

Private kennels squelch plan

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Complaints and the grand jury notwithstanding, the county will have to keep contracting with the present dog catcher because private kennels don't want the four-legged riff-raff off the streets mixing with their private clients.

While there's space at private kennels for part of the load — 264 dogs and 114 cats — kennel owners are not willing "to intermingle animals with an unknown history with those owned by private clients," Acting County Administrator George Newell reports.

His information will go to the county Board of Supervisors Tuesday along with Newell's recommendation that the county agree to its \$261,490 offered contract with the Animal Welfare Association.

The report was ordered by the board after it received 24 complaints in June and a critical evaluation of the dog-catching services by the grand jury.

People complained of insensitive handling of animals, poor record keeping and disease at the shelter.

The shelter has space for 60 dogs, 24 puppies, 75 cats and usually has on hand about 1,000 other animals made up of horses, chickens, opossums and sheep.

The shelter gathers around 40 animals a day and while that's more than all the private kennels that take in general breeds could handle, they could help in the load if they were willing.

The grand jury recommended the county set up an oversight committee and Newell agrees that the pre-1978 Dog Pound Committee be revived.

He balks, however, at the jury's suggestion the county look to building and managing its own pound.

Newell notes the law prevents the county from taking over the non-profit Animal Welfare Association and its shelter.

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loans.

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He says the county cannot afford to build its own.

Presently, interested people can join the association and in that capacity monitor the operation, Newell notes.

The pound committee's primary function will be to examine impounding methods in other counties to see if they can be borrowed to improve services here.

Newell's office will do its own quarterly reviews to determine the association is living up to its contract.