Animal Services Audit
March 2010

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Animal Services Audit
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ANIMAL SERVICES AUDIT

Office of the City Auditor

Patrice Randle, CPA
City Auditor

Report #09-16 ***March 5, 2010***

Executive Summary

The new facility provides a more customer friendly environment and improved physical workplace conditions

Limited resources are used to encourage responsible pet ownership

Opportunities for Improvement

- ***Develop strategic plan with measurable goals and objectives***
- ***Full utilization of animal management system***
- ***Maximize opportunities to promote animal adoptions***
- ***Retrieve and monitor call statistics from recently purchased enterprise telephone system***

As part of the Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Audit Plan, the City Auditor's Office conducted an audit of the Animal Services Division (Animal Services) of the Community Services Department. The audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. The objectives of the audit were to determine whether Animal Services:

- is meeting its stated mission, goals and objectives effectively;
- has made appropriate adjustments to staffing based on changes resulting from moving to a new facility;
- is effectively utilizing available information systems;
- has created a workplace environment that attracts, develops and engages a talented workforce and encourages retention of its employees; and,
- has adequately addressed recommendations made by a consultant during a review completed in early 2008.

Animal Services moved to its new facility in January 2009. Based on citizen reaction and employee survey responses, the move to the new facility has created a more customer friendly environment and has improved physical working conditions. It appears that Animal Services is effectively using its resources to encourage responsible pet ownership. By hiring a licensed veterinarian and equipping the new Animal Services Center with a surgical room, the City of Arlington now ensures that adopted animals are spayed or neutered before leaving the Animal Services Center. Also, the City of Arlington partnered with Respect-A-Bull twice during Fiscal Year 2009 to offer free city licenses, rabies vaccines, microchips, and

spay/neuter services to pit bull owners. Pit bull owners who received the complimentary services also were required to attend an educational class regarding responsible pet ownership.

The City's volunteer program became more structured after creating a Community Services Educator position and coordinating volunteer efforts through the Workforce Services Department. Citizens who volunteer at the Animal Services Center are asked to sign-in and out on a volunteer log. The volunteer log is then used to determine the number of volunteers and volunteer hours. Based on Community Services' records, 127 citizens volunteered at the Animal Services Center between January and June 2009. This represents an increase above the number of volunteers noted in the City Auditor's Office December 2008 Staffing Analysis Report. Based on feedback received from volunteers, the number of volunteers could have exceeded 127. Several volunteers indicated that did not always sign in and out to document their volunteer hours.

The City Auditor's Office noted that staffing levels remained relatively consistent throughout Fiscal Year 2009 and were projected to remain the same for Fiscal Year 2010. While the City Auditor's Office noted that Animal Services has adjusted work schedules and staff workload to complete its duties with limited resources, the division appears to rely on community service workers and volunteers to accomplish work that would normally be performed by paid employees.

The City Auditor's Office noted that several opportunities exist for Animal Services to improve its operating efficiencies. Rather than fully utilizing PetPoint, the animal management information system that has been provided to the City in exchange for promoting PetPoint's ShelterCare insurance program and implementing PetPoint's 24PetWatch Microchip Recovery program, Animal Services staff manually tracks controlled substances, and records customer payments onto pre-numbered, manual cash receipts.

Through audit observation and the results of an employee survey, the City Auditor's Office concluded that opportunities exist for the Animal Services Division to create a workplace environment that attracts, develops and engages a talented workforce. Animal Services has not developed a short-term nor long-term strategic plan, with measurable goals and objectives that could possibly resolve issues negatively impacting staff morale.

The findings and recommendations are discussed in the Detailed Audit Findings section of this report.

Audit Scope and Methodology

The audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. The following methodology was used in completing the audit.

- Interviewed various Animal Service personnel within administration, field, kennel and veterinary operations.
- Identified and tested key internal controls over cash receipting, controlled substances, bite, barking, dangerous and at-large investigations and animal euthanasia.
- Reviewed PetPoint to identify functionality used by Animal Services.
- Reviewed PetPoint data from February 2008 through October 2009.
- Observed administrative, field, kennel and veterinary operations.
- Surveyed other municipalities regarding adoption fees, euthanasia practices and impoundment fees.
- Surveyed volunteers to obtain feedback regarding their volunteer experience.
- Updated the staffing analysis performed by the City Auditor's Office in December 2008.
- Created an employee satisfaction survey to solicit feedback from both Animal Services employees and Code Enforcement Division employees.
- Reviewed the draft consultant report and response completed in early 2008 to identify if appropriate actions had been taken in response to the recommendations.

Background

Animal Services is a division of the Community Services Department. The goal of the division is to encourage responsible pet ownership by offering licensing programs, field enforcement services, and educational programs for Arlington citizens. According to the division's website, the care of stray and unwanted animals and the eradication of rabies from the community's animal population are critical to their successful operation.

