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**A G E N D A   I T E M   S U M M A R Y**

**Reference No:** CB-100-1991

**Draft No:** 2

**P r i n c e   G e o r g e ' s**

**Meeting Date:** 11/26/91

**C o u n t y   C o u n c i l**

**Requester:** CO. EXEC.

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**Item Title:** Amending the Animal Control Ordinance -  
Requiring reimbursement while animal is  
in County custody, raising the license  
fee and creating an animal hobby permit

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**Sponsors** CA   C

**Date Presented**      10/15/91                      **Executive Action**    12/11/91    S  
**Committee Referral** (1) 10/15/91    FP&GO    **Effective Date**      1/27/92  
**Committee Action**    (1) 10/30/91    FAV(A)  
**Date Introduced**      11/5/91  
**Pub. Hearing Date**    (1) 11/26/91 1:30    PM

**Council Action**      (1) 11/26/91    Enacted  
**Council Votes**      CA: N\_, B\_: N\_, C\_: A\_, D\_: -\_, F\_: A\_, MC: A\_,  
M\_: A\_, P\_: N\_, WI: A\_, \_\_: \_\_, \_\_: \_\_, \_\_: \_\_

**Pass/Fail**          P

**Remarks** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Drafter:**      Jan Marks                      **Resource**      Jan Marks  
                  DER                              **Personnel:**    DER

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**LEGISLATIVE HISTORY**

Fiscal Policy and Government Operations                      Date: October 30, 1991  
Committee Report

Committee Vote: Favorable as amended, 4-1 (In favor: Council Members  
Wineland, Fletcher, MacKinnon and Mills; Opposed:  
Council Member Castaldi)

In FY90, approximately \$30,000 in fees for animal care were not collected because owners elected not to reclaim their animals from the County, and thereby were not required to pay the fees for the care the animals had been given. A similar loss will occur in FY91. This legislation will make the owner of an animal responsible for the cost incurred by the County in caring for the animal whether or not the animal is redeemed by its owner.

CB-100-1991 would increase the annual license fee for unneutered dogs

and cats from \$8.00 to \$12.00 per year. The fee for neutered dogs and cats would remain \$5.00. This provision would increase annual revenue by \$34,000 if all existing pet owners declined to spay or neuter their pets.

This legislation also creates a new animal hobby permit for persons keeping five or more animals larger than a guinea pig. The bill exempts circuses, veterinarians, animal boarding establishments, owners of fish, birds and farm animals. The annual fee would be \$5.00. The primary purpose of the hobby permit is to control problems caused by owners of large numbers of pets. It is unlikely that the new fee would raise significant amounts of revenue.

The estimated fiscal impact on the County is positive in the amount of approximately \$67,044. There may be some additional positive fiscal impact related to the additional revenue generated by the hobby permit and penalties associated with it.

The amendment is on page 1 line 15 after animals; insert increasing a certain fee.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION/FISCAL IMPACT**

**(Includes reason for proposal, as well as any unique statutory requirements)**

Section 3-106 requires reimbursement for board and other necessary care provided to an animal in County custody whether or not the owner or custodian redeems the animal from the County. In the calendar year 1990 such a provision would have recovered approximately \$35,000 in revenues to the County. The lack of such a provision in essence puts the County in the position of subsidizing the cost of ownership for irresponsible pet owners.

Section 3-146 raises the annual license fee for unneutered dogs and cats from \$8.00 to \$12.00. The intent is to offer a more substantial monetary incentive for owners to sterilize their dogs and cats. Overpopulation of dogs and cats places an increased financial burden on the County to provide the animal control services required by an excess animal population.

As of November, 1990, 8,586 unneutered dogs and cats were licensed in the County, generating \$68,688 in licensing revenue. The same number of animals licensed at the proposed cost of \$12.00 each would have generated \$103,032, or \$34,344 in additional revenue. If the fee were increased from \$8.00 to \$10.00, the revenue generated would be \$85,860, or \$17,172 more than was generated at the \$8.00 rate. Fees for dog licenses were last adjusted in 1982, when the fee for unneutered dogs was raised from \$6.00 to its current rate of \$8.00 per year.

Sections 3-148.1 through 3-148.3 creates an animal hobby permit. Such a permit is an invaluable tool in controlling the incidence of public nuisance situations caused by animals. Each year the Animal Control Division responds to numerous complaints of noxious odors, unsanitary conditions and excessive noise caused by multiple animals being maintained by an owner. Rarely are these animals properly licensed, vaccinated against rabies, or maintained in accordance with the legal and recognized standards for the keeping of animals. The requirement for an animal hobby permit will expedite resolution of these complaints and prevent the need for more expensive and time consuming routes of enforcement in these cases.

