



CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH  
OFFICE  
of the  
CITY ATTORNEY

**Michael E. Gates**  
City Attorney

P.O. Box 190  
2000 Main Street  
Huntington Beach, California 92648  
Telephone: (714) 536-5555  
Facsimile: (714) 374-1590

**Nadin S. Said**  
Sr. Deputy City Attorney  
**Ryan E. Lumm**  
Sr. Deputy City Attorney  
**Lauren L. Rose**  
Deputy City Attorney  
**Charles "Connor" Hyland**  
Deputy City Attorney  
**Steven F. Pomeroy**  
Community Prosecutor

August 29, 2023

Honorable Maria Hernandez  
Presiding Judge of the Orange County Superior Court  
700 Civic Center Drive, West  
Santa Ana, Ca. 92701

Re: City of Huntington Beach Response  
2022-2023 Orange County Grand Jury Report  
Gimme Shelter and a Pound of Advice

Honorable Presiding Judge Hernandez,

The City of Huntington Beach received and reviewed the referenced Grand Jury Report, and in accordance with Penal Code § 533.05(b)(3), the City requires an extension of time totaling 60 days from the date of this letter to respond to the Grand Jury Report titled **Gimme Shelter and a Pound of Advice, "The State of Animal Welfare Overseen by the County of Orange."**

The City provides the following explanation and timeframe of the analysis requiring the extension in time.

**Responses and Findings:**

**F4:**

Based upon industry standards and best practices, Orange County Animal Care kennel attendants are understaffed to meet the needs of animals under care.

**Response:**

The City of Huntington Beach requires further time for a complete analysis of this finding with all applicable City departments.

Re: City of Huntington Beach Response 2022-2023 Orange County Grand Jury Report  
Gimme Shelter and a Pound of Advice  
August 29, 2023  
Page 2

**F6:**

The Orange County Animal Care Volunteer program was stopped during COVID-19 and restarting the program has been slow, resulting in decreased animal socialization and enrichment.

**Response:**

The City of Huntington Beach requires further time for a complete analysis of this finding with all applicable City departments.

**F7:**

Orange County Animal Care's Behavior Evaluation Committee evaluates dogs for euthanasia without written guidelines, policies, or procedures, resulting in inconsistent outcomes over time. Behavior evaluated euthanasia outcomes are dependent on the experience and personal considerations of the individual committee members and management rather than written objective standards.

**Response:**

The City of Huntington Beach requires further time for a complete analysis of this finding with all applicable City departments. The City will complete its analysis and provide a response within 60 days.

**F8:**

The rate of behavioral euthanasia of dogs has increased significantly over the last 2 years.

**Response:**

The City of Huntington Beach requires further time for a complete analysis of this finding with all applicable City departments. The City will complete its analysis and provide a response within 60 days. .

**F9:**

Orange County Animal Care does not employ a professional or trained and certified animal behaviorist to oversee the shelter's dog enrichment program, resulting in dogs with declining behavior being placed at greater risk of being euthanized.

**Response:**

The City of Huntington Beach requires further time for a complete analysis of this finding with all applicable City departments. The City will complete its analysis and provide a response within 60 days.

Re: City of Huntington Beach Response 2022-2023 Orange County Grand Jury Report  
Gimme Shelter and a Pound of Advice

August 29, 2023

Page 3

**F10:**

While many county and city animal shelters throughout the state have active Trap, Neuter, and Return programs, Orange County Animal Care stopped its Trap, Neuter, and Return program, reportedly on the basis of the County Counsel's legal opinion that the program violates a California statute related to willful animal abandonment.

**Response:**

The City of Huntington Beach requires further time for a complete analysis of this finding with all applicable City departments. The City will complete its analysis and provide a response within 60 days.

**F11:**

The termination of the Trap, Neuter, and Return program is correlated with an increase in adult cat euthanasia rate at the shelter.

**Response:**

The City of Huntington Beach requires further time for a complete analysis of this finding with all applicable City departments. The City will complete its analysis and provide a response within 60 days.

**F12:**

There have been public concerns and requests expressed over the years for public programs to include a spay/neuter program by Orange County Animal Care.

**Response:**

The City of Huntington Beach requires further time for a complete analysis of this finding with all applicable City departments. The City will complete its analysis and provide a response within 60 days.

**F13:**

The current adoption appointment system restricts public access to the dog kennels, thereby limiting potential adopters' access to all available animals.

**Response:**

The City of Huntington Beach requires further time for a complete analysis of this finding with all applicable City departments. The City will complete its analysis and provide a response within 60 days.

**F15:**

Internal and community engagement does not adequately communicate the shelter's mission and operating strategy.

Re: City of Huntington Beach Response 2022-2023 Orange County Grand Jury Report  
Gimme Shelter and a Pound of Advice  
August 29, 2023  
Page 4

**Response:**

The City of Huntington Beach requires further time for a complete analysis of this finding with all applicable City departments. The City will complete its analysis and provide a response within 60 days.

**F16:**

The information currently on the Orange County Animal Care website for low-cost spay/neuter is not up to date with regard to referrals and prices for spay/neuter procedures.

**Response:**

The City of Huntington Beach requires further time for a complete analysis of this finding with all applicable City departments. The City will complete its analysis and provide a response within 60 days.

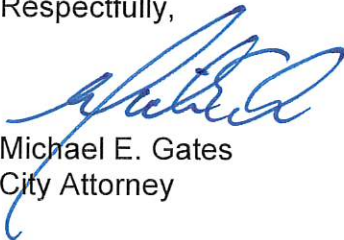
**R6:**

By June 30, 2024, the Board of Supervisors should evaluate the strategic option of creating a Joint Powers Authority for the County and fourteen contract Cities to take ownership and shared responsibility for the financial and operating policies and practices of OCAC.

**Response:**

The City of Huntington Beach requires further time for a complete analysis of this finding with all applicable City departments. The City will complete its analysis and provide a response within 60 days. .

Respectfully,



Michael E. Gates  
City Attorney

Cc:

Al Zelinka, City Manager  
Honorable Tony Strickland, Mayor  
Eric Parra, Chief of Police