



Recommendation for Action

File #: 23-2567, **Agenda Item #:** 38.

9/14/2023

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of a contract for canine heartworm treatment services with Emancipet Inc., for a term of five years in an amount not to exceed \$875,000.

[Note: This procurement was reviewed for subcontracting opportunities in accordance with City Code Chapter 2-9C (Minority Owned and Women Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program). For the services required for this procurement, there were no subcontracting opportunities; therefore, no subcontracting goals were established].

Lead Department

Financial Services Department.

Client Department(s)

Animal Services Office.

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$14,583 is available in the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Operating Budget of the Animal Services Office. Funding for the remaining contract term is contingent upon available funding in future budgets.

Purchasing Language:

Professional Service.

For More Information:

Direct questions regarding this Recommendation for Council Action to the Financial Services Department - Central Procurement at: FSDCentralProcurementRCAs@austintexas.gov FSDCentralProcurementRCAs@austintexas.gov or 512-974-2500.

Additional Backup Information:

The contract will provide heartworm treatment services for dogs through vouchers provided to new adoptive families at the time of adoption. Emancipet Inc. (Emancipet) is a local non-profit which can treat the large number of heartworm positive dogs that are placed in permanent homes through the Animal Services' adoption program. Treatment costs at private practice for-profit veterinary clinics can be three to four times higher than treatment offered by Emancipet, depending on dog size and severity of disease infection. Emancipet's treatment protocol follows the guidelines of the American Heartworm Society. This lifesaving program is cost effective to the City, as the dogs can leave the shelter immediately with their new family and treatment is scheduled by their new owner at the offsite clinic.

Heartworm disease causes lasting damage to the heart, lungs, and arteries, and can affect the dog's health and quality of life long after the parasites are gone. If the disease is not treated, it will progress and eventually cause death due to cardiac failure. It is a major challenge for Animal Services to find permanent homes for shelter dogs with heartworm disease. Providing this treatment option for available shelter dogs allows over 300 heartworm positive dogs to find permanent homes through adoption each year.

This contract will replace a contract which expires December 14, 2023. The requested authorization amounts were determined by the number of treatment vouchers issued over the past five years. The recommended contractor is the current provider of these services.

If the City is unable to secure a contract, the City will not have a reliable and continuous source for heartworm treatment services for dogs and will be forced to procure these services on an as needed basis, which may result in higher pricing and additional operational costs.