



City of Pflugerville

Legislation Text

File #: ORD-0707, Version: 2

Approving an ordinance on second reading with the caption reading: An ordinance of the City of Pflugerville, Texas, amending Chapter 90 Animal Welfare Ordinance of the City of Pflugerville, Texas, Code of Ordinances, approving fees to be charged by Pflugerville Animal Welfare Services, as authorized by state statute; repealing all ordinances to the extent they are in conflict; providing severability; and providing an effective date.

Following the COVID pandemic 'great adoption,' many pet owners returned to the workplace and began to surrender their animals to the shelter in what has been coined "the great relinquishment." As people contact the Pflugerville Animal Shelter to give their pets, these owner surrenders have a significant impact on shelter operations as space needs to be reserved for standard shelter capacity management and operations. The Pflugerville Animal Welfare Services (PAWS) shelter exists to provide a place for stray animals and seizure cases. The shelter provides owner relinquishments/surrenders as a service.

Due to an increase in owner surrenders, the proposed fee increase is requested to cover the cost the City incurs because someone no longer wants a pet. The higher fee is necessary to cover costs and keep the shelter capacity manageable. The proposed fee changes encourage residents to attempt to rehome their pet first. Owner surrender pets cost the City because of the necessary vaccinations and preparation for getting an animal ready for adoption, plus the cost of housing and care until the animal is rehomed. The proposed rates increase the cost for unaltered animals to cover the cost of the necessary spay/neuter for the animal to be adopted from the City. An increase for high-risk animals is requested because a high-risk animal is one that may not socialize well with other pets, requires additional behavioral training to enhance its adoptability or it has an ongoing health issue which typically leads to a longer shelter stay. High-risk animals have a significant cost to the City as they take longer to adopt and, often, the PAWS staff must dedicate additional time to tend to the animal's temperament. The proposed fees better align with the true cost to the City to get animals that have a home into a new home.

The shelter has had up to a four month wait list for animals for a surrender due to space constraints. To help homeowners find a home for their animal, the City launched a new adoption website platform in 2022 to help homeowners post for free if their animal is available for rehoming. Before someone can surrender an animal with PAWS, they must first post their animal to the rehoming site prior to their surrender date. More than 50 animals have been successfully rehomed without shelter surrender this past year through the new program and those are animals that go directly from owner to owner and avoid entering the shelter.

Proposed fees:

- Altered animal from \$25 per animal to \$75
- Unaltered from \$50 to \$150 (in line with cost to spay/neuter and prepare the animal for adoption)
- High-risk animal (temperament with other dogs or a health issue) from \$50 to \$150

Prior City Council Action

City Council approved the ordinance on first reading on April 25, 2023.

Deadline for City Council Action

Action is requested May 9, 2023.

Funding Expected: Revenue Expenditure N/A

Budgeted Item: Yes No N/A

Amount: _____

1295 Form Required? Yes No

Legal Review Required: N/A Required Date Completed: 4/11/2023

Supporting documents attached:

PAWS Ordinance 2023

Recommended Action

Staff recommend implementing increased owner surrender fees to align with the costs of the owner surrender program and encourage pet owners to seek alternate homes for their pets before approaching the shelter.