



Memorandum

Date: 7/14/2026

Meeting of: Committee of the Whole - Finance, Administration, and Communications

File No. CM 26-440

Type: Committee Memo

TO: Committee of the Whole - Finance, Administration, and Communications

FROM: Mayor Angela Birney

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR CONTACT(S):

Executive	Malisa Files	(425) 556-2166
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DEPARTMENT STAFF:

Executive	Amy Tsai	Chief Policy Advisor
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TITLE:

Regional Animal Services Licensing Update

OVERVIEW STATEMENT:

Regional Animal Services of King County requests regional feedback from city contract partners related to two revenue-generating proposals it is considering: a pet licensing fee increase and rabies vaccination data coordination.

☐ **Additional Background Information/Description of Proposal Attached**

REQUESTED ACTION:

☒ **Receive Information**

☐ **Provide Direction**

☐ **Approve**

REQUEST RATIONALE:

- **Relevant Plans/Policies:**

N/A

- **Required:**

N/A

- **Council Request:**

N/A

- **Other Key Facts:**

City of Redmond, along with 23 other cities, contracts with Regional Animal Services of King County (RASKC) for animal control services, including field work (animal control), shelter services, and pet licensing. Each jurisdiction pays a share of the costs, minus the licensing fee revenue that the jurisdiction brings in.

RASKC is a nationally recognized “No Kill” shelter, having vastly reduced its euthanasia rates over the years. It provides animal services to more than one million residents living in 23 cities and unincorporated King County. Contract agencies benefit from economies of scale. As a further benefit, the County handles animal welfare cases and litigation responsibilities, and it maintains a shelter facility. The County is funding and constructing an

updated shelter in Kent.

Redmond's current ILA with RASKC had an initial term that ran from 2018 to 2022, with a 5-year automatic extension that expires on December 31, 2027. The County will likely transmit a new ILA proposal in late 2026, and interested contract cities would each act on the ILA in early 2027.

Financial sustainability has long been a priority in the regional provision of animal services. Almost all participating jurisdictions must subsidize their costs of animal services because costs exceed pet licensing revenues. As we approach the renewal period, RASKC is considering two revenue-generating strategies for which it requests city feedback: (1) a pet licensing fee increase that could be incorporated into a new ILA, and (2) rabies vaccination data coordination that would be achieved through a separate Board of Health regulation. The purpose of this briefing is to solicit Council feedback on these two proposals.

RASKC hopes to hear back from contract cities this summer and early fall on their receptivity to a licensing fee increase, to help inform development of the proposed 2027 regional ILA. The rabies vaccination proposal is still in early development, and hearing from cities can help provide valuable input on community receptivity to the concept.

Potential Pet License Fee Increase

RASKC has not increased its pet license fees in 18 years, since 2008. The City of Seattle increased its fee to \$45 in 2024. RASKC is exploring a fee increase of \$10, including:

- a. Increasing altered cat and dog licenses from \$30/yr to \$40/year
- b. Increasing unaltered licenses from \$60/yr to \$75/yr
- c. No increase in Pet licenses for Senior, Disabled or Juvenile

Redmond's total estimated 2026 program costs are \$282,000 with pet license revenues of \$142,000 (representing over 5,000 pet licenses). Pet licensing revenue offsets program costs for a net cost to the City of \$139,000. A \$10 licensing fee increase would add an estimated \$52,000 in additional revenue.

Potential Rabies Vaccination Data Coordination

A second revenue-generating source being explored by RASKC is to share rabies vaccination data between veterinarians and the County. This tool would be used to better identify and conduct outreach with unlicensed pet owners, thereby increasing pet licensing compliance. RASKC is in the initial stages of exploring this option. While implementation details would need to be developed, RASKC envisions a model that would be collaborative with educational outreach, potentially paired with affordable vaccination clinic opportunities.

Board of Health Code requires rabies vaccination, which has an 80 percent compliance rate. King County Code requires pet licensure, which has a 24 percent compliance rate. Coordinating rabies vaccination information with pet licensing records would increase pet license compliance while also increasing pet owner awareness of the responsibility and benefits of licensing. The current compliance rate of 24 percent generates \$2.5 million in pet licensing revenue. Increasing pet licensing compliance rates has the potential to generate substantial increases in revenue to help offset program costs, which are largely general fund supported.

In support of its proposal, RASKC has found that rabies vaccination reporting requirements are becoming increasingly common nationwide. According to the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, over a third of states (18) had some form of mandatory rabies vaccination reporting as of 2024. Regarding data-sharing, RASKC states that many veterinary clinics now operate under national corporate ownership who routinely comply with reporting requirements in multiple jurisdictions, and that research has not identified any

jurisdictions experiencing reductions in rabies vaccination rates following implementation of reporting requirements.

Benefits of coordinated reporting can include public health benefits such as faster bite investigations, more timely quarantine determinations, and improved coordination between animal control and public health. Pet licensing benefits include pet reunification (over 700 pets reunified annually) and increased revenues to support services such as animal sheltering, veterinary care, adoptions, spay/neuter services, and animal control response.

OUTCOMES:

The City and its residents benefit from the animal services provided by Regional Animal Services of King County. The City would benefit financially from any increase in pet licensing fee revenue generated. However, this information is being provided for feedback purposes only at this time.

COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT:

- **Timeline (previous or planned):**
N/A
- **Outreach Methods and Results:**
N/A
- **Feedback Summary:**
N/A

BUDGET IMPACT:**Total Cost:**

N/A

Approved in current biennial budget:

☐ Yes

☐ No

☒ N/A

Budget Offer Number:

N/A

Budget Priority:

N/A

Other budget impacts or additional costs:

☐ Yes

☐ No

☒ N/A

If yes, explain:

The proposals have the potential to generate pet licensing fee revenue for the city, but the information is being presented for feedback purposes only at this time.

Funding source(s):

General Fund

Budget/Funding Constraints:

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☐ **Additional budget details attached**

COUNCIL REVIEW:

Previous Contact(s)

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
N/A	Item has not been presented to Council	N/A

Proposed Upcoming Contact(s)

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
N/A	None proposed at this time	N/A

Time Constraints:

Because one of the proposals relates to pet licensing fees, Regional Animal Services of King County requests feedback by this fall in order to inform ILA contract terms that could be proposed for 2027.

ANTICIPATED RESULT IF NOT APPROVED:

N/A - Information and feedback only.

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A