



NEWS FROM

CITY CONTROLLER LAURA CHICK

City Hall East, Room 300, 200 N. Main St., Los Angeles, CA 90012

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CHICK CITES ANIMAL SERVICES ON FISCAL OPERATIONS

Los Angeles – The Department of Animal Services' fiscal operations are struggling with lax collection efforts, undocumented spending and haphazard contracting practices according to an audit released by City Controller Laura Chick.

"My audit of the fiscal operations has uncovered a Department which is struggling to move forward," said Chick.

"The largest source of revenue for Animal Services is from the dog license fee. The City of Los Angeles has anywhere from 400,000 to 800,000 dogs, however, my audit found that the Department has registered only 123,000. Increasing this number of licensed dogs would not only boost revenues, it would also help the Department achieve its mission," wrote Chick in a letter to the City's elected leadership.

"In addition, the Department, to say the least, is inactive in its collection of monies owed it, to the tune of at least \$2 million over the last two and a half years. Delinquent accounts are not transferred to the City Attorney as they should be," said Chick.

"My report also revealed that the Department's spending and contracting operations are haphazard and lack needed oversight. Thousands of dollars of charges made on purchasing cards had no requisite support information as to why the expenditures were made. Contracts were awarded with little transparency, lacking crucial documentation, and at times were executed without the required signatures of the City Attorney or City Clerk," said Chick

"In February, the City Council passed a mandatory spay and neuter ordinance which takes effect this October. This is a crucial time for Animal Services as it prepares for this new and significant responsibility. It is critical that it get its financial house in order and maximize every revenue generating opportunity available," said Chick.

"I will be bringing forward additional information regarding the Department's Spay and Neuter Program in a performance audit to be released this summer," concluded Chick.

The Animal Services audit can be accessed at Controller Chick's web-site at www.lacity.org.

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