

Animal Services

Department Purpose

Pinellas County Animal Services (PCAS) is the largest open-admission shelter for dogs and cats in Pinellas County and is centrally located in Largo, FL. PCAS is responsible for ensuring animal-related health, welfare, and safety for the citizens and animals of Pinellas County. Services include pet adoption, spay and neuter grant programs, microchipping, found pet reunification services, rabies control, animal bite investigations, dangerous dog investigations, pet licensing, kennel permitting, pet dealer permitting, hobby breeder permitting, code enforcement, and cruelty investigations.

Executive Summary

In FY20, Pinellas County Animal Services was challenged to serve the community, keep their staff healthy, and uphold levels of service while maintaining COVID-19 restrictions. Through implementing creative solutions to keep citizens and staff safe through social distancing, the department also saw efficiencies through their process improvements that have become permanent changes. One improvement included changing the weekly vaccine clinic that once took place inside the shelter to a mobile drive-up clinic, allowing staff to vaccinate animals quicker and without citizens exiting their vehicles. The department also reorganized shelter staff under the Veterinary Services program, creating synergies between the previously siloed groups and giving the shelter staff more purpose in their roles.

PCAS continues to work with community partners and staff to continuously improve outcomes for the animals that come into the shelter. By working with local shelter Friends of Strays (FOS), feral cats are now sent to FOS to be sterilized and returned to the field. Previously, PCAS could only euthanize these cats, so by offering this alternative, PCAS can reduce operating expenses on medical care and euthanasia.

Staffing Summary

Animal Services	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
General Fund	56.0	57.0	57.0	57.0	57.0
Gifts for Animal Welfare Trust Fund	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Total FTE	57.0	58.0	58.0	58.0	58.0

*As of May 2021, PCAS has three (3) vacant positions totaling 2.5 FTE.

Historically, PCAS has relied heavily on the use of volunteer services in order to avoid requesting additional personnel. On-site volunteer shifts were temporarily suspended from April-May 2020. In June 2020, shifts resumed but were reduced to maintain social distancing within the shelter. Due to the temporary suspension of volunteers due to COVID-19, and a change in volunteer hour calculation methods, there was a reduction of volunteer hours by 47.0%, from 49,884 hours in CY19 compared to 26,439 hours in CY20.

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Budget Summary

Pinellas County Animal Services (PCAS) is supported by two funds: General Fund and Gifts for Animal Welfare Trust Fund. The General Fund is the primary funding source for the department's activities.

Department Revenues

Fund	FY18 Actual	FY19 Actual	FY20 Actual	FY21 Budget	FY21 Estimate	FY22 Request	\$ Change	% Change
General Fund	\$3,360,514	\$3,434,454	\$3,348,898	\$3,531,670	\$3,375,000	\$3,387,500	(\$144,170)	-4.08%
Gifts for Animal Welfare Trust Fund	\$107,189	\$94,264	\$53,729	\$80,750	\$68,000	\$57,000	(\$23,750)	-29.41%
Revenues Total	\$3,467,703	\$3,528,718	\$3,402,627	\$3,612,420	\$3,443,000	\$3,444,500	(\$167,920)	-4.65%

- General Fund
 - General Fund revenues decreased by \$144,170, or 4.08%, for FY22 due to lower anticipated shelter fees for animal adoptions, reclaims, and charges for services provided. This aligns with current trends due to the impacts of COVID-19, in comparison to the FY21 Budget. In FY20 and FY21, the department experienced reduced animal intake compared to previous years. As a result of COVID-19 restrictions, the demand for pets increased. Adoption rates remained consistent throughout the pandemic, and the average length of stay for shelter animals decreased. As a result, the live release rate has increased from 70.0% in CY19 to 81.0% in CY20. Currently, PCAS is still experiencing this trend. However, it should be noted that this projected decrease in revenues could recover more significantly since COVID-related mandates and restrictions have lifted. Animals coming to the shelter could increase as people return to work and life outside of their homes.
 - Rabies Licensing Fees experienced minimal impacts, reflecting a decrease of \$50,000, or 1.56%, in comparison to the FY21 Budget. As of May 2021, there are 203,999 pets currently licensed in Pinellas County, and 39.0% of the pet population is licensed - one of the highest rates in the state. The department has been working in the community for the past few years to increase the rate of pets licensed to over 30.0% and has exceeded its target. The department has set a new goal to reach 41.0% in FY22.
- Gifts for Animal Welfare Trust Fund
 - Gifts for Animal Welfare Trust Fund revenues decreased by \$23,750, or 29.41%, for FY22 due to a decrease in donations from citizens and community partners. Approximately 50.0% of pet stores shifted to a rescue-based model for cat adoptions, no longer participating in PCAS' pet store program.

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- User Fees
 - User Fees remain unchanged for FY22.

