

Town of Yucca Valley
TOWN COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

To: Honorable Mayor & Town Council
From: Janet Yochmowitz, Administrative Assistant III
 Shane Stueckle, Deputy Town Manager
Date: March 26, 2025
Meeting Date: April 1, 2025

Subject: Animal Shelter Operational Review Update One

Recommendation:

That the Town Council receive and files the Animal Shelter Operational Review Update One and provides direction as deemed necessary.

Order of Procedure:

- Request Staff Report
- Request Public Comment
- Council Discussion/Questions of Staff
- Motion/Second
- Discussion on Motion
- Call the Question

Discussion:

At the March 4, 2025 Town Council meeting, the Town Council directed staff to complete an operational review of the Town's Animal Shelter operations. To keep the Town Council and public informed during the operational review, Town staff will be providing interim updates on April 1, 2025 and May 6, 2025, with the final report submission planned for June 3, 2025.

At the February 18, 2024 Town Council meeting, the Town Council received public comments including concerns and observations regarding the Town's Animal Shelter operations. While the comments were varied and diverse, some central themes revolved around the Shelter's animal intake processes, adoption availability notification process, canine adoption rates, canine euthanasia rates, community outreach and volunteer opportunities. Due to the item not being on the meeting agenda, Town Council was prohibited by State law from discussing the item.

The Town is confident that Animal Care and Control facility and staff adhere to all state, county, and local regulations, and that the Shelter staff is fully dedicated to the well-being of the animals served.

The Town's Animal Shelter is an open-admission shelter that is required to provide intake of stray animals regardless of age, health condition, pedigree, or level of aggression, and operates at the Town's newest-built public facility completed in 2014. As an example of

the requirement for the intake of stray animals, in calendar year 2023, 61.15% of total dogs accepted at the shelter were either dropped off by dog owners or were left in the outdoor drop kennels by anonymous donors. Only 24.48% of total dogs were impounded by Animal Control Officers.

Focused operational reviews can be helpful to confirm or correct statistics, affirm or clarify operational practices, evaluate procedures for consistency with industry best practices, consider modifications that may improve desired outcomes, and provide communication and transparency to the public. Therefore, the Town management team has commenced an Operational Review of the Town's Animal Shelter operations.

1. Scope of the Operational Review:

The operational review will encompass, but not be limited to, the following areas:

- Process Analysis: Evaluation of existing workflows, procedures, and service delivery models.
- Resource Utilization: Assessment of staffing levels, equipment, technology, and budgetary resources.
- Performance Metrics: Review of key performance indicators (KPIs) and data analysis to measure effectiveness and efficiency.
- Technology Integration: Examination of current technology usage and potential for further automation and digital solutions.
- Compliance and Best Practices: Ensuring adherence to relevant state, county and local regulations and alignment with industry best practices.
- Internal Communication: Assessment of how information flows within the department and other Town departments.
- Training and Development: Review of current training programs and identification of needs for professional development.
- Customer/Community Feedback: Analysis of feedback received from residents and stakeholders to identify areas for improvement in service delivery.

2. Methodology:

The operational review will be conducted using a combination of the following methods:

- Data collection and analysis.
- Interviews with staff and stakeholders.
- Review of customer and resident feedback.
- Benchmarking against comparable municipalities.
- Review of relevant regulations, policies and procedures.

3. Timeline:

The operational review has begun and will be completed within 90 days. A preliminary report outlining initial findings and recommendations will be returned to the Town Council shortly thereafter.

- Week 1-2: Planning and data collection.
- Week 3-10: Interviews, process mapping, and analysis.

- Week 11-12: Final analysis, recommendations, and report compilation.

4. Expected Outcomes:

The operational review is expected to yield the following outcomes.

- Development of actionable recommendations for operational enhancements.
- Identification of areas for process improvement and efficiency gains.
- Optimization of resource allocation and cost savings/requirements.
- Enhanced service delivery and improved community satisfaction.
- Strengthened internal communication and collaboration.
- Improved data driven decision making.

This approach will ensure that the Town Council and public are provided a comprehensive review of data, policies and procedures from which to evaluate appropriate further action and/or policy modifications.

Without appropriate review and assessment, abrupt operational changes may lead to unintended and undesired outcomes.

Alternatives

None recommended.

Fiscal Impact

None with this item.

Alternatives:

NA

Fiscal Impact:

NA