



Item: Resolution 9749, Creating an Animal **Ordinance**/Shelter
Operations/Enforcement Advisory Committee

From: City Manager's Office

Initiated By: City Staff

Presented By: Cheryl Patton, Assistant City Manager

Action Requested: Adopt or Deny Resolution 9749 as amended

Suggested Motion:

1. Commissioner moves:

“I move that the City Commission (adopt/deny) Resolution 9749 as amended.”

2. Mayor calls for a second, discussion, inquiries from the public, and calls the vote.

Background: On May 20, 2008, staff recommended the adoption of Resolution 9749 creating an Animal Shelter/Enforcement Advisory Committee to assist the Commission in a variety of issues relating to the animal shelter and animal control. The action on the resolution was postponed until June 3, 2008. At the June 3, City Commission meeting the resolution was again postponed to allow Commissioner Bronson an opportunity to draft amendments to the resolution that might be acceptable to the Commission. The resolution, as amended, is included in this agenda for City Commission consideration.

Additional Background: The City of Great Falls did not renew a contract with the Humane Society of Cascade County (HSCC) and resumed operation of the City owned Animal Shelter and all municipal animal code enforcement duties in July of 2007 following several months of attempting to resolve citizen complaints and performance issues with the contractor. The decision by the City has been a contentious and divisive issue in the community.

The City Commission has advised the community that it does not intend for the City to continue to operate the shelter in the future but intends to contract for shelter operation when an acceptable contractor can be found willing to provide the level of service desired by the City. In the meantime, the animal shelter and all animal code enforcement operations are being provided by the police department. Staff is working to assess the accurate level of financial support which

will be necessary for either the City to continue to provide the services or for support of a contractor.

The idea of an Animal Advisory Committee was raised by Elizabeth Baker, the Special Examiner hired by the Commission to review complaints at the shelter since the City had taken over operation. The makeup of the Committee was suggested to facilitate future decisions regarding the animal ordinance and enforcement; as well as the operation of the City's animal shelter. The idea was to include representation from the active community groups with animal interests.

Concurrences: NA

Fiscal Impact: The fiscal impact of creating an Animal Ordinance/Shelter Advisory Committee would be minimal with staff time the most significant City expense.

However, the annual fiscal impact of the City continuing to operate the Animal Shelter and providing animal enforcement is anticipated to be \$500,000 for FY 2009. The City is experiencing related revenue for FY 2008 of \$136,000.

When a new shelter is built, there will be a need for the City to participate in the cost of the construction. The amount requested by the Animal Foundation is \$1.5 million. This will not include annual operating expenses.

Alternatives: The City Commission can choose to adopt, deny or further amend Resolution 9749 as amended.

Attachments/Exhibits: Resolution 9749 Amended
June 6, 2008 Memorandum from Commissioner Bronson