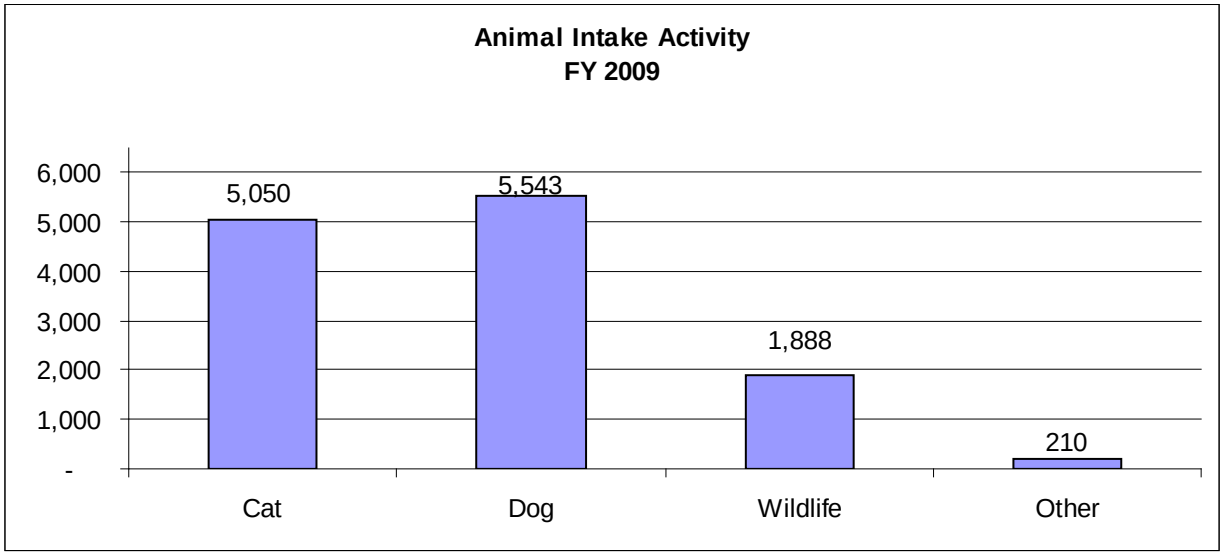
The Animal Services Center is located at 1000 S.E. Green Oaks Blvd. The 19,950 square-foot facility is equipped with 114 canine kennels and 118 feline cages. The Animal Services Center is open to the public Monday through Friday, from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Emergency and after-hours field personnel are available Monday through Friday, from 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m. and from 4:00 p.m. on Saturday until 8:00 a.m. on Monday.

Animal Services staff is responsible for administering and enforcing applicable animal laws and regulations of the State of Texas and City ordinances pertaining to animals. Arlington residents are assisted with stray animals, rabies mitigation, dangerous animal investigation, wildlife/exotics, animal nuisances, loose livestock, animal cruelty, injured animals and deceased animal pickup. While an Arlington residency is required for these services, there is no residency requirement for animal adoptions or to reclaim pets. Animal Services staff is organized into four

sections: Administration (which includes Dispatch), Field Operations, Kennel Operations, and Veterinary Operations.

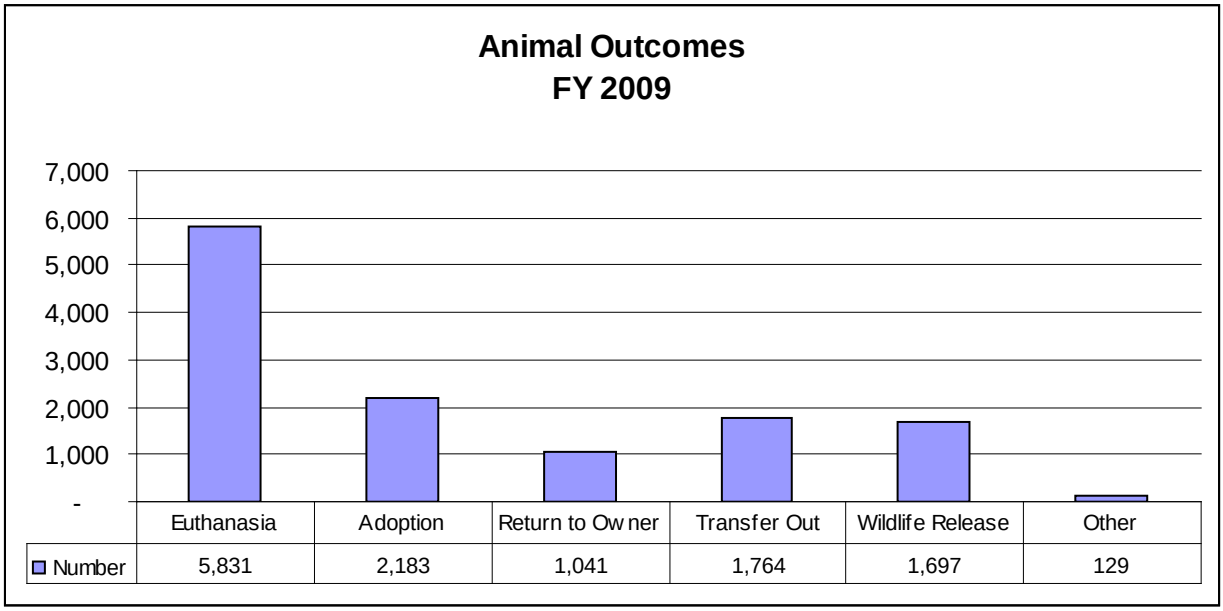
Animal Intake and Outcomes

Over 12,000 animals were recorded as incoming to the Animal Services Center or rescued in the field by Animal Services in Fiscal Year 2009. The following chart summarizes animal intake by species and type.



Source: PetPoint

During Fiscal Year 2009, the following outcomes were recorded in PetPoint.



Source: PetPoint

Data within PetPoint indicates that Animal Services has not seen a substantial increase in adoptions or the live release rate since moving to the new Animal Services Center. It is possible that current economic conditions have had a negative impact on adoptions, owner reclamations and the number of outgoing transfers to partner organizations. The following chart shows the live release rates for dogs and cats over various periods since the inception of PetPoint. The City Auditor's Office did not compare additional periods because PetPoint has only been utilized since February 2008.

