

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT

Report Title: Dogs on the Run

Report Date: 06/26/2018

Response by: Board of Supervisors and Department of Health & Human Services, County of Humboldt

FINDINGS

1. The Board disagrees with findings: F2, F8
2. The Board and Department of Health & Humans Services disagrees with findings: F8
3. The Board disagrees wholly or partially with the findings:

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recommendations have been implemented:
2. Recommendations have not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future:
3. Require further analysis:
4. Will not be implemented: R1, R2, R7

Date: _____ Signed: _____

Number of pages attached: _____

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY STATEMENT

FINDINGS

F2. Humboldt County Animal Codes need to be updated to reflect current medical practices to prevent owners of potentially dangerous and vicious dogs from avoiding serious consequences resulting from attacks. This puts the public at increased risk for attacks by dogs with known bite histories.

Response: Disagree

This finding is unwarranted, as the report fails to establish the relationship between Humboldt County Code and current medical practices as they pertain to dog bites.

F8. The Division of Environmental Health is tasked with handling all cases of possible rabies exposure, but receives no funds to carry out those duties, placing an undue burden on already busy employees and possibly hampering their effectiveness in a rabies outbreak.

Response: Disagree

This finding is unwarranted, as \$11,850.00 was allocated in FY 2017-18 for the Division of Environmental Health's Vector Control Program (1175406-2401), and only 17.6% of those funds were spent. The Vector Control Program was allocated another \$11,850 for the current fiscal year. Historical review of Vector Control Program funds reveals that the funds allocated have been sufficient for the last twenty years. The Vector Control Program covers the cost of rabies testing and supplies used in the field. Staffing costs associated with vector control are not reimbursable through other sources and are covered with local funds transferred to the Consumer Protection budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends Humboldt County, the City of Eureka, and the City of Fortuna form a collaborative task force to review and update their Animal Codes, and present them for consideration to their governing bodies by December 31, 2018.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented as it is unwarranted.

Each city and county can create codes that are as strict or stricter than California law. These codes are individualized to each city and county as each community is different, and the goals of those communities can differ. Because of this, a combined task force to update codes across jurisdictions is not feasible. Humboldt County Codes are

continually revised and updated, and are current through Ordinance 2608, which passed on July 31, 2018. The most recent ordinance requires licensing and proof of rabies vaccination for all dogs owned in the unincorporated areas of the County. Title V, Division 4 of Humboldt County Code clearly defines and regulates dog ownership and control, including compulsory licensure and vaccination, as well as the identification, seizure, impoundment, and disposition of potentially dangerous or vicious dogs.

R2. The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends Humboldt County, the City of Eureka, and the City of Fortuna approve the amended Animal Codes recommended by the collaborative task force in Recommendation 1 by March 31, 2019.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented as it is unwarranted.

Humboldt County Codes are continually revised and updated, and are current through Ordinance 2608, which passed on July 31, 2018. The most recent ordinance requires licensing and proof of rabies vaccination for all dogs owned in the unincorporated areas of the County. Title V, Division 4 of Humboldt County Code clearly defines and regulates dog ownership and control, including compulsory licensure and vaccination, as well as the identification, seizure, impoundment, and disposition of potentially dangerous or vicious dogs.

R7. The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends the Humboldt County Public Health Department revise its budget for the Division of Environmental Health to cover costs associated with monitoring animal bites and responding to possible rabies cases. This revision should be complete by December 31, 2018.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented.

Costs associated with rabies control are adequately funded by the Vector Control Program budget. Moreover, the Vector Control Program budget does not come from the General Fund. The Public Health Branch of the Department of Health and Human Services has indicated they will review additional staff allocations upon such time as it is warranted.