

July 31, 2018

The Honorable Judge Joyce D. Hinrichs, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, County of Humboldt
825 Fifth Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Honorable Judge Hinrichs,

I write in response to the letter that I received from the Grand Jury dated June 26, 2018. Hopefully, the enclosed information will answer the request that you have made but if not, please feel free to contact me.

“Dogs on the Run” – Do County and City Animal Control Codes, Policies and Procedures Adequately protect Our Residents?

Findings:

The Fortuna Police Department agrees wholly or partially with findings numbered F1, F2, F4, F6, F7, and F8.

Note: Findings F3 and F5 are findings that pertain solely to the City of Eureka and the City of Eureka Animal Control, which the Fortuna Police Department has no knowledge of the internal functions and duties of the City of Eureka Animal Control program or Animal Control Officer.

The City of Fortuna and the Fortuna Police department have reviewed the Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury report titled: *Dogs on the Run*” and have prepared this formal response to the report.

On page 7 of the report, the City of Fortuna and the Fortuna Police Department would like to provide further clarification regarding information in the Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury report:

Paragraph 1 –Sentence 1: Fortuna employs Two Community Services Officers (1 Fulltime and 1 Part-time) and is supervised by the Management staff of the Fortuna Police Department. Animal Control duties are included in the duties of the CSO.

On page 11 of the report, the City of Fortuna and the Fortuna Police Department would like to provide further clarification regarding information in the Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury report:

Paragraph 1-Second Sentence: Animal control duties are handled by two Community Services Officers (1 Full-time and 1 Part-time) and are Supervised by the Management staff of the Police Department.

Paragraph 1-Fifth Sentence: Fortuna Animal Control contacts the county animal shelter to transfer an animal when the animal in the Fortuna Animal Shelter is determined to live in the County's jurisdiction. All quarantine services for animal bites occurring in the City of Fortuna are quarantined at home in a secured perimeter or at the Fortuna Animal Shelter.

Recommendations:

Recommendation 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 (F2, F3, F4)

The Fortuna Police Department agrees with this finding based on the Grand Jury report. The City of Fortuna and the Fortuna Police would support a Collaborative Task Force to review and update Animal Control Codes, and present them for consideration to their governing body. The Fortuna Police Department will begin this process immediately and present any changes or updates to the Fortuna City Council for approval and implementation.

Recommendation 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. (F2, F3, F4)

The Fortuna Police Department agrees with this recommendation and will present any changes or updates to the Fortuna City Council for approval and implementation.

Recommendation R5:

The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office, the City of Eureka Police Department, and the City of Fortuna Police Department establish a checklist, similar to the one found in Appendix A, to be embedded within Animal Control

Report Forms. The checklist should function as a reminder to Animal Control Officers of all follow-up information needed for a complete report. This checklist should be in use by December 31, 2018. (F6)

The City of Fortuna and the Fortuna Police Department will utilize the Appendix A form from this period forward when investigating animal bites.

Recommendation R6:

The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends Humboldt County Animal Control, the City of Eureka Animal Control, and the City of Fortuna Animal Control comply with the State of California Animal Code and provide monthly reports to the Public Health Department of all animal bites that occurred within their jurisdiction for said month. This reporting system should be in use by December 31, 2018. (F7)

The City of Fortuna and the Fortuna Police Department will now send a copy of every animal bite investigation report to Humboldt County Environmental Health. Previously the reports were consistently submitted to the Humboldt County Animal Control Department. We will continue this practice with our animal bite reports.

Recommendation R9:

The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends the Humboldt County Animal Shelter, the City of Eureka Animal Control, and the City of Fortuna Animal Control microchip at owners expense for identification purposes all un-microchipped animals that pass through the Humboldt County Animal Shelter or have engaged in an unprovoked attack upon a person or pet. The microchip information shall be maintained within a database accessible to all local law enforcement. This program should be in effect by December 31, 2018. (F1)

The City of Fortuna and the Fortuna Police Department support this recommendation but feel that the legalities of injecting a microchip identification chip without owner's permission be explored to avoid possible litigation against the City of Fortuna or the Fortuna Police Department.

I hope that the information provided meets your request. If you should need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

William Dobberstein

Chief of Police

City of Fortuna

CC: Foreperson

2016-2017 Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury

825 Fifth Street

Eureka, CA 95501

(Electronic Copy)