

Saline County

Animal Shelter Cooperative Proposal

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Background & Purpose

- No open-admission animal shelter in the county.
- City of Bryant already has plans to build a new animal shelter.
- This is a prime opportunity to build an Animal Shelter Cooperative.
- The City of Bryant already has the land, and it has been identified as an excellent location for a larger shelter with room for future growth, community engagement, access to the trail systems, with high visibility which will provide opportunities for local adoption and less euthanasia.



- Bryant Animal Shelter already has a good reputation in the community as an open-intake, no suffering animal shelter and the department's leadership and staff as well as the community's leadership have both the desire and the ability to provide excellent service to all the participating communities in Saline County based on past support of the animal shelter and its programs. The current shelter is well-managed, progressive, flexible, 100% compliant with state & federal laws & at a point that it is poised to increase its outreach and animal-housing capabilities.

Major Differences from Past Partnerships & Animal Housing Contacts

- Members would be charged annually based on population instead of by the individual animal. When the payments would be due would be negotiated one on one with the partners.
    - Makes it easier for the jurisdiction to budget, as there are no surprises.
    - There is no disconnect between the citizens' needs, their perception of the partnership and the animals that can come into the shelter.
        - Most shelters have contracts with agencies that charge by the individual animal or service provided. This stops that. The members are charged per capita, and just like the City of Bryant shelter operates now, there will be a set budget, and it would be the Director's responsibility to work within that budget.
- All members would be asked to sign multi-year agreements (generally 10-years) with annual increases built into the contract.
- The City of Bryant has offered to own, maintain and operate the shelter under the City of Bryant and all employees of the shelter would be City of Bryant employees. Jurisdictions (or their citizens) would be responsible for bringing animals to the shelter, Bryant ACOs would not provide those services, except within the City of Bryant (For example, Saline County has a deputy that is currently assigned to handle animal problems.)
- Each jurisdiction would be asked to draft uniform ordinances regarding animal holding, record keeping, etc (anything that directly affects the shelter's operation) which would fall into line with the City of Bryant ordinances (so there would be no confusion within the shelter, and no jurisdictional confusion.)
- City of Bryant Animal Control Officers would be given authority by partners to issue or serve citations for a limited number of violations which may occur in other jurisdictions in order to facilitate return to owners of impounded animals. An example of which include, but is not limited to: failure to provide proof of rabies vaccination.

Funding - Construction, Ongoing Operational and Maintenance Costs

American Rescue Plan funds, as the project meets approximately 85% of the Guiding Principles as set by the Quorum Court for these funds.

- ➔ Large, transformative project
- ➔ Positively impact most of Saline County
- ➔ Project is easy to quantify, and if 100% funded, would meet the completion deadline of 2026.
- ➔ Would include partnerships between local governments and supports public-private partnerships by potentially offering a location for private veterinarians, animal trainers and other non-profits whose goals and principles fall in line with those of the shelter, a place to meet, perform, and has the potential to provide many additional services involving pets to the community.



Additional Funding would be provided by impact and annual fees charged to participating members. Additionally:

- Fees and donations that are collected by the shelter would go into a fund which would serve to help off-set the costs of operation, provide medical care or help cover transportation costs to out of state partner shelters and rescues.
- Fines assessed by the district courts for violations would be kept by the jurisdiction in which the offense occured, with the exception of restitution which would be paid to the shelter and partners would agree to assist the shelter in obtaining restitution orders from their local courts, documentation of these requests would be provided to prosecutors by the shelter.
- Partners would agree to keep in close communication with their local prosecutors and provide information regarding upcoming court dates, plea negotiations and other court decisions to the shelter in a timely manner, especially so when animals are being retained at the shelter pending adjudication, or restitution requests.
- The size and cost to build the shelter will be determined by the number of partners.
- Impact fees to assist with the costs involved in building a shelter to accommodate the anticipated number of annual impounds from all partners will be determined by the number of partners.
- Those communities which opt to not sign on as a partner at the beginning of the project, but request to join the cooperative later on, will be required to pay impact fees equal to the amount that they would have paid at the onset of the partnership adjusted for inflation, and may not necessarily be approved at the time of the request based on current occupation levels at the shelter.