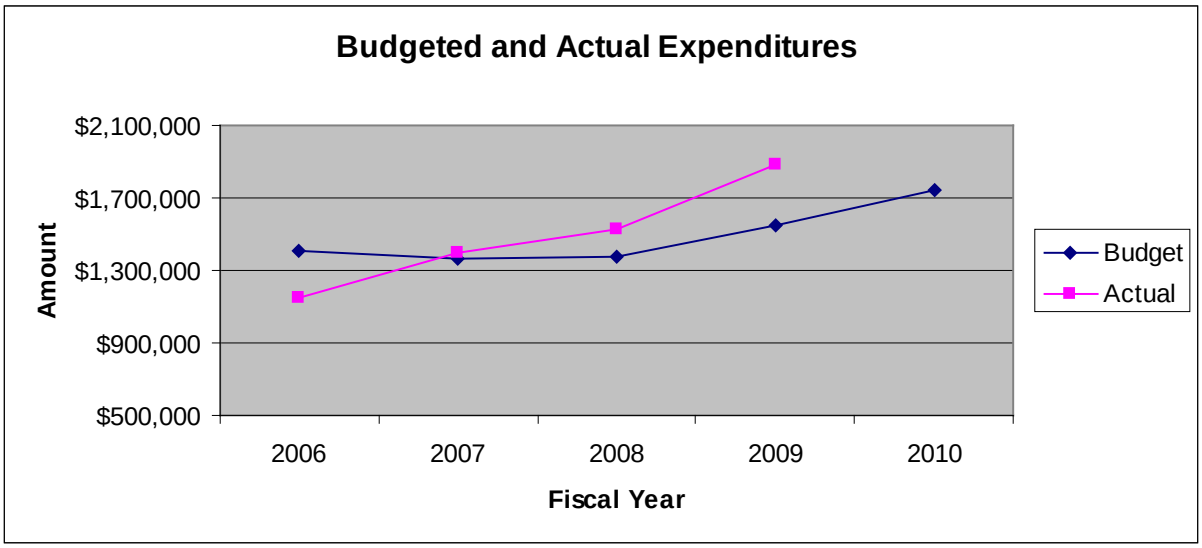
Live Release Rates (Dog and Cats Only)

	Dogs			Cats		
	4/1/08 to 9/30/08	**10/1/08 to 3/31/09**	**4/1/09 to 9/30/09**	**4/1/08 to 9/30/08**	**10/1/08 to 3/31/09**	**4/1/09 to 9/30/09**
Animal Intake	3,162	2,570	2,901	2,935	1,995	3,021
Outcomes						
a Adoptions	799	752	737	357	312	353
b Returned to Owners	535	457	510	43	44	27
c Transfers	296	481	549	280	326	327
d Euthanasia	1,355	826	1,056	2,008	1,258	2,280
e Died in Shelter Care	45	25	17	27	18	25
f Total Outcomes	3,030	2,541	2,869	2,715	1,958	3,012
Live Release Rate sum(a..c) / (f - e)	54.6%	67.2%	63.0%	25.3%	35.2%	23.7%

Source: PetPoint

Budget

Over the last three fiscal years, Animal Services has exceeded its budgeted expenditures, as indicated in the following chart. The Fiscal Year 2010 budget represents a 24% increase from Fiscal Year 2006. However, the Fiscal Year 2010 budget is still less than actual Fiscal Year 2009 expenditures. Increased costs over the years have resulted from the creation of a City Veterinarian position, position reclassifications and additional supplies needed to perform in-house spay and neuter surgeries.



Source: Annual Operating Budgets

The following chart summarizes actual Animal Services revenue from Fiscal Year 2006 through Fiscal Year 2009 and presents budgeted revenue amounts for Fiscal Year 2009 and Fiscal Year 2010. Revenue collected by Animal Services increased in Fiscal Year 2009 as a result of new revenue received for sterilizations and other veterinary procedures performed at the new Animal Services Center. Although revenue increased from prior fiscal years, actual revenue did not meet projected totals. Revenues anticipated from sterilization and veterinary procedures were less than expected because opening the new center was delayed. For Fiscal Year 2010, additional license revenue was budgeted based on a planned outsourcing agreement.

ANIMAL SERVICES REVENUE
FY 2006 to FY 2010

Description	2006 Actual	2007 Actual	2008 Actual	2009 Budget	2009 Actual	2010 Budget
Animal Awareness/Safety Program	$ 6,600	$ 4,250	$ 4,205	$ 3,000	$ 3,290	$ 3,000
Adoption Fees	16,808	19,685	21,488	126,630	21,592	20,000
Sterilization Fees	-	-	-	-	47,790	128,000
Impoundment Fees	35,945	44,085	57,395	40,000	51,678	40,000
Dog and Cat License	54,021	53,638	63,115	60,000	58,329	251,721
Animal Microchip	11,910	12,430	15,162	12,000	17,773	13,000
Animal Vaccines	11,145	12,285	15,652	140,483	59,150	49,000
Total Revenue	$ 136,429	$ 146,373	$ 177,017	$ 382,113	$ 259,602	$ 504,721

Source: Lawson financial system

In addition to budgeted revenue, the Animal Services Division receives monetary and non-monetary donations that are used towards operations. Monetary donations totaling approximately $10,832 were received from citizens along with mailing water payments from January 2009 through September 2009. In addition to these monetary donations, management indicated that since relocating to the new Animal Services Center, the Friends of Arlington Animal Services has donated batteries for hand-held radios and infrastructure for an additional kiosk. The Animal Services Center has also received food donations.

Staffing

The total number of authorized positions (23) remained unchanged since the December 2008 City Auditor's Office staffing analysis. However, management did reassign staff.

Two of eight (8) field Code Compliance Officers (CCOs) are scheduled to rotate and assist with day-to-day kennel operations. By rotating two field CCOs to kennel operations on a daily basis, no more than six (6) CCOs are assigned to Field Operations at any given time.

The City Auditor's Office performed a comparison of 2009 PetPoint dispatch and disposition information (March 1 through August 31) to information obtained during the 2008 audit (April 1 through September 30). During these two six-month time periods, there were significant decreases in the number of calls dispatched, as well as a decrease in the number of complaints. Some of these variances are shown in the chart below.

Comparison of Dispatched Calls, Call Dispositions and Complaints
Top 6 Types of Service (based on case count)

Type of Service	April - September 2008	March - August 2009	# Change	% Change
Total # of Calls Dispatched	9,061	7,964	(1,097)	-12.1%
Dispatched Calls				
Confined Animals	2,721	2,327	(394)	-14.5%
Loose Animal	2,269	2,101	(168)	-7.4%
Dead Animal Pick Up	1,224	1,000	(224)	-18.3%
Sick/Injured Animals	657	472	(185)	-28.2%
Neglect/Cruelty/Tethering	566	498	(68)	-12.0%
Special Assignment	516	601	85	16.5%
Call Disposition				
No contact/No violation	2,586	2,429	(157)	-6.1%
Impounded Animals	2,213	1,713	(500)	-22.6%
Service Trap	1,421	1,556	135	9.5%
Release Wildlife	995	911	(84)	-8.4%
Removed Dead Animal	987	745	(242)	-24.5%
Time Cancelled	982	466	(516)	-52.5%
Complaints				
Bite Complaints	432	316	(116)	-26.9%
Barking Complaints	285	186	(99)	-34.7%
At-Large Complaints	218	169	(49)	-22.5%

Source: PetPoint

The decrease in the total number of dispatched calls makes a significant impact on the number of field officers and/or the total number of hours required to respond to calls. Based on the PetPoint

information reviewed, during an eight-hour shift, each field officer responds to an average of approximately 13 calls. Therefore, the 1,097 decrease in number of dispatched calls would result in a decrease of approximately 675 hours of field officer time. The City Auditor's Office calculated the staffing level necessary to respond to the reduced level of dispatched calls and concluded that the current staffing level of six field officers appears adequate.

