



DeKalb County Government

Manuel J. Maloof Center
1300 Commerce Drive
Decatur, Georgia 30030

Agenda Item

Substitute

File #: 2024-0203
File Status: Action

2/14/2024

Public Hearing: YES NO

Department: Board of Commissioners

SUBJECT:

Commission District(s): District 7

A Resolution Of The Governing Authority Of DeKalb County, Georgia, In Support Of The CEO Of DeKalb County To Perform An External Audit Of DeKalb County Animal Services

Information Contact: Commissioner Lorraine Cochran-Johnson
Phone Number: 404-371-2899

PURPOSE:

To adopt a resolution supporting the CEO Of DeKalb County in conducting an external audit of DeKalb County Animal Services

NEED/IMPACT:

There has been an increased burden and strain to provide shelter for countless animals with decreased resources, thereby stretching Animal Services to critical capacity. Georgia Dept. of Agriculture inspectors have identified problems with the Animal Shelter, including small dog cages, sanitation and housekeeping issues, and clogged air ducts. Although direct efforts by Animal Services staff, animal advocacy groups, and volunteers to alleviate the strain have been taken, multiple accounts, media advisories, and memos continuously reported on a severe shelter space crisis and warnings of the possible use of euthanasia to control overcrowding. An external audit is needed, specifically on the efficiency of operations, overcrowding, enforcement of protective measures for animals, flow of operations for quicker animal adoptions, fostering, and rescue transfers, as well as related policies and procedures to provide formal, concrete recommendations for increased efficiency and effectiveness of Animal Services.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

To approve the resolution and authorize the chief executive officer to execute all necessary documents.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Substitute includes minor formatting and grammatic adjustments. Language Changes in Resolution title and the resolved statements of the resolution.

A RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA, ~~REQUESTING IN SUPPORT OF THE CEO OF DEKALB COUNTY TO PERFORM CONDUCT AN AN~~ EXTERNAL AUDIT OF DEKALB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES

WHEREAS, DeKalb County Animal Services shelters are managed by the LifeLine Animal Project, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with a mission of ending the euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals in County shelters; and

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WHEREAS, On February 26, 2013, the Governing Authority of DeKalb County approved a resolution to outsource Animal Services to the Lifeline Animal Project, Inc. to provide animal shelter operation services; and

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WHEREAS, There has been an increased burden and strain to provide shelter for countless animals with decreased resources, thereby stretching Animal Services to critical capacity; and

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WHEREAS, Georgia Dept. of Agriculture inspectors have identified problems with the Animal Shelter, including small dog cages, sanitation and housekeeping issues, and clogged air ducts; and

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WHEREAS, Although direct efforts by Animal Services staff, animal advocacy groups, and volunteers to alleviate the strain have been taken, multiple accounts, media advisories, and memos continuously reported on a severe shelter space crisis and warnings of the possible use of euthanasia to control overcrowding; and

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WHEREAS, Legislation was presented to the Governing Authority of DeKalb County that passed on September 26, 2023, to increase funding to the Lifeline Animal Project, Inc. for additional resources, shelter operations, and staffing for Animal Services; however, an external audit is needed, specifically on the efficiency of operations, overcrowding, enforcement of protective measures for animals, flow of operations for quicker animal adoptions, fostering, and rescue transfers, as well as related policies and procedures to provide formal, concrete recommendations for increased efficiency and effectiveness; and

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WHEREAS, The Governing Authority of DeKalb County also acknowledges the ongoing concerns still heard from constituents and community groups about the state of the Animal Services shelters and the condition of animals; and

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WHEREAS, The Governing Authority of DeKalb County recognizes the need for specific strategies and recommendations provided by an external, independent auditor.

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Governing Authority of DeKalb County, as follows:

1. The Governing Authority of DeKalb County ~~requests supports~~ the CEO of DeKalb County ~~to in~~ conducting an external audit of Animal Services managed by the Lifeline Animal Project, Inc. to ensure adequate animal services are being carried out, including its operations, policies, and practices. The external audit will assist in identify strategies and recommendations for the improved flow of operations, sheltering of animals, and quality of care for animals.

