



# CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

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MEETING DATE: DECEMBER 1, 2009

ITEM NUMBER:

**SUBJECT:** K-9 CLEANUP SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM FOR DOG WASTE BAGS AND DISPENSERS

**DATE:** NOVEMBER 16, 2009

**FROM:** CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

**PRESENTATION BY:** THOMAS R. HATCH, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** CAROL C. PROCTOR, MANAGEMENT ANALYST,  
AT 714-754-5688

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the City Council:

1. Approve the K-9 Cleanup sponsorship program to offset costs for providing dog waste bags and dispensers at City parks; and
2. Amend Council Policy 800-4 to reflect the addition of the K-9 Cleanup sponsorship program.

## **BACKGROUND:**

At their October 13, 2009 Study Session, City Council reviewed a report on a sponsorship program for dog waste bags and dispensers. Attachment 1 contains this study session report. The purpose of the sponsorship program is to provide a revenue stream to pay for the bags and the dispensers, a plan to ensure dispensers are maintained, and a marketing plan to promote the program. City staff worked with resident Judi Berry to design the program. The Costa Mesa Community Foundation approved the conceptual program at their August 26, 2009 meeting and created a "K-9 Cleanup" account to accept monetary donations for the K-9 Cleanup program.

The City Council requested that staff bring the K-9 Cleanup dog waste bag and dispenser sponsorship program concept forward to a City Council meeting.

## **ANALYSIS:**

Due to the economic downturn, certain services were eliminated from the City's 2009-10 budget. One item removed was the provision of dog waste bags, which cost the City approximately \$40,000 per year. Members of the community have expressed a desire to have dog waste bags and dispensers available, and are willing to contribute to have them available.

Staff further investigated ways to provide the bags, including: a coin-operated machine dispenser; bag holders that the public could place extra plastic shopping bags into; and a sponsorship program, paid for by individuals and businesses. The coin machine dispensers is not practical, based on several factors: (1) the plastic capsule packaging the dog waste bag may create a litter problem; (2) dog handlers would need to have change readily available to purchase the bag; (3) the machines

could malfunction if slugs were inserted; vandalism to the machine mechanism may arise; (4) theft of coins could occur; and (5) staff time to collect, count and deposit the coins would also be needed.

The idea of placing a dispenser with a hinged or similar lid for the public to place bags in for others to use may work well in a specific setting, such as at the Bark Park. However, in some areas of various City parks, it may be more difficult for the public to stock these types of dispensers. Another concern is with the type of bags deposited by the general public in the dispenser—degradable and bags of recycled material are preferred, as well as those that are not torn. Finally, litter could be a problem because of easy access to the bags, and if bags are not properly placed into the dispenser. The bags could fall out and be blown by the wind. However, staff will implement a pilot program with one such dispenser in a select location to determine the viability of this approach. While litter could be a problem with all three types of dispensers, staff feels the best approach is through a sponsorship program, with buy-in from the public.

The proposed K-9 Cleanup sponsorship program (Attachment 2) would present a method for the City, dog owners, residents, homeowner associations, and businesses (including Orange County Humane Society, veterinarians, dog-related businesses, etc.) to partner on providing dog waste bags and dispensers. It would also encourage a sense of stewardship to keep City parks, parkways and medians and other open space areas clean for all to enjoy.

Marketing by staff would be limited to occasional press releases, website notices/flyers, the Costa Mesa Community News, through the Animal License/Renewal Notification process, through other appropriate marketing venues, and on existing dispensers as well as on those sponsored dispensers. The Costa Mesa Community Foundation would also promote this program.

As indicated in the Study Session Staff Report and the K-9 Sponsorship Program, donations of any amount would be accepted through the Costa Mesa Community Foundation towards the payment of waste bags and dispensers. There is currently \$1,600 in the K-9 Cleanup account.

Sponsorship funds would also be funneled through the Foundation. The minimum sponsorship of each dispenser and bags is a one-year commitment. Recognition of each sponsor is an important element in making this a successful program. Staff investigated the cost difference between placing a sponsorship sign on each dispenser purchased versus printing the name of the sponsor on the bags. Information from various sources revealed that printing sponsors names on bags is very cost prohibitive to create, especially with the potential number of sponsors involved.

Based on costs involved, including staff time, it is recommended that small (removable) sponsorship signs be used to discreetly recognize individual sponsors.

While one-year sponsorships would be available, a 3-tiered sponsorship program is proposed. The sponsorship level dollar amounts were selected by the Costa Mesa Community Foundation when they approved creating the account for accepting the donations. The Foundation considered various dollar amounts, and believed the three sponsorship level amounts were attractively set to encourage sponsors, particularly in the current economy. The Foundation further stated that depending on how well the program is received, they would prefer to adjust the tiered sponsorship amounts, should that become necessary. The Foundation felt it would be a more efficient method for ensuring success of the program.

The new dispensers will replace the current ones on existing supports as a sponsorship is submitted. Each sponsor will be advised of the location of their dispenser, and that dispenser will display a sign recognizing the sponsor. Some members of the City Council had expressed concerns about the sign copy, and preferred simple information. Staff has come up with a draft of the revised sign (Attachment 3). Donations to the K-9 Cleanup account will further offset costs for bags, stocking of bags, replacement dispensers, and any maintenance required by the City.

Should City Council approve the K-9 Cleanup Sponsorship, it is suggested that wording be added to Council Policy 800-4, pertaining to Acceptance and Recognition of Donation to City Parks and Public Facilities and Circle of Service Recognition. Attachment 4 is the proposed amended Council Policy, with a section added covering the K-9 Cleanup Sponsorship.

Approval of this program will also mean that the City secure dispensers and bags at the best and lowest possible price. Specifically, the products would be those that are easy to obtain, the highest quality, user-friendly, and best fit for our community needs. Staff will then proceed to use funds donated to the K-9 Cleanup account through the Costa Mesa Community Foundation to purchase the bags and dispensers.

**ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:**

1. Do not approve this sponsorship program.

**FISCAL REVIEW:**

There is no fiscal impact to the City.

Donations made to the Costa Mesa Community Foundation for the K-9 clean-up program will be used to purchase bags and dispensers, stocking of bags, and the maintenance and repairs of the dispensers. The monies available for the K-9 clean-up program are solely dependent on the donations received by the Foundation.

**LEGAL REVIEW:**

There is no legal review required for this item.

**CONCLUSION:**

The City Council needs to decide whether to approve the dog waste bag/dispenser sponsorship (K-9 Cleanup) program.

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DISTRIBUTION:    Director Of Public Services  
                         Maintenance Services Manager  
                         Police Chief  
                         Police Chief Adjutant/Sergeant-Animal Control Div

Recreation Manager  
Assistant Finance Director  
Grant Administrator

- ATTACHMENTS:    1    [10-13-09 City Council Study Session Report](#)  
                         2    [K-9 Cleanup Sponsorship Program](#)  
                         3    [Sample Sponsor Sign](#)  
                         4    [Council Policy 800-4 – Redline/Proposed Amended](#)