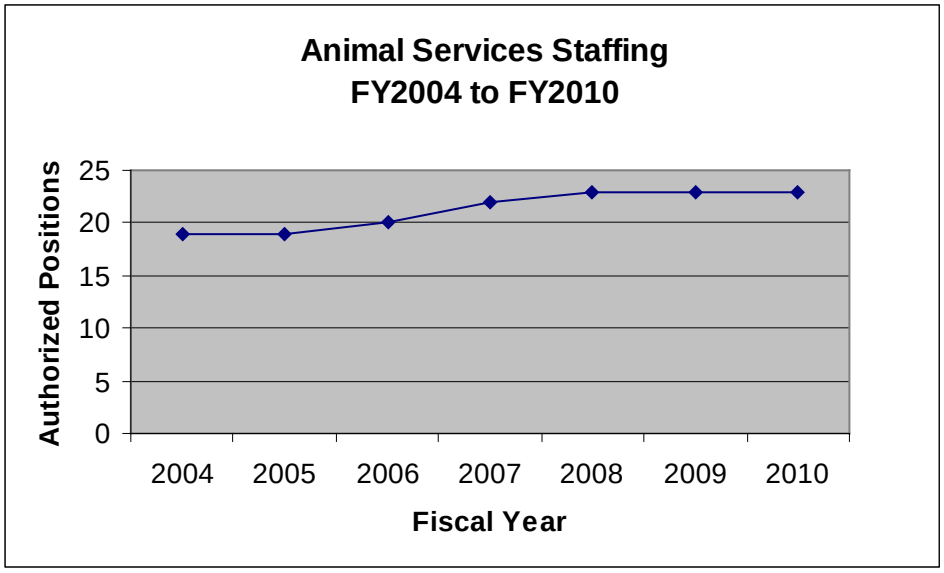
Number of field officers necessary to respond to annual dispatched calls (Based on Animal Services Benchmark)

Total Hours Available for a Full-time Field Officer	2,080	# of Dispatched Calls (March 1 - Aug 31)	7,964
Less:		Annualized	15,928
Vacation	80		
Sick	80	Benchmark (Calls/Hour)	1.5
Holidays	88		
Training	20	Time (hours) required to respond to all calls	10,619
Court	20		
Miscellaneous	20		
Total	308	**Number of Officers needed to respond to annual calls**	5.99
Annual Hours for Field Work	1,772		

In addition to rotating two field officers to Kennel Operations, the Animal Services Division received assistance from the Code Enforcement Division during the last two months of Fiscal Year 2009. Each weekday, one CCO from the Code Enforcement Division was assigned to help with kennel cleaning. This was also done to enable Animal Services to meet budgetary restraints.

A CCO was permanently reassigned from Field Operations to Administration to assist the Customer Service Agents/Dispatcher. However, one of the existing Customer Service Agents terminated employment during the audit. According to Animal Services management, in order to obtain the Fiscal Year 2010 vacancy savings target established for the Community Services Department, there are no immediate plans to replace that employee. As a result, field officers will be responsible for dispatching themselves. By not filling the vacant position, the City will not achieve the full benefit initially expected from reassigning the one field officer to Administration. Since management plans to outsource animal licenses that are currently processed by Administration staff and because telephone volume/activity reports were not available during this audit, the City Auditor's Office was unable to conclude as to the adequacy of staffing within Animal Services' Administration.

As the following chart indicates, Animal Services staffing has remained level over the past few fiscal years and additional staff is not projected for Fiscal Year 2010.



Source: Community Services Department

The following chart identifies the position titles for the 23 authorized full-time Animal Services staff. In addition to the full-time staff, funds are available to hire part-time kennel technicians, which is equivalent to approximately 1.5 full-time equivalent staff members.

FY04 - FY10 Comparison of Positions

	Number of Positions						
Title	**FY04**	**FY05**	**FY06**	**FY07**	**FY08**	**FY09**	**FY10**
Code Compliance Officer	7	7	7	9	14	14	14
Animal Control Dispatcher	2	2	2	2	2	-	-
Animal Svcs Mgr	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Animal Control Investgtr	1	1	1	1	-	-	-
Animal Svcs Ops Supv/Comm Svc Supv	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
Animal Svcs Supv	1	1	1	1	-	-	-
Customer Service Agents	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Sr Clerk Animal Svcs	2	1	2	1	1	-	-
Kennel Attendant/Animal Tech	3	3	3	4	-	-	-
Bite Invest Euth Off	1	1	1	1	-	-	-
Animal Svcs Admin Coord	-	1	1	1	2	2	2
Veterinarian	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Total	19	19	20	22	23	23	23

Source: Community Services Department and GovMax budgeting software

The Community Services Department created a Community Services Educator position that was filled in April 2009. The Community Services Educator position provides an additional resource within the Community Services Department to help recruit, train and retain volunteers at the Animal Services Center. The Educator position is also responsible for coordinating educational programs and performing non-Animal Services duties. The Community Services Educator position is not accounted for within the Animal Services accounting unit.

Detailed Audit Findings

1. Animal Services has not established specific, measurable goals and objectives that would indicate how well it is doing towards fulfilling its stated mission of encouraging responsible pet ownership.