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2. The auditor is directed to consider and include the following areas for review:

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- a. Cause of recent overcrowding, kennel space shortages, overflow capacity, as well as identify improvements;
- b. The flow of operations for adoptions, fosters, and rescue transfers;
- c. Availability of services to the public for stray animal intake, spay and neuter programs, pet resource services, animal protection, and animal adoption services, as well as identify areas that need improvement and strategies to implement;
- d. Current staffing levels and recommendations for adequate increased staffing;
- e. Veterinary shortages and services sufficient to provide optimal medical treatment and care to best serve the health needs of the animals and the capacity of the facility;
- f. Animal transportation which transports animals to other shelters and rescue organizations, with local and national best practices;
- g. Reporting requirements for potential updates and recommendations for any changes for optimal public transparency;
- h. Current reporting of data for compliance with ordinance requirements;
- i. Process and actions for enforcement of protective measures for animals in accordance with County ordinances and state animal-related laws; and
- j. History and stats of Lifeline Animal Projects, Inc. partnerships with animal advocacy, rescue partners, and volunteer and community groups, and recommend strategies to improve these partnerships.

The Governing Authority of DeKalb County authorizes the Chief Executive Officer of DeKalb County to execute all necessary documents for such purposes. **ADOPTED** by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners, this _____ day of February, 2024.

MEREDA DAVIS JOHNSON
Presiding Officer
Board of Commissioners
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED by the Chief Executive Officer, this ____ day of February, 2024.

MICHAEL L. THURMOND
Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

~~1-102.12.2024~~

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO SUBSTANCE:

BARBARA H. SANDERS-NORWOOD, CCC
County Clerk
Board of Commissioners and
Chief Executive Officer

ZACHARY L. WILLIAMS
Chief Operating Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

VIVIANE H. ERNSTES
County Attorney
DeKalb County, Georgia

**A RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF DEKALB COUNTY,
GEORGIA, IN SUPPORT OF THE CEO OF DEKALB COUNTY TO PERFORM AN
EXTERNAL AUDIT OF DEKALB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES**

WHEREAS, DeKalb County Animal Services shelters are managed by the LifeLine Animal Project, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with a mission of ending the euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals in County shelters; and

WHEREAS, On February 26, 2013, the Governing Authority of DeKalb County approved a resolution to outsource Animal Services to the Lifeline Animal Project, Inc. to provide animal shelter operation services; and

WHEREAS, There has been an increased burden and strain to provide shelter for countless animals with decreased resources, thereby stretching Animal Services to critical capacity; and

WHEREAS, Georgia Dept. of Agriculture inspectors have identified problems with the Animal Shelter, including small dog cages, sanitation and housekeeping issues, and clogged air ducts; and

WHEREAS, Although direct efforts by Animal Services staff, animal advocacy groups, and volunteers to alleviate the strain have been taken, multiple accounts, media advisories, and memos continuously reported on a severe shelter space crisis and warnings of the possible use of euthanasia to control overcrowding; and

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WHEREAS, The Governing Authority of DeKalb County also acknowledges the ongoing concerns still heard from constituents and community groups about the state of the Animal Services shelters and the condition of animals; and

WHEREAS, The Governing Authority of DeKalb County recognizes the need for specific strategies and recommendations provided by an external, independent auditor.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Governing Authority of DeKalb County, as follows:

1. The Governing Authority of DeKalb County supports the CEO of DeKalb County in conducting an external audit of Animal Services managed by the Lifeline Animal Project, Inc. to ensure adequate animal services are being carried out, including its operations, policies, and practices. The external audit will assist in identify strategies and recommendations for the improved flow of operations, sheltering of animals, and quality of care for animals.
2. The auditor is directed to consider and include the following areas for review:
 - a. Cause of recent overcrowding, kennel space shortages, overflow capacity, as well as identify improvements;

- b. The flow of operations for adoptions, fosters, and rescue transfers;
- c. Availability of services to the public for stray animal intake, spay and neuter programs, pet resource services, animal protection, and animal adoption services, as well as identify areas that need improvement and strategies to implement;
- d. Current staffing levels and recommendations for adequate increased staffing;
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- i. Process and actions for enforcement of protective measures for animals in accordance with County ordinances and state animal-related laws; and
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MEREDA DAVIS JOHNSON
Presiding Officer
Board of Commissioners
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED by the Chief Executive Officer, this _____ day of February, 2024.

MICHAEL L. THURMOND
Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO SUBSTANCE:

BARBARA H. SANDERS-NORWOOD, CCC
County Clerk
Board of Commissioners and
Chief Executive Officer

ZACHARY L. WILLIAMS
Chief Operating Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

VIVIANE H. ERNSTES
County Attorney
DeKalb County, Georgia