



CITY OF UNIVERSITY PLACE

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University Place will do its own animal control starting in 2006

The University Place City Council approved a new contract with the Humane Society for Tacoma and Pierce County at its Nov. 7 meeting. The \$41,826 contract takes effect Jan. 1, 2006, and pays only for shelter of stray, impounded and unwanted domestic animals turned in by University Place citizens and its police and code enforcement officers. The Humane Society will no longer be in the animal control business, but it will continue to issue pet licenses for UP residents who adopt animals at the organization's facility in Tacoma. As part of the deal, the Humane Society will keep \$2 of each license fee paid for adopted animals. After Jan 1, 2006, UP residents will be directed to purchase licenses and license renewals at the city's police department in the Public Safety Building, 3631 74th Ave. W. The Humane Society will get no part of license fees paid at the police department.

University Place will spend an estimated \$160,000 per year on animal control in the city starting in 2006. The city expects to bring in \$80,000 of that from pet licenses and the remaining \$80,000 will come from the city's general fund.

"Once we get a good handle on the expenditures and the revenues we will come back after the first year and budget for actual expenditures and revenues, but for now we are putting in the \$80,000 as a place holder," said Assistant City Manager Rob Karlinsey.

UP looked at the option of partnering with other cities to save money, but came to the conclusion that it could provide animal control services itself at a lower cost and with more local control.

"We really took a look at all the options and I think the best option that we have is in house," Police Chief Jim Andrews said "It's going to allow us some flexibility and it's also going to allow us to enhance our code enforcement, because for what we were going to get from the other cities for one three-quarter-time person we are going to end up with two full time employees that will be doing code enforcement and animal control."

One UP code enforcement officer is currently trained to collect and transfer dangerous, stray and unwanted domestic animals to the Humane Society where they will be held for 15 days and then humanely disposed of if no one adopts them or no owner claims them. UP police officers are also now equipped with catch poles to capture stray or dangerous animals in the city. The city is fitting a steel cage into the bed of a pickup truck to use for the transfers. In cases of dangerous dogs or potentially dangerous dogs, the city will be responsible for holding its own hearings to determine the fate of these animals.

For more information, please contact Assistant City Manager Rob Karlinsey at (253) 460-2516 or rkarlinsey@cityofup.com.