



**M E M O R A N D U M**  
**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**  
**ANIMAL SERVICES**  
County of Placer

TO: Board of Supervisors

DATE: April 27, 2021

FROM: Rob Oldham, MD, MSHA, Director of Health and Human Services

SUBJECT: Neonatal Kitten Care – Kitten Central

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**ACTION REQUESTED**

Approve an agreement with Kitten Central for off-site neonatal kitten care services from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2022 in an amount not to exceed \$55,000 and authorize the Director of Health and Human Services to sign the agreement with Risk Management and County Counsel concurrence, and to sign subsequent amendments up to \$5,500 consistent with the contract's subject matter and scope of work with Risk Management and County Counsel concurrence.

**BACKGROUND**

The Animal Services Division takes in more than 600 neonatal (0-28 day old) kittens each year from community members in the cities we serve. Most of these neonatal kittens are brought into the shelter without their mother and require around the clock care to survive. The care required for these fragile newborn kittens is time consuming and intense and consists of keeping the kittens warm, feeding every two hours and manually stimulating them to eliminate. This is in addition to ensuring that these kittens, whose immune systems are undeveloped, stay protected from common viruses to stay healthy.

Based on the amount of care required and the associated costs, most municipal run animal shelters are unable to provide 24-hour care to neonatal kittens and generally either transfer these kittens to already overburdened rescue organizations or euthanize them. Placer County Animal Services is committed to ending the practice of euthanizing healthy and adoptable kittens simply for being too young, however providing full-time staff at the Auburn shelter for around the clock care of neonatal kittens is not a viable option.

Kitten Central, located in Placer County, is a non-profit animal rescue organization that specializes in raising medically fragile neonatal kittens. Their staff and volunteers have committed to taking in any neonatal kitten from Placer County Animal Services jurisdictional area and raising them until they are old enough for adoption at the Placer County Animal Services Center. Kitten Central's program is associated with UC Davis Koret Shelter Medical Program and is overseen by one of their resident Veterinarians. Kitten Central provides all food, medication, vaccinations, preventative medicine and socialization for a small fee charged per kitten. This partnership allows Placer County Animal Services staff to focus on the other animals at the shelter and keeps fragile kittens out of the shelter, reducing their potential exposure to disease.

In the time that Placer County Animal Services has worked with Kitten Central, the save rate for cats and kittens has increased from 42% in 2015 to 92% in 2020. Additionally, this partnership has received national acclaim from Maddie's Fund and the Million Cat Challenge as well as receiving statewide recognition as one of NACo's 100 Brilliant Ideas at Work.

Animal Services has been impressed with the quality of Kitten Central's services and experience and would like to award a new contract for a two-year period, effective January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2022. Procurement Policy Section 3.5B exempts professional services such as these from competitive bidding.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

These services are funded with County General Funds and are partially offset through animal licensing fees, city contracts for services by the County, and adoption fees. These expenses are included in the Department's FY 2020-21 Budget and Future Budgets.

The agreement is on file with the Clerk of the Board for review.