic planning efforts. Based on their previous experience learning about the LBACS operations through their work with the City Auditor's Office, the Department felt JVR was well positioned to guide this process. JVR consulted with the Adisa Group, a company specializing in organizational strategy, managing systemic change, action planning, and leadership development. The team from Adisa was made up of well-respected animal welfare professionals with track records of success in bringing about systemic change in shelters to improve and save lives.

The development of the strategic plan included review of the audit conducted by the City Auditor, the team worked closely with the newly appointed LBACS manager, and engaged with the public for feedback about the organization and aspirations of the community for LBACS. A public meeting was held on March 3, 2019, to solicit community feedback on the kind of shelter they would like LBACS to become. Feedback was welcomed for weeks to follow in preparation for two strategic planning workshops that were held separately in May 2019. One day-long workshop was held with the Task Force, and a two-day workshop was held with LBACS staff.

The Task Force and LBACS staff selected members from their respective groups to form a working

group to sort, categorize, and articulate the enormous amount of feedback created through these processes. This working group met weekly and reported regularly to the Task Force in a public forum to share the progress being made on the development of the strategic plan, to ensure the plan remained relevant and on track for final approval. In addition, staff were also engaged in providing feedback about the development of the plan.

The working group identified five strategic goal areas including:

- Healthy, animal welfare-centric operation
- Community outreach and engagement
- Fiscal stewardship and sustainability
- Lifesaving and thriving programs
- Staff development and culture

Each of these areas represent sets of goals and action plans that will achieve the results needed to accomplish the plan. Each area is equally important to the other and in some cases, interdependent on the success of the other. Much of the plan relies heavily on changing the way work is done and how we engage our community.

The final rough draft of the plan was reviewed by the Task Force in a public meeting on July 6, 2020, and was approved by the Task Force in another public meeting on September 11, 2020. Two additional public meetings were held in October 2020 to solicit community feedback on the plan.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Arturo D. Sanchez and Revenue Management Officer Geraldine Alejo on October 5, 2020.

City Council action is requested on December 8, 2020, to move forward with the proposed strategic plan.

The total cost of the Strategic Plan was \$141,745, and was funded from resources in the General Fund Group in the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department, including FY 18 one-time funding of \$50,000 appropriated for this purpose. Funding for future resources related to the Strategic Plan have not yet been identified and further detailed cost estimates will be determined as resources are identified. This recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with the existing City Council priorities. There is no local job impact associated with this recommendation.

Approve recommendation.

BRENT DENNIS
DIRECTOR OF PARKS,
RECREATION AND MARINE

APPROVED:

THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER