

City Settles Litigation on the Old Animal Shelter

The City Council is pleased to announce the settlement of litigation involving the care of animals housed in the City's old animal shelter. The City recently closed its old animal shelter and has relocated the City's lost and abandoned pets to the new, state of the art shelter. The settlement confirms, reaffirms, and acknowledges the City's continuing efforts to provide the City's lost and abandoned pets the best care in a fully transparent manner. The settlement ratifies the superior standards the City had voluntarily imposed on itself and that have been carried forward to govern the management of the new shelter.

Prior to the commencement of the litigation, the City established and initiated several significant programs, including:

- holding periods that are longer than the minimum holding periods mandated by state laws,
- Providing veterinary care to ill or injured animals,
- Maintaining monthly reports on the care of animals at the shelter,
- Implementation of spay and neuter protocols for animals impounded at the shelter,
- Increasing homeless animals' chances of adoption through foster and off-site adoption programs,
- Encouraging public comments on the operation of the new shelter.

The City initiated these programs. In settling this litigation, the plaintiffs and the City have agreed that these programs should and will be continued.

Neither party to the litigation admitted liability. Each party was responsible for its own attorneys' fees and costs. Neither party can or should claim victory. The claims in the litigation pertained to the old animal shelter and the allegations in the complaint were never substantiated or proven. The litigation was filed only a few months before the old animal shelter would be closed forever and the new shelter would open. The City Council decided that a settlement that confirmed the City's existing practices would significantly reduce its legal costs to defend the lawsuit. Most importantly, the settlement renews the City's commitment to the human and animal residents of the City to provide superior care of our lost and abandoned pets.