As indicated in the background section of this report, the Animal Services Division has a stated mission to encourage responsible pet ownership. Within the Fiscal Year 2010 Proposed Operating Budget, the Animal Services Division publicizes performance measures of "percent of animal calls for service carried over to the next business day" and "number of animals rescued increases." Neither of these measures appears to indicate how well the City is doing in encouraging responsible pet ownership.

Workload and performance data is available through PetPoint and other sources on the number of adoptions, euthanasia, licenses issued and dispatched calls. The Animal Services Division accumulates this workload and performance data in a Monthly Activity Report and communicates this information to the Animal Services Advisory Board. The City Auditor's Office did not see evidence that some of the more crucial performance indicators were communicated to the public through the division's website or publication in the City's annual budget document. The City Auditor's Office noted that other agencies have established and published additional performance indicators such as percent of animals adopted, percent of animals returned to owner, customer satisfaction, emergency response time and number of dogs licensed.

The National Council on Pet Population and the National Animal Control Association have comparative data that is available to Animal Services to use in setting goals and objectives. A draft consultant report completed in early 2008 included a recommendation to establish a goal of becoming a full spectrum, cutting edge animal services organization. The draft response by Animal Services noted that a five-year strategic plan would be developed. The new Animal Services Manager, hired in July 2009, indicated that he intends to develop a strategic plan in the near future. Community Services management has also tasked the new Animal Services Manager with the responsibility to "provide draft five (5) year animal services vision statement and implementation plan for upper management review (e.g. customer service enhancements, animal euthanasia and live placement goals, grants and private fundraising goals, volunteer leveraging goals, etc.)."

The number of animals rescued by other organizations has increased over the past two fiscal years, indicating that Animal Services has created and maintained good working relationships with partner organizations that are willing and able to provide homes for displaced animals. The division has also successfully educated many citizens through various educational programs and the Animal Awareness Program that is aimed at educating first time offenders of certain animal codes. Starting with the opening of the new Animal Services Center in 2009, Animal Services is ensuring that adopted animals are spayed or neutered prior to leaving the center. However, the low compliance with pet licensing requirements and the high percentage of unaltered animals arriving at the Animal Services Center indicate the City has a large number of irresponsible pet owners. For example, the City Auditor's Office noted the following.

- Based on American Veterinary Medical Association population estimation guidelines, approximately only 4% of Arlington animals are licensed.
- More than 80% of the cats and dogs (excluding adopted animals) entering the shelter are not altered and most (89%) have no identification, based on PetPoint data from March to August 2009.
- Only 1% of cats impounded were returned to their owners during the six-month period ending September 30, 2009.
- More than 76% of cats were euthanized during the six-month period ending September 30, 2009.
- Approximately 31% of adoptable dogs are euthanized.

Establishing measurable goals and objectives would help identify progress towards meeting goals and assist in identifying where additional resources might be needed. Without specific measurable goals, the City Auditor's Office is not able to determine whether Animal Services is meeting its stated mission of encouraging responsible pet ownership.

Recommendation:

The Community Services Director should ensure that Animal Services develops a strategic plan with measurable goals and objectives and routinely communicates its progress towards meeting those goals.

Management's Response: *Concur.*

Staff and [University of Texas at Arlington] UTA are currently reviewing a proposed agreement and partnership for services with the UTA Institute of Urban Studies, to design and facilitate a strategic planning process for Arlington Animal Services resulting in a Five Year Plan.

Target Date:	*Commence: May 2010* *Completion: February 2011*
Responsibility:	*Assistant Director of Community Services* *Animal Services Manager*

Recommendation:

The Community Services Director should ensure that Animal Services participates in local, regional or national statistical organizations or studies that will help establish comparative performance data. Such participation will help the division establish reasonable goals, benchmark best practices and help identify improvement areas.

Management's Response: *Concur.*

Target Date:	*December 2010*
Responsibility:	*Animal Services Manager*

2. Kennel staffing levels rely on non-paid staff to accomplish basic animal care needs.

Due to the uncertainty surrounding community service workers and volunteers, the preferred staffing model for kennel operations is to schedule a sufficient number of paid full- and part-time workers to ensure that basic animal care needs are met. Community service workers and volunteers would then be able to supplement that level of care by providing additional capacity for animal socialization, grooming, interaction and preparing animals for adoption.

The City Auditor's Office noted that Animal Services has adjusted kennel staffing levels frequently since opening the new animal services center. During August and September 2009, Code Enforcement personnel assisted Animal Services by providing one CCO per day to assist in the kennels. In September 2009, the kennel schedule included 272 hours per week for kennel duties. In order to meet FY 2010 budget projections, scheduled kennel hours were reduced to 235 hours per week in late October. Because of the reduced staffing levels, Animal Services must adjust its cleaning procedures on a daily basis depending on the number of staff and volunteers available.

During observations of the kennel area, the City Auditor's Office noted the following.

- Kennel staff was unable to complete the cleaning of the dog adoption area by the 10:00 a.m. opening time. The dog adoption area consists of 30 holding areas, each of which has a glass window that allows citizens to observe animals that are eligible for adoption.
- The City Auditor's Office noted that dried urine and feces observed in the dog adoption area in the early morning hours remained in the adoption area at the end of the day. It did not appear that kennel staff had time to perform spot cleaning of the dog adoption area throughout the day.
- Kennel staff were frequently required to stop their assigned duties (such as euthanasia or sanitization) to assist with other kennel-related functions.
- Dogs were seen left unaccompanied in the "meet and greet" rooms and it appeared that spot cleaning of the "meet and greet" rooms was not performed as needed.
- Volunteers and community service workers were seen performing basic animal care functions such as feeding and sanitizing kennel areas. Although the volunteer log indicated that some volunteers signed in to "socialize" animals, this was not observed by the City Auditor's Office.

After relocating to the new shelter, management purchased temporary kennels to allow staff to complete cleaning in a timelier manner. However, the above observations indicate that even with the temporary kennels, it is often still difficult for Animal Services to complete the desired level of service with existing staff. Based on City Auditor's Office calculations, it appears that the current daily number of hours assigned to kennel operations would not be sufficient to perform a complete and thorough disinfection cleaning. Animal Services management indicated that on days that insufficient staff and/or volunteers exist to perform a "thorough" cleaning, then an alternative "spot" cleaning protocol would be followed. Because the City houses dogs in the same run from day to day, this reduces the reliance on thorough daily disinfection. The City Veterinarian stated that this complies with best practices recommended by experts in the field. She also noted that she will monitor disease levels to watch for negative trends that may arise as a result of the alternative cleaning protocol.

