



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
November 28, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager
 Submitted by: Peter Radu, Assistant to the City Manager
 Subject: Contract: Echo Cartagena, DVM to Provide On-site Relief Veterinary Coverage for Berkeley Animal Care Services

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a contract and any necessary amendments with Echo Cartagena, DVM, for temporary, on-site veterinary services for Berkeley Animal Care Services (BACS) for January 2024 to June 2024, which establishes a contract in an amount not to exceed \$60,750.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Berkeley Animal Care Services contracts with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) to provide veterinary services three days per week onsite at the Dona Spring Animal Shelter. This contract will be for six months, from January 11, 2024, to June 30, 2024, while our current contracted veterinarian is on maternity leave. The total contract cost of \$60,750 will be appropriated into the Animal Services' budget as part of the First Amendment to the Annual Appropriations Ordinance.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Orsolya Kuti, DVM, has been the contracted veterinarian with Berkeley Animal Care Services since 2020. In 2021, Council approved increasing Dr. Kuti's hours from 16 to 24 per week, recognizing the growing need for care at the shelter. Beginning January 2024, Dr. Kuti will be on a 6 month leave/ The purpose of this proposed contract is to provide relief veterinary services during that time.

BACS is a full-service municipal animal care and control agency, enforcing local and state laws throughout the City of Berkeley (COB), the City of Emeryville, and the City of Albany. BACS is also contracted to shelter animals for the city of Piedmont. BACS is an open-admission facility on track to accept 2,000 stray and homeless animals in 2023, the most intakes since 2017.

BACS has a constant influx of animals that need veterinary care, treatment, and spay/neuter services. The BACS shelter is open to the public seven days a week to receive stray, surrendered, and confiscated animals. Additionally, field services are provided seven days a week, during which Animal Control Officers impound stray, surrendered, and confiscated animals. Many animals arrive at the shelter sick or injured

and need immediate veterinary care. On-site veterinary services include but are not limited to examining and diagnosing shelter animals, treating sick or injured animals, performing spay/neuter surgeries, and performing other routine surgeries.

To prevent unnecessary euthanasia and to maintain the current high live release rate above 90%, sick or injured animals must obtain necessary treatment so that they have a much better chance of rescue or adoption.

BACKGROUND

We contacted several veterinarians about the temporary position, and there were four responding veterinarians to consider. Echo Cartagena, DVM, is the recommended choice from among the respondents due to her shelter medicine and surgery experience.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Echo Cartagena is a local veterinarian who has practiced veterinary medicine since 2010 and is well respected for her work in shelter medicine and as a spay/neuter surgeon. Dr. Cartagena can be consistently available to the animal shelter and provide a wide range of general and specialized services at an hourly rate consistent with the local market.

If the recommendation is not approved, the city will be unable to provide essential veterinary care services at Berkeley animal shelter, such as State and Berkeley Municipal Code-mandated spay and neutering for stray or adopted animals; prescription or use of medication or anesthesia; and suturing of wounds. All necessary procedures would likely be referred to an emergency vet clinic, which is prohibitively expensive.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

An alternative to engaging in a contract with Dr. Cartagena is to outsource all veterinary services to local veterinarians and hospitals. Berkeley Animal Care Services performed 350 spay or neuter surgeries 2023 from January 11 to June 30. We have a contract with Animal Fix Clinic, a high-volume spay and neuter clinic in Richmond, where we have five standing appointments every Monday for community or shelter animals to be altered at the much-reduced cost of \$200 per animal. If we could use Animal Fix Clinic for all needed spays and neuters at the shelter, the cost would be \$70,000, nearly \$10,000 more than Dr. Cartagena's contract, and we would still need to contract out non-surgical care for an even higher cost. Therefore, this alternative action is not recommended.

CONTACT PERSON

Mike St. Pierre, Animal Services Manager, (510) 981-6603

Contract: Cartagena, Echo, DVM for On-site temporary veterinary services

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Attachments:
1: Resolution

ATTACHMENT 1

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

CONTRACT: ECHO CARTAGENA, DVM, FOR ONSITE VETERINARY
SERVICES FOR BERKELEY ANIMAL CARE SERVICES

WHEREAS, BACS has a constant influx of animals that need to receive immediate and affordable veterinary care and treatment; and

WHEREAS, sick or injured animals that obtain necessary procedures and/or treatment/s have a much better chance of rescue or adoption; and

WHEREAS, to prevent unnecessary euthanasia and to maintain the City's current high live release rate above 90%, sick or injured animals must obtain necessary treatment so that they have a much better chance of rescue or adoption.

WHEREAS, it is necessary to provide veterinary care and oversight on the premises for 16-18 hours per week; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Echo Cartagena submitted a highly qualified bid to provide on-site veterinary services at the Dona Spring Animal Shelter; and

WHEREAS, the contract will be funded by approved AAO1 funds.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is authorized to establish a contract and any necessary amendments with Dr. Echo Cartagena, DVM, for on-site veterinary services for Berkeley Animal Care Services (BACS). The contract will be for \$125 per hour for January 11, 2024, to June 30, 2024, with a total amount not to exceed \$60,750.