



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 22-1499A, Version: 1

Subject:

Suncoast Animal League Spay/Neuter Clinic Project Fiscal Year 2023 Municipal Services Taxing Unit special projects funding request.

Recommended Action:

Approval of the Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) special projects funding request made by Suncoast Animal League, Inc. in the amount of \$19,971.00 to purchase veterinary surgical equipment for a spay and neuter clinic located in unincorporated north County.

- Since 2006, Suncoast Animal League, Inc. has operated a no time limit, no kill animal shelter caring for cats, dogs and wildlife, from the time they are surrendered, or accepted from other shelters, until they are adopted. All cats and dogs are spayed or neutered, microchipped, and fully vaccinated prior to adoption. Suncoast Animal League assists all shelters in the Tampa Bay area, including Pinellas County Animal Services, and often take their more difficult cases.
- The overpopulation of cats and dogs continues to create overcrowding in shelters; however, the situation has remarkably worsened recently due to surrenders of pets by individuals and families due to the pandemic, the housing crisis and financial issues.
- Appointments for spay and neutering veterinary services are taking as long as 7-to-8 weeks to schedule among the seven veterinarians who provide reduced fee or free services to the Suncoast Animal League.
- The approval of this Fiscal Year 2023 MSTU funding request in the amount of \$19,971.00 will allow the Suncoast Animal League, Inc. to purchase approximately one-third of the essential veterinary surgical equipment for a spay and neuter clinic that will be owned and operated by the League. The balance of funds needed for the equipment is provided through donations made by private individuals who support the League.

Strategic Plan:

Ensure Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

2.1 Provide planning, coordination, prevention, and protective services to create and enhance a safe, secure, and healthy community

2.2 Be a facilitator, convener, and purchaser of services for those in need

Foster Continual Economic Growth and Vitality

4.2 Invest in communities that need the most

Deliver First-Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

5.4 Strive to serve the needs of all Pinellas County residents and customers

Summary:

This is a Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) Special Projects Fiscal Year 2023 Funding Request

for SUNCOAST ANIMAL LEAGUE, INC.; a non-profit organization that, in addition to finding forever homes for homeless cats and dogs, is focused on spaying and neutering as the only effective approach to reducing the dog and cat overpopulation problem.

Shelters and rescue groups, not just in our area but all over the country, are experiencing critical overcrowding. Delays in adoptions are occurring because demand for spay and neuter veterinary services is outpacing the influx of animals due to increased surrenders of pets and the ongoing cycle of unchecked overpopulation. Spay and neuter appointments by veterinarians providing reduced fee or free services to shelters are taking as long as 7-8 weeks compared to 1-2 weeks at conventional “for-profit” vets. Delays in getting animals spayed and neutered causes backups for adoptions which, in turn, create space issues at the shelters and reduces the ability to take in and adopt out more animals.

In March of 2022, Suncoast Animal League purchased a building in Palm Harbor with the intent of owning and operating their own spay and neuter clinic. They paid \$320, 000 in cash for the appropriately commercially zoned property on Ohio Avenue. The League has also obtained commitments from two licensed veterinarians to operate the clinic- one of whom has owned and operated three spay/neuter clinics. The surgical equipment necessary to operate the clinic costs \$67,000 and required a 50% down payment with the balance paid on delivery. The League plans to order the equipment with funds already raised through donations and will use the MSTU \$19,971.00 in grants funds to complete the balance prior to installation. The League hopes the clinic will be operational before the end of 2022.

By having their own spay and neuter clinic, the Suncoast Animal League can expedite their entire adoption program which will allow them to free-up shelter space and help more animals, which is critical right now. The League will also be able to help other groups who are facing the same situation and eventually assist the public in general with spay and neuter needs. Much like the Pinellas County Animal Services spay and neuter program, the Suncoast Animal Clinic will be open to everyone just as the Suncoast Animal League is open to all and will benefit to those who are economically challenged by offering a lower-cost alternative to conventional “for-profit” spay and neuter services.

Background Information:

Suncoast Animal League, Inc. is a no time limit, no kill, nonprofit animal shelter that, in addition to finding forever homes for homeless cats and dogs, is focused on spaying and neutering as the only effective approach to reducing the pet overpopulation problem. All cats & dogs taken in at their shelter are spayed or neutered, microchipped, fully vaccinated & provided with heartworm & flea prevention prior to adoption. They treat heartworm positive dogs and provide major surgical procedures when necessary. Suncoast Animal League assists all County shelters in the Tampa Bay area and often takes their more difficult cases.

Fiscal Impact:

The request for funding in the amount of \$19,971.00 is a one-time expenditure of budgeted MSTU Special Projects funds.

Staff Member Responsible:

Nancy McKibben, Assistant to the County Administrator Representing Unincorporated North County

Partners:

Suncoast Animal League, Inc.

Attachments:

MSTU Special Projects Funding FY23 Application Suncoast Animal League

Suncoast Animal League FY23 MSTU Funding Request for \$19,971.00

Suncoast Animal League, Inc. Evaluation Criteria Form FY23 MSTU

Comparable Quotes for Specified Equipment (8 attachments 1a through 4b.)