Animal Services anticipates additional changes in the future that may further increase its ability to meet desired service levels. For example, the division anticipates that the purchase of additional temporary kennels may allow kennel staff to complete its cleaning of the dog adoption area by the 10:00 a.m. opening time. Temporary kennels are placed outside and used to house animals while the inside kennels are being cleaned.

The City Auditor's Office noted that Animal Services has established a specific standard related to required hours to clean and sanitize the kennels. However, the scheduled amount of paid hours is below the department's established weekly standard, indicating that the desired level of cleaning can only be accomplished if sufficient volunteers and community service workers exist.

Recommendation:

The Community Services Director should ensure that Animal Services records kennel hours by function for employees, community service workers and volunteers and track the number of days that volunteers and community service workers were needed to accomplish basic animal care duties. This documentation should be utilized in establishing appropriate staffing levels.

Management's Response: *Concur.*

Target Date: *May 2010*

Responsibility: *Animal Services Manager*
Community Services Supervisor

3. The City of Arlington does not use the most preferred method of euthanasia.

Texas law does not require two-person euthanasia teams. However, two-person teams are recommended by industry standards. Animal Services has written policies and procedures that specify the process by which animals should be euthanized at the City of Arlington. Those procedures do not specify any circumstances that require two-person euthanasia teams.

According to Animal Services management, workload often prohibits more than one person from performing euthanasia. Euthanasia records maintained by the City do not indicate whether more than one person was present during euthanasia. The City Veterinarian noted that it would be preferable to have a two-person team performing euthanasia, but it has been a management decision to utilize intraperitoneal (for cats) and intracardiac injection (after the animal is heavily sedated) for dogs as a practical way of utilizing existing resources and being able to complete the other necessary functions within the center. Section 169.84 of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) lists intracardiac injections (into one of the four chambers of the heart) as an allowable method of euthanasia (if the animal is heavily sedated, unconscious, or anesthetized first), but it is least preferred. The TAC lists intravenous injections (into the vein) and intraperitoneal injections (into the peritoneal cavity) as the preferred methods. The Humane Society of the United States indicates that the humaneness of the euthanasia method is the most important factor, followed by the number and type of animals handled, number of employees available, training, etc. The cities of Carrollton, Fort Worth, Grand Prairie and Lewisville noted that intravenous injections are used for dogs and intraperitoneal injections are used for cats, kittens

and puppies. These cities also require two-person euthanasia teams. The cities of Fort Worth, Grand Prairie and Lewisville indicated that intracardiac injections are sometimes used when the animal is completely unconscious/heavily sedated.

The City Auditor's Office did not observe euthanasia during fieldwork, but did observe as many as ten cats waiting in the euthanasia room while the one CCO assigned to perform euthanasia assisted in other areas of the kennel. It appeared that current staffing levels could decrease the ability to utilize two-person euthanasia teams and, at times, interrupts the performance of euthanasia by even one staff member. The City Auditor's Office reviewed euthanasia data and noted that in approximately 11.5% of the euthanasia cases, Animal Services documented the euthanasia reason as "Aggressive", "Behavior" or "Fearful." It is possible that these cases indicate more dangerous situations if only one staff person is performing euthanasia and could also indicate a higher level of anxiety for animals.

Although not specifically required by law, it appears prudent to require two-person teams when necessary to ensure the safety of personnel and/or comfort of the animal. According to Animal Services management, there have not been any reported injuries from performance of euthanasia.

Recommendation:

The Community Services Director should seek direction from the City Manager and/or Mayor and Council regarding the preferred euthanasia method for the City of Arlington. If the intravenous and intraperitoneal injections are recommended, two-person euthanasia teams would be required and additional staff would be necessary.

Management's Response: *Concur.*

Target Date: *October 2010*

Responsibility: *Community Services Director*

4. Animal Services does not fully utilize the PetPoint animal management system.

Animal Services uses PetPoint to record animal surrenders, adoptions, owner reclamations, rescues, euthanasia, and spay/neuter surgeries. Since the City promotes PetPoint's ShelterCare insurance program and has implemented PetPoint's 24PetWatch Microchip Recovery program, PetPoint is free of charge to the City.

The City Auditor's Office noted that Animal Services does not fully utilize the functionality of the PetPoint animal management system. As noted in Finding #5, Animal Services does not currently utilize the existing ability to record controlled substance usage by container number. In addition, Animal Services does not utilize the PetPoint system to generate receipts for services performed, such as adoptions, reclamations and the issuance of animal licenses. Instead, Animal Services uses manual, pre-numbered cash receipts to account for revenue received.

Because PetPoint's receipting function was not used and not all revenue-generating services are recorded in PetPoint (e.g., Animal Awareness Program), the City Auditor's Office was not able to reconcile revenue recorded in the City's financial system to the number of services recorded in

PetPoint. Internal control is enhanced when the information system used to record activities is linked to the system used to record revenue received associated with those activities. For example, under the current fee structure, if PetPoint indicated that five dog adoptions and one cat adoption occurred on a particular day, the expected revenue for that day would be $590 (5 dogs @ $100 each + 1 cat @ $90). A PetPoint report of adoptions for the day would identify the six adopted animals. Under the current process, the daily cash report has to be obtained to identify which cash receipts were associated with a particular day. Then each manual cash receipt has to be reviewed to determine which animal was associated with the cash receipt.

Animal Services has not identified a specific individual responsible for the overall accuracy of data in PetPoint. Although the system appeared to be used effectively to record and monitor animal movement throughout the facility and outcomes (adoptions, reclamations, euthanasia), the City Auditor's Office noted less significant areas where attention to detail and field edit controls are not utilized.