Stakeholders & Potential Partners

- ★ Saline County Quorum Court
- ★ City of Bryant
- ★ City of Benton (Currently has an animal shelter and programs)
- ★ City of Alexander
- ★ City of Bauxite
- ★ City of Shannon Hills
- ★ City of Haskell (Currently has a small animal shelter holding facility.)
- ★ Hot Springs Village (Currently has an excellent animal shelter with strong community-led volunteer programs.)
- ★ Pulaski County* (Currently has a limited contract with a local animal shelter, which has greatly reduced the number of animals that they are allowed to impound.)
- ★ Grant County* (Currently has no public animal shelter, the only shelter available in the entire county is the City of Sheridan.)



Details of Partnership

Partner Responsibilities:

1. Partners would sign multi-year agreements (presumably 10-years in length) with increases written into the dues paid by the partners each year based on the population recorded during the most recently completed census.

2. Partners would agree to provide their own officers/staff to enforce their laws, ordinances or regulations within the individual jurisdiction.



3. Side agreements for animal control officers, or the equivalent, to serve multiple partners would be allowed but would not be managed by the City of Bryant.

4. Provide their community with honest, correct and productive feedback in answer to questions regarding the cooperative, incidents involving the cooperative and the enforcement of their individual ordinances. Partners shall not expect shelter staff to answer these types of questions for the partner's citizens.

5. Partners would ensure that their employees, staff or volunteers comply with the policies and procedures of the animal shelter, including but not limited to complying with security, safety, documentation and cleaning procedures while working in the shelter and the grounds.

6. Partners would be required to attend regularly scheduled partner meetings with, at minimum, one of those meetings to occur during the City of Bryant annual budget preparation, and any staff or volunteers would be required to attend regularly scheduled training sessions to assure continuity with shelter procedures.

7. Provide updates to the shelter regarding new local annexations and changes to ordinances, policies and procedures at least 14 days before those changes take effect, unless an urgent or emergency situation exists, in which the partner shall notify the shelter at the earliest opportunity.

8. Storage of equipment, supplies or vehicles belonging to the partners on the shelter grounds may be accommodated and would affect annual dues paid by partners.

9. Partners would agree to regular, respectful communication with the host agency to preempt any problems, conflicts or disagreements.

City of Bryant Responsibilities:

1. Provide a clean, operational animal shelter which meets or exceeds all minimum standards for cleanliness, housing populations, health and safety for all animals in its care.

2. Set the budget for the shelter cooperative, with final approval to be the sole responsibility of the Bryant City Council, ensuring that all funds collected for the cooperative operation shall be used only for such purposes, allowing up to 25% of the annual total collected to be used for the supportive administration costs provided by the City of Bryant.

3. Manage the annual budget for the cooperative and work within such a budget.

4. Operate the shelter in such a manner as to provide a safe and secure environment for all staff, volunteers and visitors.

5. Create and maintain policies and procedures which provide the greatest opportunities for live release for all animals impounded into the shelter, as well as provide for the public safety.
6. Operate community service and volunteer programs which meet the needs of both the shelter, communities which the cooperative serves, while simultaneously providing a safe working environment for both animals and staff.
7. Provide clear, regular and respectful communication to cooperative partners.
8. As needed, assist in the creation, passage and adoption of ordinances and procedures to assure continuity between partners.
9. Maintain and store any documents or records which are generated by the operation of the shelter in compliance with local law.
10. Obtain and maintain any and all licenses, permits, certifications and mandatory training for any and all shelter staff and volunteers as well as the facility during the entirety of its operation.
11. All supporting roles, including but not limited to, personnel, finance, legal, administration, facility maintenance for the shelter, its personnel and grounds shall be provided by the City of Bryant.

Next Steps

1. Determine estimates of costs involved.
2. Obtain resolutions declaring support and commitment from all partner communities.
3. Determine costs of initial shelter needs, hire architecture firm(s) to create design.
4. Estimate construction costs and final annual dues.
5. Identify and obtain funding sources for construction.
6. Passage of contracts and agreements.
7. Signing of contracts.
8. Opening of Bryant Parkway (must be completed before construction can begin - this item is flexible.)
9. Bid out construction.
10. Determine payment schedules.
11. Begin construction.
12. Assist partners with creating, amending and passage of ordinances, policies and procedures.
13. Implement payment schedules.
14. Construction complete.
15. Soft opening of the facility.
16. Meeting with partners to determine any unresolved problems, issues or needs.



17. Opening ceremonies.

Contact Information

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