



COUNTY OF YOLO

YOLO ANIMAL SERVICES PLANNING AGENCY JPA

Bill Biasi, Mayor, City of Winters
Chair

Date: February 19, 2025

To: Yolo Animal Services Planning Agency JPA (YASPA JPA)

From: Leslie Lindbo, Director Community Services

Subject: Receive update on the background and recent activity of the Yolo County Animal Services Planning JPA; consider whether there is collective interest to move forward with formation of an Operational JPA; and consider next steps.

Background

Prior to the formation of the Yolo Animal Services Planning JPA. There was a city/county Animal Services Working Group that met regularly and involved community stakeholders to discuss animal services operations and improvements for shelter facilities. In 2013 a “Yolo County Animal Services Governance Study” was completed in partnership by the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program, and the Yolo Local Agency Formation Commission. Among its findings and recommendations, it identified the establishment of a joint powers agency (JPA) as a means to provide participating jurisdictions with increased control over budget and operational decision making.

Throughout 2018 and 2019 the Working Group met to discuss the governance structure, with a shared interest in developing a Joint Powers Authority to create a governance entity that would have:

- Operational and budgetary control over animal services operations
- Authority to make improvements to shelter facilities

The County and the four cities, in consultation with UC Davis, agreed to the formation of a JPA. The Animal Shelter Working Group participants agreed that the JPA start as a planning agency only, and that the operational and program options be studied first, before proceeding to consideration of facility options. There were no preconceived plans regarding any type of program, model, facility or otherwise. On February 25, 2020, the Yolo County Board of Supervisors and the cities of Davis, Winters and Woodland formed the YASPA JPA. West Sacramento joined the JPA in November 2023. The purpose of this body was to function as a planning JPA which would explore new options for Animal Services and potentially develop an operational JPA to take over the provision / governance of Animal Services. However, delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022) created a barrier to early progress.

On May 26, 2022, the YASPA JPA adopted the following vision, mission, and goals:

Vision: Animal Services in Yolo County are an adequately funded and fiscally sustainable community and public-private partnership that facilitates the best outcomes for animals and people

Mission: Building upon a foundation of community partnership, the mission of the Yolo county Animal Services Planning JPA is to create an adequately funded and fiscally sustainable governance structure for animal services in Yolo County that facilitates positive outcomes for animal and human health and well-being through education, outreach, and implementing best practices and efficient delivery systems for

animal control and sheltering, including an animal shelter that will facilitate these goals on a long term basis.

Goals:

- Animal and Human Health and Well-Being
- Education & outreach
- Adequate funding and fiscal sustainability
- Best practices in animal control and sheltering

On December 6, 2022, the Board directed Animal Services to be moved from the Sheriff's office to the County Administrator's Office (CAO) with the intention the CAO would take responsibility for Animal Services to address operational concerns, strengthen key relationships and determine a permanent placement for the division. On January 23, 2024, Animal Services was placed in the Department of Community Services (DCS). This did not change anything with the YASPA JPA, however new leadership and management structure provided an opportunity for refreshed leadership involvement with staff. Furthermore, the County allocated significant funding to make improvements to the existing shelter and initiated improvements to a neighboring building for a future community spay / neuter clinic.

After development of the Mission, Vision and Goals, the Planning JPA has met regularly to receive staff updates but has not focused their efforts on implementation of an Operational JPA. As such, at the January 23, 2024 Board of Supervisors meeting, staff requested the YASPA JPA to formally consider whether there is still a collective interest in creating a shared governance model. In response, on February 14, 2024, Planning JPA discussed the Operational JPA shared governance model and determined it would be a "heavy lift" and decided to see how Animal Services works under the management of the Department of Community Services.

During the last 12 months, since Animal Services has been placed in the Department of Community Services, the Division of Animal Services has accomplished the following (among other things):

- Hired permanent veterinarian staffing, which improved animal spay/neuter and medical treatments
- New roof (in progress)
- Improved sound dampening in the dog area
- Installed a new HVAC system in the shelter building
- Made improvements to the dog exercise areas
- Contracted with an animal licensing service which improved dog licensing and is increasing revenue
- Received numerous grants, including funding for Clinic in a Can to replace the Big Fix Rig
- Installing a new roof (in progress)

The YASPA JPA continues to meet regularly (typically every other month). The Planning JPA has made meaningful progress as an advisory body by advocating for improvements, by serving as a forum for communication and collaboration, and by recognizing and supporting the work of staff. Additionally, the meetings serve as a forum for regular staff updates, and formal public comment. It also supplements the monthly city/county staff working group meetings.

The YASPA JPA has no budget or staff, and does not have decision-making authority for County staff, including Animal Services staff. The JPA may make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, however only the Board of Supervisors may direct staff and make decisions on operations, service levels or capital improvements.

Next Steps:

As the group now begins a new year, staff recommends the JPA once-again consider its collective interest in creating an Operational JPA, that would take over the provisions and governance of Animal Services. If intent exists, consider next steps, including resource needs.

If no intent to form a new operational governance model exists, consider a future agenda item to discuss next steps for the Planning JPA, such as:

Review and revise the Planning JPA purpose to align with current practices or new desired outcomes, or consider options for other stakeholder engagement models that would better meet the current practices of the group.

Attachments:

YASPA JPA Agreement

Presentation Slides