TOWN OF
APPLE VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

AGENDA MATTER

Subject Item:

PROMOTION OF THE FOURTH ANNUAL PET FAIR THROUGH A DOG LICENSING – AMNESTY AND VOLUNTARY CAT LICENSE PROGRAM

Summary Statement:

Each year Apple Valley Animal Control Officers respond to a large number of dogs running loose. In 2008, Animal Control handled a total of 3,612 animals at-large calls. Dogs that have not been spayed or neutered are more likely to run loose to breed. Male dogs can become aggressive and territorial when they smell a female in heat. Most stray animals do not have a current license, which makes finding the owner difficult for animal control staff. In addition, animals running loose may cause vehicle accidents, damage residents manicured yards, spread infectious diseases, and generally create a public nuisance.

Licensing, rabies control and spay/neuter programs all work together to promote responsible pet ownership and to decrease the numbers of stray animals roaming the streets. Keeping dogs in their yards is a priority for Animal Control.

Staff is proposing a Dog Licensing – Amnesty. For two weeks, dog owners would be allowed to license their dogs without incurring fees for expired years or late fees. The two-week timeframe (August 24th – September 5th) would coincide with the Pet Fair on August 29, 2009. A low cost rabies vaccination clinic will be offered at the Pet Fair. After the two-week amnesty, Animal Control would begin canvassing throughout town to enforce licensing requirements. Dog owners would be responsible for all late fees and prior year licenses.

(Continued)

Recommended Action:

1. Authorize an amnesty period for two weeks as described in the staff report.
2. Authorize a voluntary cat license to include a microchip at the cost of $10.00.
3. Direct staff to increase enforcement of unlicensed dogs beginning September 7, 2009

Proposed by: Gina M. Whiteside, Director of Municipal Services   Item Number_____

T. M. Approval: _____ **Budgeted Item** ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☒ **N/A**

17-1

In order for a dog to be licensed in the Town of Apple Valley, the dog must have a current rabies vaccination. Apple Valley Animal Control has held four rabies clinics, which have proved to be very successful. Many of the participating dog owners license their dogs during the rabies clinic. The current rate for an altered dog is $12 per year. An increased rate of $75 per year is charged for dogs that have not been altered. Residents who purchase a one-year unaltered license receive a voucher to have their animal spayed or neutered at a free or reduced cost.

Pet owners are more likely to license their animals when having to pay the reduced rate. When an animal is licensed, it ensures that they are in compliance with State rabies laws. In addition, increasing the number of licensed animals benefits the Town of Apple Valley Animal Shelter in several ways. First, licensed animals are vaccinated for rabies and other diseases as well. Vaccinated animals brought to the shelter have a strong defense against contracting infectious diseases and/or against spreading it to other animals in the shelter.

Second, licensed animals can decrease the number of unclaimed animals at the shelter. It is easier for staff to locate a pet's owner when they are licensed. In addition, licensed dogs, which are currently spayed or neutered, are returned for free to the owner on the first offense. This helps keep the shelter population to a minimum and decreases the number of animals euthanized due to space limitations and the decreases the amount of money spent to house, feed, care for and find homes for unwanted, lost, or abandoned litters.

Staff wants to make sure we include cats in our Pet Fair promotions as well. We are proposing to offer a voluntary license program for all cats at the cost of $10.00. This would include a microchip, since most cats do not wear collars. The microchip would then be entered into our licensing system and allow us to return stray cats to their owner should the cat ever end up at the shelter.