



Legislation Text

File #: K-1617-101, **Version:** 1

CONTRACT K-1617-101: AN AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, AND PETDATA INC., TO PROVIDE ANIMAL LICENSING SERVICES FOR THE NORMAN ANIMAL WELFARE CENTER FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS.

BACKGROUND: The Animal Shelter Oversight Committee has discussed the option of purchasing city pet licenses on-line for some time. At the November 28, 2016, Animal Shelter Oversight Committee meeting, members unanimously voted to recommend entering into an Agreement with PetData, Inc. to provide comprehensive pet licensing for the City of Norman.

Requirements for a city pet license can be found in Sec. 3-211-221 of the Norman City Code. The City Code requires every person within the City that owns, possesses, controls, harbors or keeps any dog or cat over six months of age to obtain a pet license tag for each dog or cat from the Animal Welfare Center or its authorized agent. Service animals are not charged a pet license fee and senior citizens receive a fifty percent discount. Animals adopted from the City of Norman receive a waiver of the first year pet license. The pet owner has the option to purchase a pet license for either a one-year or three-year period. Each owner must produce proof of the rabies vaccination for each pet. The metal license tag is required to be worn at all times by the dog or cat registered and a microchip, registered with the Animal Welfare Center, may also be used in lieu of a city pet license tag for identification of the animal.

Norman Animal Welfare and the voluntary license stations issue between 4,000 and 5,000 city pet license tags per year. Each pet license sold requires data entry by Animal Welfare staff into the management software. Each entry takes an average of ten minutes for a total of 750 hours annually or approximately 94 work days. Staff commits significant time following up with application errors such as rabies certificates or incorrect addresses. Staff processes and mails renewal notices to all existing license holders resulting in additional staff time and postage fees. Postage fees are also incurred when mailing the tag or corresponding with license holders. Overtime hours are incurred to maintain data entry and to manage the voluntary license stations. Currently, the only methods available to residents to obtain a pet license are in person at the Norman Animal Welfare Center, at a voluntary license station, or by mail.

DISCUSSION: The Norman Animal Welfare staff believes the city pet license requirements serves two primary functions. First, it ensures the pet owners vaccinate their pets for rabies. Second, the city pet license is the most reliable method of returning at-large animals to the owners in the field before entering the shelter as a stray. However, as mentioned above, the cost in staffing hours, supplies and postage is significant.

PetData, Inc. offers a comprehensive license solution that includes data entry, database and web site services, printing and supply purchases, customer service, mail processing, postage and mail expenses and management of the voluntary license stations as well as an online service for purchasing tags. PetData has been in operation since 1995 and is the only company in the United States offering this comprehensive service. In addition, PetData only performs animal licensing services and are not involved in other unrelated services. PetData has over sixty clients across the United States.

A one-time start-up fee of \$1,000 is due and payable within fifteen business days after the approval of the Agreement. Funds are available in Animal Control - Other Business Services (account number 010-6070-441.41-99) to pay this fee. There are no start-up fees for term extensions or any renewals of the Agreement. Licensing fees will be deposited into an account designated by the City.

With a three-year Agreement, PetData retains \$4.10 for every license sold and processed (i.e., the amount paid to the City will be net of PetData's fee). The current license fee for altered pets is \$8 (\$4 for seniors). The current fee for unaltered pets is \$15 (\$7.50 for seniors). Those fees are among the lowest in the region and Staff is planning to increase the altered fee to \$10 and the unaltered fee to \$30, which will be done administratively. These fees have not been increased since 2010. In 2016, a fee was added offering a discount if the pet license was purchased for two years (from

\$16 to \$12 altered/\$30 to \$24 unaltered) and for three years (from \$24 to \$16 altered/\$45 to \$32 unaltered).

The Agreement with PetData would provide savings in postage, supplies and overtime hours and allow staff to focus on other responsibilities and duties. Seniors will continue to receive a 50% discount and the voluntary license stations would continue to retain \$4 for every license sold. The City would be in the mid-range of fees from the surveyed cities with the increase in fees. The average altered fee is \$15 and the average unaltered fee is \$47. The unaltered fee is higher to promote responsible pet ownership through spay and neuter. The revenue account where funds will be deposited is Pet licenses (010-0000-322.14-47).

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the City Council approve K-1617-101 with PetData, Inc. to provide comprehensive pet licensing services and, if approved, direct payment in the amount of \$1,000 for the start-up fee.