



MEDIA RELEASE

Sahuarita Town Council to consider contract with Humane Society of Southern Arizona

SAHUARITA, Ariz. — The Sahuarita Town Council will consider contracting with the Humane Society of Southern Arizona for animal sheltering services at the Council’s regular meeting on May 8, 2017. The meeting will start at 6:30 p.m. at Council Chambers, 375 West Sahuarita Center Way. The Town of Sahuarita’s contract with Pima County’s Pima Animal Care Center (PACC) expires June 30, 2017.

If the Council approves a contract with the Humane Society of Southern Arizona (HSSA), HSSA will begin providing animal sheltering services on July 1. The Town routinely evaluates contracts and services and explores options to ensure fiscal responsibility and accountability and, in the case of animal control, animal welfare, public health and safety. Town staff conducted research and exercised due diligence in its efforts to secure animal services that would best serve Town residents.

The Town proposed a new PACC contract to Pima County in March that Town staff believed more closely represented the enforcement of the Town’s Animal Control code, but the county rejected it, declining to continue providing shelter, enforcement and licensing services to the Town. The Town also approached The Animal League of Green Valley about providing shelter services. TALGV Board has very carefully reviewed and evaluated this opportunity and has concluded that they do not have the capability to handle it effectively at this time.

“We were very interested in working with a reputable, respected business that operates right here within our Town and already provides a wonderful service to our residents,” said Sahuarita Town Manager Kelly Udall. “Although disappointed, we understand and respect that right now may not be the best timing for them to take on additional services.”

The Town is in the process of hiring an Animal Control/Community Services Officer who will enforce the state’s and the Town’s animal control regulations, including picking up stray animals and issuing warnings and citations in cases of neglect, cruelty, bites, leash violations or noise.

If the Council approves the HSSA contract, HSSA will accept, and provide shelter services for, those animals brought into its main shelter at 3450 N. Kelvin Blvd. in Tucson by the Sahuarita Animal Control Officer or Police Officers.

Owner-surrendered animals may still be taken to The Animal League of Green Valley, PACC or HSSA. Sahuarita town residents will be asked to schedule an appointment to drop off owner-relinquished animals at HSSA. Owner-relinquished drop-offs are charged a one-time fee of \$45, to be paid by the owner. This fee covers vaccinations, microchip, health check and spay/neuter, if needed. Currently, owners are not required to pay a fee to PACC and the Town of Sahuarita is billed for that.

In addition to enforcement aimed at improving community response and service, the Town will provide animal licensing services. Sahuarita pet owners will be able to license their animals online through the Town’s website or by visiting the Anamax Park Recreation Center at 17501 S. Camino De Las Quintas.

Mayor Tom Murphy believes this will be a win-win for the residents of Sahuarita. “Providing our own animal control program will allow us to ensure our residents are getting the best service for their tax dollars,” Mayor Murphy said. “We will have our own enforcement officer who will be able to act effectively and efficiently, while communicating with the animal owners in a more timely manner. Likewise, we believe that providing animal licensing for our residents will bring a level of customer service that they expect and deserve.”

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