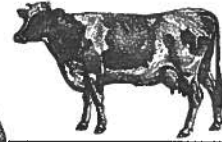
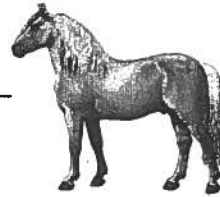




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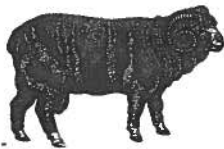
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Date 8:09 am, Apr 12, 2011

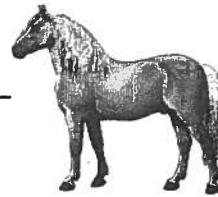
Dear Supervisor Nutting,

With regards to the upcoming Monday, April 11th workshop on Animal Services I have the following comments.

1. Per the exemption for licensing Agricultural dogs and guide dogs. I suggest you consider licensing but then waving the fee. The purpose of licensing is to ensure rabies vaccination and protect the public. With guide dogs and other service dogs their exposure to the public is at least as great as the average pet and probably more so. For canines used in the agricultural industry to herd cattle, sheep/goats or to guard against predators of small ruminants there is not a great risk of exposure for the public. It is critical however that these dogs are protected against rabies due to the fact that being in the field for a great number of hours each day or even overnight their risk of exposure is great. If one of these animals does contract rabies the risk of that animal exposing an entire herd of animals is high. The entire herd would then have to be quarantined behind a double fence and monitored for 6 months or slaughtered. --- There would also have to be some sort of an evaluation system or review to determine who qualifies for this exemption.
2. I have worked with Animal Services in El Dorado County on various cases over the last 20+ years. I find the current group of officers to be a most reasonable and fair group of individuals. They know how to work with livestock owners and pet owner and work with veterinarians to come up with workable solutions with a minimum of conflict. I will point out that an NGO/nonprofit organization running animal services would not likely be as knowledgeable or understanding about livestock issues.
3. After a review of the documents pertaining to Animal Services Budget, with my professional understanding of laws regarding rabies, and after research into per capita costs for provision of Animal Control/Animal Services the cost projections for EDC Animal Services is consistent with costs nation wide. At \$13 per capita and with a population of 178,447 per the 2010 census the total would be \$2,319,811.
4. Review of the supporting documents for this workshop has also revealed to me that at least 75% of the expense for Animal Services goes to functions mandated by law whose primary function is to protect your constituents. At the shelter a lot of the so called "fluff" is done by a cadre of volunteers.
5. The recent fee hikes may need to be reassessed. They certainly create a negative image of Animal Services and may actually backfire and decrease revenue generation. Strategies to encourage licensing of all dogs in the county may be more productive in this regard. Calgary Canada is one model that appears to be



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working but strategies need to be explored that increase the % of licensed dogs in the county through incentives and positive image and perceived value.

6. I see many non-profits in the area of animal rescue, sheltering and welfare going under or barely able to keep their head above water so to speak. They are not trained to do the work of an animal control officer. I do not see any groups in the wings clamoring to take over Animal Services in this County. For the safety of your constituents and to meet your legal obligations El Dorado County needs to continue to provide **Animal Services. They need a permanent and appropriate facility in which to do this. You have the land; you have the plans; you have the CEQA compliance. Move ahead with the New Shelter.** If you continue to stall you are going to end up in an emergency crisis with no where to house the shelter and wasting yet more time and money. You see quite happy to move toward spending \$5,000,000 toward the new \$89 million county courthouse project. Quit stalling and move ahead with the site improvements so we can get donations to help put up the facilities. Fail to do this and you substantiate the Grand Jury Report that questioned the motives for the procurement of the site for the New Shelter.

Signed,

Lisa S. Couper, DVM