- Waived impoundment fees were not always recorded in PetPoint.
- Animals had been quarantined for biting, but the "bite history" field indicated "no bite history."
- Dogs are shown as issued a license for an altered animal, but the animal detail record indicates that the animal is unaltered.
- Dogs are weighed prior to surgery and euthanasia, but the weight is not recorded in PetPoint.
- Explanations as to why owner reclaims of unaltered animals were not charged the spay/neuter coupon fee were not recorded in PetPoint.
- Microchips are entered as identification, not as a medical procedure. Therefore, it is difficult to determine whether a given microchip was implanted by the City or just recorded by the City as a result of a scan.
- Spay/neuter vouchers are entered by the issuer, not automatically generated by the system, thereby requiring that vouchers be accounted for manually.

The City Auditor's Office noted that Animal Service intends to transition some information management responsibilities to the AMANDA development tracking system in Fiscal Year 2011. The intention is for AMANDA to be the primary program used for field operations. PetPoint will remain the information system used for animal receiving components. Management intends to migrate data each night from PetPoint to AMANDA. Because Animal Services is only now identifying and defining how it will use AMANDA, the City Auditor's Office was not able to review the planned usage of AMANDA or determine whether its usage is necessary.

Recommendation:

The Community Services Director should ensure that Animal Services utilizes the receipting and cashiering function of PetPoint. Services recorded in PetPoint should be reconciled to cash receipts on a daily basis.

Management's Response: *Concur.*

Target Date: *May 2010*

Responsibility: *Community Services Supervisor*
Animal Services Administrative Coordinator

Recommendation:

The Community Services Director should ensure that Animal Services specifically documents waived fees, including the rationale for waiving fees, in PetPoint.

Management's Response: *Concur.*

Target Date: *May 2010*

Responsibility: *Community Services Supervisor*
Animal Services Administrative Coordinator

Recommendation:

The Community Services Director should ensure that the Animal Services Manager identifies staff with the appropriate skill level to ensure that data recorded in PetPoint and/or AMANDA is reasonable, relevant and reliable. This could include assigning an individual to periodically review system usage, identify training needs and ensure that staff receives necessary training and instruction on how to use the systems.

Management's Response: *Concur.*

Target Date: *October 2010*

Responsibility: *Animal Services Manager*
Community Services Supervisor

5. The current methods used to track controlled substances are cumbersome.

The Drug Enforcement Agency establishes the requirements for inventory of controlled substances. The Texas State Department of Health Services outlines guidelines for record keeping of controlled substances. The following information is recommended to be included in a euthanasia log.

- In-house assigned bottle number
- Date drug was dispensed/administered
- Name of the person using the drug
- Species and breed of animal involved
- Animal identification number and weight
- Route administered

- Dosage amount of the drug used
- Total amount of drug on hand after each use
- Supervisor reconciliation of amount of drug used with drug remaining in stock

The Animal Services Division uses two controlled substances when performing euthanasia, ketamine (used as a sedative) and sodium pentobarbital (euthanasia agent). Once a bottle of controlled substance has been depleted, a usage sheet is submitted to a supervisor who ensures that the usage recorded on the sheet equals the amount of substance issued. Due to the amount of time it may take a bottle to be depleted and/or staff work backlog, comparing usage sheets to issued substances is usually performed weeks (or months) after actual usage. The City Auditor's Office noted that the supervisor did not always receive usage sheets for issued bottles and does not verify that the recorded usage appears reasonable.

Animal Services employees record each animal's weight at intake, but do not generally record the weight of animals just prior to performing euthanasia. This practice may impact the supervisor's ability to verify the reasonableness of the amount of controlled substances used in performing euthanasia. Additionally, because euthanasia is generally performed by one staff member, a control weakness exists in that a staff person could perform euthanasia through intravenous injection (which does not require sedation), but could purposely record that a sedative such as ketamine was used to perform an intracardiac injection. As a result, theft and illegal use of controlled substances could occur without detection.

Since Animal Services currently records information such as euthanasia date and time, drug description and dosage, etc. in PetPoint, some of the information recommended by the Texas State Department of Health Services already exists within PetPoint. PetPoint can currently be utilized to record controlled substance use by container number. The route of administration (intravenous, intracardiac, etc.) is not currently recorded, but additional PetPoint training could identify a way of recording the route of administration. PetPoint will soon be implementing an inventory module that appears will be able to reflect the amount of drug on hand after each use and allow a supervisor to reconcile the amount of drug used with the amount of drug remaining in stock. Animal Services management is currently reviewing PetPoint to determine whether the division can reduce some of the redundancy and paperwork involved in recording controlled substance use. Utilizing PetPoint to record drug usage would be more efficient than manually recording usage.

Recommendation:

The Community Services Director should ensure that Animal Services determines whether the PetPoint system can be utilized to decrease the amount of paperwork required to account for controlled substances. If Pet Point can be utilized, the Community Services Director should require written policies and procedures to ensure proper recording, reporting of improper use and/or unaccountability for controlled substances, and should retain records for the amount of time required by local, state and/or federal law.

Management's Response: *Concur.*

Target Date: *October 2010*

Responsibility: *Community Services Supervisor*
[City] Veterinarian

6. The City of Arlington is not maximizing opportunities to promote animal adoptions.

The Animal Services website indicates that the humane care and successful placement of stray and unwanted animals is critical to successful operations. To help achieve such success, the City of Arlington extends its animal adoption program to anyone wishing to adopt an animal from the Animal Services Center. However, due to staff limitations, management indicated that its adoption efforts are focused on on-site adoptions.

Many cities and non-profit organizations promote animal adoptions by hosting mobile adoptions at off-site events at locations in high traffic areas. Animal Services indicated that due to staff limitations, the City of Arlington has only hosted one mobile adoption in over 12 months. For that one mobile adoption, management indicated that only one staff person was available to staff the event.

Mobile adoptions can help promote the placement of stray and unwanted animals and thus decrease the number of animals required to be cared for in shelters and/or euthanized. With limited staffing, mobile adoptions could be made successful by partnering with volunteers, the Animal Services Advisory Board, animal welfare groups, etc. By hosting mobile adoption events, the City could not only benefit from successful animal adoptions, but could also use the event to solicit volunteers, distribute responsible pet owner literature, provide information regarding other City of Arlington initiatives, as well as provide information regarding other local animal welfare groups such as the Friends of the Arlington Animal Services.

