

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

TO: THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: THE CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

DATE: April 1, 1987

NO.

SUBJECT:

REPORT BY CITY MANAGER ON POSSIBLE METHOD OF APPRISING NEIGHBORS WHEN CATS HAVE BEEN PICKED UP BY ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS AFTER BEING SNARED IN CAT TRAPS

PREPARED BY: City Manager

RECOMMENDED ACTION: None required. Information only.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: At its regular meeting of March 18, 1987, Mayor Pro Tempore Olson requested information concerning the notification to cat owners when their pets have been trapped and taken to the City's Animal Shelter. I have reviewed this matter with the Chief of Police and the Animal Control Officer. While there is no simple, inexpensive way to provide individual notification to residences in the area where the cat is trapped, there no doubt will be some benefit from an increased public awareness effort. Contact will be made with the Lodi News-Sentinel to request the publication of periodic reminders to keep the public advised that unlicensed cats brought to the Animal Control Shelter will be destroyed if unclaimed within 72 hours. With regard to licensed cats, the owners are contacted and advised that their pet has been impounded. If we cannot reach the owner by telephone, an Animal Control employee will place a notice on the front door or deposit it in the owner's mailbox. It is the City's policy not to destroy a licensed animal before contact has been made with the owner, regardless of how long that may take. On occasion, an owner, when so notified, will request that the animal be destroyed. To the best of our knowledge, Animal Shelter personnel have never destroyed a licensed animal without the owner's authorization. When animals are reclaimed, the owner must pay a redemption fee of \$5.00. Unlicensed cats may be redeemed by the payment of the redemption fee, plus the purchase of a pet license (\$1.00) and the payment of a penalty fee (\$2.00).

The City currently has available for use by the public, 16 cat traps. During the breeding season (March through August) all 16 are frequently in use. Some are used in more than one location on the same day. It is difficult, if not impossible, to capture cats any other way. Thus, virtually all of the cats who are impounded reach the Animal Shelter as a result of having been trapped. In addition to residents borrowing and using the traps, the City's animal control personnel utilize these devices at the request of merchants, industrialist, packing house operators and the like. Animal control personnel will pick up from residents trapped cats at the rate of as high as 8-10 cats each day. Approximately 90 cats a month (about 1,100 a year) are destroyed at the Animal Shelter. With these kinds of numbers, it is really not feasible to deliver individual notices to dwelling units (houses and/or apartments) in the immediate area where the cat was trapped.

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Obviously, the importance of licensing one's animal (dog or cat) cannot be overemphasized. Unfortunately, some will purchase the pet license, but for one reason or another, will not put the license on the pet. Such an animal when impounded is "unlicensed" and is handled accordingly.

We will discuss this matter with the Lodi News-Sentinel and hopefully the resultant additional publicity regarding the importance of licensing will have a positive affect.

The staff will be prepared to answer any questions Councilmembers may have.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas A. Peterson
City Manager

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