Department Expenditures

General Fund	FY18 Actual	FY19 Actual	FY20 Actual	FY21 Budget	FY21 Estimate	FY22 Request	\$ Change	% Change
Personal Services	\$3,978,550	\$3,992,295	\$4,182,391	\$4,542,690	\$4,242,360	\$4,727,170	\$184,480	4.06%
Operating Expenses	\$1,138,077	\$1,279,357	\$1,163,969	\$1,320,690	\$1,258,790	\$1,247,090	(\$73,600)	-5.57%
Capital Outlay	\$17,921	\$108,911	\$222,041	\$116,620	\$118,980	\$25,000	(\$91,620)	-78.56%
Grants and Aids	\$9,998	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%
Expenditures Total	\$5,144,546	\$5,380,562	\$5,568,401	\$5,980,000	\$5,620,130	\$5,999,260	\$19,260	0.32%

Gifts for Animal Welfare Trust Fund	FY18 Actual	FY19 Actual	FY20 Actual	FY21 Budget	FY21 Estimate	FY22 Request	\$ Change	% Change
Personal Services	\$6,768	\$56,272	\$57,528	\$62,800	\$60,230	\$66,850	\$4,050	6.45%
Operating Expenses	\$20,794	\$1,271	\$1,929	\$48,430	\$40,430	\$48,390	(\$40)	-0.08%
Capital Outlay	\$57,100	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%
Grants and Aids	\$60,878	\$63,091	\$7,316	\$17,000	\$82,000	\$87,000	\$70,000	411.76%
Reserves	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$524,950	\$0	\$408,950	(\$116,000)	-22.10%
Expenditures Total	\$145,539	\$120,634	\$66,772	\$653,180	\$182,660	\$611,190	(\$41,990)	-6.43%

- General Fund operating budget increased by \$19,260, or 0.32%, for FY22.
 - This increase includes salary and wage inflation, career path salary adjustments, the repurposing of two positions to focus on community support and educational services and upgrading a part-time Certified Veterinary Technician position to a full-time position.
 - This increase is offset by capital outlay, due to the inclusion of a carry forward amendment in the FY21 Budget for four vehicles that were purchased in FY20 but delivered in FY21.
 - This increase is also offset by operating expenses, which includes a reduction in Risk allocation for injuries and vehicle-related incidents, a reduction in medical supplies in Veterinary Services due to decreased overhead from an anticipated continued reduction in animal intake, an increase in fleet operations and

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maintenance, the addition of two new vehicles in the Vehicle Replacement Program, an increase in communication services for new cell phones with hotspots for field officers, and the inclusion of additional care for shelter animals that extends beyond services available or provided by the shelter.

- The local shelter partner, Friends of Strays (FOS), received a grant for a one-year Return-to-Field (RTF) pilot project that covers surgeries for feral cats that return to the field, resulting in fewer kittens born in the community. This partnership with FOS will result in increased live outcomes for cats and takes the burden away from Animal Services. The department transfers feral cats that come in from the community to FOS and all medical exams and surgeries are performed by FOS. This program was implemented in January 2021 and the live release rate for felines has already seen an increase, with a live release rate of 94.42% for January 2021 and 73.0% for February 2021. FOS is attempting to develop a long-term donor stream to continue to fund this program.
- Gifts for Animal Welfare Trust Fund operating budget increased by \$74,010, or 57.72%, for FY22, excluding Reserves.
 - This increase was primarily driven by an increase in the annual Community Grants Program for local animal shelters and clinics which specialize in Preventive Care and/or Sterilization (\$67,000), Trap, Neuter, Vaccination and Return (TNVR) (\$12,000), and Babies with Benefits (\$8,000). This program was reduced in FY21 to address facility needs in the kennel area. The budget for the TNVR program will be adjusted and/or removed pending the outcome of the decision package for the Community Cat Sterilization Voucher. This increase also included salary and wage inflation for a Grant Worker position (1.0 FTE).

Decision Packages

- **Community Cats Sterilization Voucher**
 - A voucher system for funding MEOW Now and other non-profit organizations or individuals for the specific purpose of having community cats in Pinellas County (approximately 1,400 cats annually) sterilized, rabies vaccinated, and ear-tipped which will comply with County ordinances. This voucher system will aid in the efforts to decrease the number of stray cats in the community, lower costs of operating supplies and overhead, decrease enforcement complaints and Animal Control Officer field calls, and lower drug costs due to lower euthanasia. The budgetary impact of this decision package is \$50,000 for FY22 (recurring).

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Potential Threats

Senate Bill 60 (County and Municipal Code Enforcement) prohibits code inspectors and code enforcement officers from initiating investigations or initiating enforcement proceedings of potential violations of codes & ordinances by way of anonymous complaints. An amendment was later added to the bill that allows the submittal of an anonymous complaint if the code enforcement officer has reason to believe that the violation presents an imminent threat to public health, safety, or welfare or imminent destruction of habitat or sensitive resources. If passed, this bill would negatively affect PCAS by placing more animals in danger due to the decreasing number of complaints for animal cruelty and neglect from citizens who would no longer be anonymous and fear retaliation.

Attachments

Attachment 1 - PCAS Performance Dashboard

Attachment 2 - PCAS User Fees

Attachment 3 - PCAS Organizational Chart

Attachment 4 - PCAS Decision Packages