

Public Safety Committee Minutes
October 7, 2020– 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Bill Peck; Committee Members John Lant, Jack Lawler, Jean Raymond, Matt Veitch, Mo Wright; Chairman of the Board Preston Allen; Chad Cooke, Matt Rose, County Administrator; Steve Dorsey, Mike Hartnett, County Attorney; Penny Heritage, Animal Shelter; Michael Zurlo, Rick Castle, Sheriff; Andrew Blumenberg, Public Defender; Karen Heggen, District Attorney; Carl Zeilman, Emergency Services.

Chairman Peck called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Lant, the minutes of the September 8, 2020 meeting were approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Lant, seconded by Mr. Veitch, to authorize a temporary amendment to the administration of the Animal Shelter Trust and Agency Fund. Unanimous.

Ms. Heritage said that as discussed at last month's meeting, she is requesting an amendment to Resolution 254-2017 which states that annual disbursements from the Animal Shelter Trust and Agency Fund shall be limited to 80% of the donations received in the prior fiscal year. The Shelter is not requesting a disbursement this year due to Covid delays and therefore the request is for an amendment to allow disbursements in 2021 for up to 80% of the donations received in 2019 and 2020. Mrs. Raymond asked what the project is. Ms. Heritage said that it has become two projects. One is an outdoor structure for sun shade, rain, snow shelter for dog walking. The other project is the replacement of a pressure washing cleaning system that can incorporate cleaning chemicals that is at the end of its useful life. Mrs. Raymond expressed concern over the use of these funds. Mrs. Raymond said that the use of donated funds was understood to be used for special projects only as opposed to operating maintenance, salaries etc. Mrs. Raymond believes that something like a cleaning system is part of the general operations of the Shelter. Mr. Peck agreed that it was the intentions of the donations when it first started that the funds would be used towards special projects. Mrs. Raymond said that she leaves it to the judgement of the Chairman to work with Ms. Heritage to either come up with a larger outdoor shelter, or something else to spend the funds on.

A motion was made by Mr. Lawler, seconded by Mr. Lant, to authorize renewal municipal contracts for Animal Shelter services. Unanimous.

Ms. Heritage said that as discussed last month, the request will include the removal of provision for the Animal Shelter to provide back up for Town Animal Control officers. Most Towns already have working relationships with adjoining Towns for ACO back up. The remainder of the agreement would remain unchanged.

A motion was made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Lant, committee approval to increase the Animal Shelter Impoundment Fee effective January 1, 2021. Unanimous.

Mr. Peck said that Ms. Heritage circulated an email to the entire board regarding the impoundment fee. Ms. Heritage said that there was a lot of input from different Supervisors from the email that was sent out. The current fee is the minimum in Ag. and Markets Law at \$10 for the first offence. It was proposed to increase this to \$40 which is what the Shelter Service fee is for bringing in a dog, this way it would be a wash. Mr. Peck said that the general consensus he got from the emails and the summary was to increase the fee so that the Towns were not being hit by the impoundment fee. Ms. Heritage's concern was that due to this additional cost, more animals would be left at the Shelter. Mr. Peck has requested that Ms. Heritage track this monthly to see the results. Mr. Peck said that the increase in this fee will eliminate the additional charge back to the Towns.

A motion was made by Mr. Lant, seconded by Mr. Wright, to authorize the Chairman to enter into an amended agreement with Forensic Medical Services to increase professional services fees for various autopsy related services effective January 1, 2021. Unanimous.

Mr. Cooke said that Dr. Sikirika had reached out to the County regarding the request for an amendment for his services. Mr. Cooke said that the last time autopsy rates were increased was in 2017 when the fees went from \$900 to \$1,000. This request is to increase the fee to \$1,200 per autopsy. There are some other miscellaneous services provided by Forensic Medical Services such as scene investigations, with very minimal changes in those rates. Mr. Cooke said that it is difficult to put a budget number on this as it is dependent on the number of cases. Historically, \$100K to \$115K is spent on autopsies per year. Mr. Cooke said that they are working on the tentative budget and believes they have the funds to cover this increase in 2021.

Mr. Peck said that he, the Sheriff's Department and Administration are reviewing the next steps for Executive Order 203 compliance and it will be taken care of shortly. The Sheriff, Undersheriff are working through the details with the County Attorney and the Chairman of the Board.

On a motion made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mrs. Raymond, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese Connolly
Deputy Clerk of the Board