



MEMORANDUM

Date: January 2, 2018

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator 

Re: **Pima Animal Care Center Transformation**

In Fiscal Year 11/12 Pima Animal Care Center (PACC) handled approximately 24,000 animals per year and had a live release rate of animals of 55% percent. For a variety of reasons PACC was operated much the same as it had been 10 years before. It was at this time we began a planned operational transition for PACC based on community input and community values related to animal care. In the early stages of this transition, we erected a tent at our aging facility to provide significantly more shelter capacity for dogs. This helped increase our live release rate by allowing animals to remain at PACC for longer periods of time to help facilitate adoption. This tent was far from ideal, was difficult to manage, and heating and cooling drove utility and maintenance costs higher.

The Board of Supervisors recognized the changing community values and need to make increased investment in animal care programming and facilities and approved a number of actions that have led us to where we are today. We are now beginning the operation of a modern animal care facility, stabilizing costs and increasing the live release rate to nearly 90%.

The most significant step the Board approved was the nearly unanimous placement of a bond financing question before the voters in 2014 to authorize \$22 million in General Obligation Bonds to replace the 1950s vintage animal care facility. This bond question was overwhelmingly approved despite limited opposition.

Animal care services are a regional service where other entities and municipalities can voluntarily join with the County in providing these services through intergovernmental agreements. This regional service model has proven to be the lowest cost model making the most efficient use of taxpayer resources used to operate PACC. While two smaller jurisdictions representing less than 5% of our total intake, have opted out of County animal care service, we are hopeful they can rejoin the County as a regional service provider once it is clear that operational performance has substantially improved, costs stabilized and will hopefully reduce in the future.

The County concluded the First Phase of construction for PACC improvements by moving in on December 26, 2017 and opening the facility to the public. A ribbon cutting ceremony occurred on December 28, 2017. Construction of Phase 2 improvements are now well underway and should be completed Summer 2018.

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Page 2

A new management team has now been in place since July, headed by new PACC Director Kristen Auerbach who achieved national prominence in her prior role as Deputy Director for the Austin Municipal Shelter. The management team includes a new Deputy Director Sarah Aguilar, former Program Manager at Ventura County, a Cat Program Coordinator and Adoption Coordinator. Outside of the shelter walls, the PACC field services team, including the Pet Support Center and Animal Protection Division aim to provide support and services to community pet owners in order to keep pets in homes and out of the shelter. This pro-active, community approach helps to reduce overall intake, saving resources and increasing the humane treatment of animals in Pima County. With this new management team, service model transition, and focus helping pets before they come to the shelter, the County has achieved national prominence and been awarded numerous grants, donations and honors.

In March 2014 the position of Development Director was added at PACC to help cultivate the additional resources needed. Later that year, Friends of Pima Animal Care Center was founded as a project fund of the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona. Subsequently, Friends of PACC became a separate non-profit corporation and a formal Master Cooperative Agreement with Friends of PACC was approved by the Board of Supervisors in June, 2017.

The very positive trend of community support for and response to PACC continues. In 2011, PACC received a total of \$145,569.60 in charitable contributions. By 2016, that number had increased to \$1,085,278. In addition, PACC received an unprecedented \$1.4 million in planned gifts. Additionally, more than \$1.2 million of in-kind contributions have been invested in PACC since our development program began.

Finally, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Humane Society of the United States Wayne Pacelle visited the PACC in October 2017 to recognize the achievements made by Pima County in transitioning into one of the nation's leading lifesaving municipal or governmental animal care organizations.

Attached for your review is a December 27, 2017 PACC Fall 2017 Director's Report that contains additional information you may find useful and of interest.

CHH/anc

Attachment

c: Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Francisco Garcia, Assistant County Administrator for Community and Health Services
Kristen Auerbach, Director, Pima Animal Care Center
Barry Gillaspie, Chair PACCAC