



OFFICE OF THE  
MAYOR

411 Main Street (530) 896-7250  
P.O. Box 3420 Fax (530) 895-4825  
Chico, CA 95927 <http://www.ci.chico.ca.us>

September 10, 2010



The Honorable Steven J. Howell, Presiding Judge  
c/o Court Administration  
Superior Court of California, County of Butte  
One Court Street  
Oroville, CA 95965

RE: 2009-10 Final Report of the Butte County Grand Jury

Dear Judge Howell:

Pursuant to California Penal Code §933, this letter constitutes the response of the City of Chico to the 2009-10 Final Report of the Butte County Grand Jury.

**BUTTE COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL AND SHELTERS**

**Finding F1:** "In Butte County, 90% of calls for service are generated by 10% of the population, who are habitual offenders."

**Response:** Respondent agrees with this finding.

**Recommendation R1:** "Owners of animals who are habitual offenders should be subject to increased fees for repeat violation."

**Response:** This recommendation has already been implemented. For many years the Chico Municipal Code has included increased fines for repeat offenders. (7.08.150cmc)

**Finding F2:** "Animal Control has a much easier time identifying the owners of animals with implanted micro chips."

**Response:** Respondent agrees with this finding.

**Recommendation R2:** "Owners not wishing to have a microchip placed in their animal should be subject to additional fees."

**Response:** This recommendation will not be fully implemented because pet owners have a right to object to having a chip placed in their pet. It is difficult to quantify what, if any expense would be saved by enforcing such an incentive. However, all animals that are adopted out of the Chico Shelter are now "chipped" and every owner recovering an animal is given the option to pay for a chip to be implanted in their pet.

**Finding F8:** “The facility currently being utilized by the Butte Humane Society, which is owned by the City of Chico, is old, inadequate, outdated, and in poor condition.”

**Response:** Respondent agrees with this finding.

**Recommendation R8:** “The City of Chico should acquire property and build a new animal shelter facility. The City is encouraged to consider using the Northwest SPCA as a model. We strongly feel this should be a priority project.”

**Response:** This recommendation will not be fully implemented because purchasing property to build a new shelter is not necessary. It is noted that the Grand Jury did not choose to speak to any representatives from City management before making the recommendation to move the shelter. The City management has conducted an analysis to determine the feasibility of expanding the facility in its current location. That analysis concludes that:

- There is enough space at the existing facility on Fair Street to build a large expansion.
- A large facility expansion can be built at a far more economical cost at the existing site than by purchasing new land and building or remodeling a new shelter.
- Building a new, purpose-designed expansion is far more economical and will provide a better finished product than re-modeling a previously built structure.
- The existing Fair Street site has been thoroughly vetted through the community and is known and accepted by all as the location of the Chico Animal Shelter. It has high visibility in the community.
- The Grand Jury referenced “Shelter Planners of America” 2009 document which does not indicate that an expansion at the existing site is unwise or unfeasible, nor does it address the opportunities and/or obstacles involved in expanding the facility.

The Respondent has visited the Northwest SPCA and agrees that it is a good model, both for its operations and its modern facility design.

**Finding F9:** “The City of Chico does not have a low-cost spay and neuter clinic.”

**Response:** Respondent agrees with this finding.

**Recommendation R9:** “The City of Chico should establish a much needed low-cost spay and neuter clinic. This clinic will lower the expenses being incurred by the City for so many unwanted animals.”

**Response:** The City does not plan to implement this recommendation at this time. The Butte Humane Society has opened a low-cost spay neuter clinic in Chico. The planned expansion of the City Animal Shelter on Fair Street can include such a clinic if it is needed at that time.

**Finding F10:** " Most facilities have expressed a desire to be able to accept credit cards for payment of all imposed fees and fines."

**Response:** Respondent agrees with this finding.

**Recommendation R10:** "The Grand Jury recommends that all agencies not currently accepting payment of fees and fines by credit card should do so."

**Response:** This recommendation has already been implemented. The Butte Humane Society currently accepts credit card payments made at the Chico Animal Shelter.

If you have any questions regarding the City's response, please contact me or call City Manager David Burkland at 896-7200.

Sincerely,



Ann M. Schwab  
Mayor

Authorized pursuant to City Council  
Motion on September 7, 2010

cc: City Clerk (8)  
City Manager  
City Attorney  
Department Heads  
Butte Humane Society

G-GA-1-14