

**BOARD OF
ANIMAL SERVICES
COMMISSIONERS**

TARIQ A. KHERO
PRESIDENT

KATHLEEN RIORDAN
VICE PRESIDENT

MARIE ATAKE

GLENN S. BROWN

ARCHIE J. QUINCEY, JR.

City of Los Angeles
CALIFORNIA



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF
ANIMAL SERVICES
221 North Figueroa Street
5th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(888) 452-7381
FAX (213) 482-9511

EDWARD A. BOKS
General Manager

Report to the Board of Animal Services Commissioners

Edward A. Boks, General Manager

COMMISSION MEETING DATE: July 14, 2008

PREPARED BY: Catherine D. Garcia

REPORT DATE: June 24, 2008

TITLE: Management Analyst II

SUBJECT: Mandatory Collection of the One-Time \$5.00 Cat Registration Fee for New Adoptions and Owner Redemptions

BOARD ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the Board reconsider and approve making mandatory, collection of the existing one-time voluntary \$5.00 cat registration fee, payable at the time of adoption or reunification only, and direct the General Manager to implement this policy effectively immediately.

SUMMARY:

During the Mayor's Fiscal Year 07-08 Budget Hearing, discussion occurred regarding implementation of mandatory collection of the existing \$5.00 cat registration fee, to be payable at the time a cat is adopted or returned to its owner only. Participating in the meeting were the Deputy Mayor of Finance and Performance Management and the City Administrative Officer, both of whom overwhelmingly supported implementation of this fee. Current Department policy does not mandate the collection of this fee, however, it is permitted under Section 53.19 (a) of the Municipal Code which states, "Upon payment of a \$5.00 fee, there shall be issued at the request of each cat owner or person having custody or control thereof, a cat identification tag to be worn by the cat for which it is issued."

On March 27, 2007, this matter was heard by the Board and held over for the April 9, 2007 meeting. During this meeting, it was discussed that implementation of this fee would result in an increase in cat-owner reunifications and a decrease in euthanasia which is apparent with the Department's reunification rate of 16% for dogs and only 1% for cats. However, on a vote of 4-0, the item was rejected.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Visit our website at www.LAAnimalServices.com

**Subject: Mandatory Collection of the One-Time \$5.00
Cat Registration Fee for New Adoptions
and Owner Redemptions**

The Department respectfully requests reconsideration of this matter. Implementation of this fee would result in the following benefits:

- An increase in cat-owner reunifications, and attendant decrease in euthanasia.
- Program would be advertised as a means of saving cats and increasing cat-owner reunifications.
- Registration confirmation letters sent to owners would include language to encourage the registration of additional cats and the mandatory licensing of any unlicensed dogs, thus expanding our outreach database.
- A portion of any future fee increase in registration could be surcharged to the Animal Spay and Neuter Trust Fund to provide additional pet sterilizations for low-income residents and lower the euthanasia rate, thus assisting the City in achieving its "No Kill" policy/goal.
- Accumulation of statistical information about cat ownership.

In light of the above-referenced benefits, it is proposed that a Departmental policy be adopted mandating the collection of a one-time \$5.00 registration fee at the time of adoption or reunification. All subsequent cat registration renewals (i.e., for address change or new registrations for owner changes) would be strictly voluntary in contrast to the mandatory annual licensing of dogs. The Department will likely also work to increase the registration fee to \$10.00, which would bring the amount in-line with the former base cost of a dog license.

On May 14, 2007, the Board approved mandatory microchipping of cats and dogs redeemed by owners. The primary benefit of this action, as detailed in the report presented to the Board, was the projected increase in pet-owner reunifications, and attendant decrease in euthanasia. Microchipping when combined with mandatory cat registration will act as a dual safeguard in successfully reuniting both dogs and cats with their owners. By requiring cats to be registered at the time of adoption or redemption, we will afford cats the same opportunity currently granted to dogs, to be reunified with their registered family.

Upon approval, the Department will immediately notify all staff responsible for the collection, tracking, and accounting of fees connected to this policy to ensure prompt implementation.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Animal tags cost approximately \$0.25 each. The cost to the Department of this program will be minimal, since the fee will be assessed at the same time as other fees are being processed.

**Subject: Mandatory Collection of the One-Time \$5.00
Cat Registration Fee for New Adoptions
and Owner Redemptions**

The following is a historical overview of the potential revenue that would have been derived from cat adoptions, cat-owner reunifications, and New Hope placements annually, had the one-time \$5.00 registration fee been in effect during the period of 2004-2006.

Cat Shelter Adoptions			
Year	Number of Adoptions	Fee	Potential Revenue
2004	4,670	\$5	\$23,350
2005	5,133	\$5	\$25,665
2006	5,378	\$5	\$26,890
2007	5,664	\$5	\$28,320

Cat-Owner Reunifications from Shelters			
Year	Number of Reunifications	Fee	Potential Revenue
2004	270	\$5	\$1,350
2005	573	\$5	\$2,865
2006	289	\$5	\$1,445
2007	248	\$5	\$1,240

New Hope Placements			
Year	Number of Adoptions	Fee	Potential Revenue
2004	1,942	\$5	\$9,710
2005	2,860	\$5	\$14,300
2006	2,398	\$5	\$11,990
2007	2,504	\$5	\$12,520

Approved:

Edward A. Boks, General Manager

BOARD ACTION:

_____ Passed	Disapproved _____
_____ Passed with noted modifications	Continued _____
_____ Tabled	New Date _____