Management indicated that flyer information is posted on the City's cable channel to inform citizens of upcoming events. However, the cable channel is not used to air a segment on animals that are available for adoption. While the City Auditor's Office did note that citizens may observe pictures of animals available for adoption via the City's website and may read event information included on flyers, the City could receive an additional benefit by airing an animal adoption segment on the local cable channel on a routine basis in order to promote animal adoptions. City staff could take advantage of existing partnerships to help host the event while accommodating for limited staffing.

Recommendation:

The Animal Services Manager should consider partnering with current volunteers, the Arlington Animal Services Center Advisory Board, Friends of the Arlington Animal Services, etc. to host a mobile adoption on at least a quarterly basis.

Management's Response: *Do Not Concur.*

Animal Services provides real-time online viewing of animals which assists in the outreach and promotion of adoptable companion animals. Unless mobile adoptions are done in conjunction with a major national event, such as Adoptathon, the return on staff and volunteer resources is usually negligible at best. With a $5.6 million shelter, resources are best utilized to assist potential adopters who are actively seeking companion animals.

Offsite adoptions may encourage "impulse adoptions", whereby a person adopts an animal without proper thought and planning, only to later relinquish the animal at a shelter. According to a study published in the Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science*, this issue may be mitigated when mobile venues utilize full-time, well-trained adoption counselors, and potential adopters are screened appropriately. These factors are essential to the successful and ethical adoption placement of companion animals.*

Target Date: *Not Applicable*
Responsibility: *Not Applicable*

Recommendation:

The Animal Services Manager should consider partnering with volunteers, the Animal Services Center Advisory Board, Friends of Arlington Animal Services, etc. to routinely air an animal adoption segment on the City's cable channel to help promote animal adoptions.

Management's Response: *Concur.*

Target Date: *August 2010*
Responsibility: *Animal Services Manager*

7. **Functionalities of the recently purchased enterprise telephone system are not being maximized to enhance customer service and better manage Administrative staff workload.**

In the December 2008 Animal Services Staffing Analysis Report, the City Auditor's Office recommended the purchase of a phone system that allowed customers to press a number for specific information such as Animal Services Center hours, location, spay/neuter requirements, etc. The system would track and monitor the number of incoming calls. In August 2008, the City purchased an enterprise phone system with call center functionality for approximately $27,000.

The newly purchased phone system is currently being used by Animal Services staff. However, call statistics and reporting are not being retrieved and used by management as a management tool. Management is, therefore, not maximizing the enterprise phone system to help improve operations and possibly staff morale. For example, statistical reports generated from the telephone system could be used to help track call volume, wait time, call drops/hang-ups, etc. Management could then use the statistical information to help predict high call volume times and adjust resources to help ensure that quality customer service is provided.

Recommendation:

The Community Services Director, in conjunction with the Information Technology Director, should ensure that Animal Services management is provided instructions and/or training to produce statistical reports from the enterprise phone system. Animal Services management should then use the statistical reports to monitor phone volumes, adjust staffing and report call volume to senior management.

Management's Response: *Concur.*

Target Date:	*May 2010*
Responsibility:	*Information Technology [Department]* *Animal Services Manager*

8. Employee satisfaction survey responses indicate management's need to address employee issues.

Because the City Auditor's Office noted that employee morale appeared to be low during the preliminary survey stage of this audit, an employee satisfaction survey was developed. The survey was sent to all employees in the Animal Services Division and to 14 employees within the Code Enforcement Division who have received training in basic animal control and have provided assistance to Animal Services.

The results of the survey were mixed. While employees indicated that changes made over the past year have been positive and physical working conditions improved, employees expressed a belief that management does not understand the problems employees face on the job and that management does not clearly communicate goals and strategies to employees.

The City Auditor's Office tabulated the results of the survey (included as Appendix 1 to this report) and provided the written comments received to the Animal Services Manager. The following issues appeared to be identified by employees.

- Employees believe the amount of work they are expected to perform is unreasonable.
- Two-thirds of the employees rated their job stress level as severe or extreme.

These issues were further supported by the written comments received from the employees. Stress was most often mentioned in association with the belief that not enough staffing or other resources were available to perform the job effectively. Very little mention was made of repetitive euthanasia as a reason for increased stress. Some employees commented that supervisors were not generally helpful and that work schedules change too often, resulting in little flexibility for employees.

Several survey questions dealt with the use of Code Enforcement CCOs for assistance with Animal Services duties. According to Community Services management, the department is in the final phases of certifying a few remaining staff members in basic animal control. Code Enforcement staff is expected to begin shadowing Animal Services CCOs in the field and will be provided with equipment and training related to animal attack defensive tactics. Eventually,

Code Enforcement personnel will be utilized to assist Animal Services with emergency calls. Additionally, CCOs will be trained to address and mitigate identified animal issues during the course of their daily code inspection activities. To date, it appears that Code Enforcement CCOs have generally only assisted with kennel cleaning. Although the majority of Code Enforcement employees stated that they understood and agreed with the reason they were cross-trained for Animal Services operations, several expressed concern that they have only been utilized to date to clean kennels. Several Animal Services employees expressed concern that additional kennel technicians at a lower rate of pay would make more sense than utilizing the higher-paid Code Enforcement CCOs. Community Services management indicated that they were aware that kennel technicians are paid a lower rate of pay. However, as noted in the December 2008 City Auditor's Office Staffing Analysis report, Code Enforcement CCOs were used as a temporary and emergency response to inadequate staffing. During this audit, management stated that the CCOs were used while filling vacancies and building the Animal Services volunteer base.

Recommendation:

The Community Services Director should ensure that the Animal Services Manager reviews the survey results, develops strategies to address identified issues and communicates openly with employees regarding those issues.

Management's Response: *Concur.*

Target Date:	*May 2010*
Responsibility:	*Animal Services Manager* *[Animal Services] Supervisory Staff*