



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City votes to Consolidate Animal Services with Animal Friends of the Valley (AFV) and to join the Joint Power's Authority (JPA) for Shelter Services

MENIFEE, CA — On Thursday night in a Special City Council meeting the City Council voted 4-1, with Councilman August dissenting, to direct city staff to move forward with contract negotiations and to work with the Animal Friends of the Valley (AFV) Joint Power's Authority, that includes city members Canyon Lake, Murrieta, Temecula, Wildomar and Lake Elsinore and the County of Riverside, to join the JPA and request AFV to provide both animal field services and sheltering services for the City of Menifee.

Since 2010, the City of Menifee has a contracted with AFV for animal field services and the County of Riverside for sheltering services. The current animal service agreements with both the County and AFV were entered into in 2017 for a term of 3 years, and will expire on June 30, 2020. The agenda item was brought forward for discussion at the request of Mayor Pro Tem Matt Liesemeyer. "This was about continuity of services for our residents, and making it easier to reunite our pets with our residents," said Mayor Pro Tem Liesemeyer. "Riverside County staff have the space, as does AFV to shelter our animals, and both entities provide great services, it was purely about logistics, having a seat at the table to make decisions for services for our residents, and making it easier to reunite families."

Menifee City Council further elaborated and cited their reasons for considering combining services into one agency to assist residents with confusion in locating their animals with the shelter located in San Jacinto, and AFV located in Wildomar. Councilwoman Sobek stated, "Currently, residents are left to drive to San Jacinto for their pets, and should the County close the shelter this budget cycle, it would leave city residents exposed to driving to Jurupa Valley, well over 50 minutes away, as the County is also looking to close a multimillion dollar budget deficit."

"Both agencies are impeccable organizations and provide great care to our pets, but our residents need one agency to provide both services," said Councilman Dean Dienes. "I have worked on, back in the day on the AFV shelter when it first started, and I know firsthand how wonderful both agencies are (eluding to his tenure at the County Executive Office) so this decision doesn't come easy for me but it is the right thing for our residents."

The cost of services will be negotiated by city staff and they will be brought back to the City Council for formal approval. Council gave direction to negotiate with AFV to maintain consistency with the draft budget proposal presented by city staff for the fiscal year 20/21 budget, asking for consideration of an additional \$30,000 reduction from the cost comparison presented.



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City staff stated that they will discuss with the JPA this month, and will work to bring back a formal agreement to Council by end of June 2020. Should the agreement not be executed by end of June, AFV Board of Directors President Kris Anderson stated, “we will commit to working with the City to house their animals until the agreements for the JPA and service are executed.”

For more information, please contact the Community Development Department Director, Cheryl Kitzerow, at ckitzerow@cityofmenifee.us , or visit the city’s website at www.cityofmenifee.us .

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ABOUT MENIFEE: *Situated in the heart of southern Riverside County along Interstate 215, Menifee is a vibrant, new city of more than 97,000 residents who enjoy a pleasant year-round climate, abundant recreational offerings, reasonably priced housing and convenient proximity to some of Southern California’s premiere attractions and employment centers. Within its 50 square miles, Menifee’s business, retail and entertainment outlets are starting to shape the community’s character and this growing economic base is also contributing favorably to the city’s strong financial position. Menifee’s growing family-oriented population values the city’s ongoing commitment to public safety, community events and smart growth for the future. All of these elements are working together to support the city’s strategic vision to make Menifee one of the state’s most promising new cities.*