



Animal Control & Shelter Services

Overview & Contract Proposal
BOCC Workshop 01/20/2026

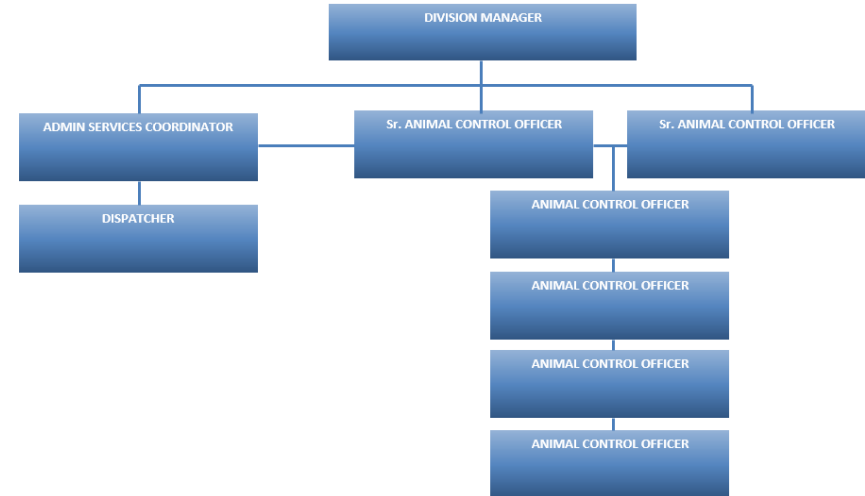


CHARLOTTE COUNTY
FLORIDA

Animal Control Overview

- Current Budget – **\$1,451,298**
- Current FTE's – **9**
- Avg Number of Animals Impounded Per Year – **2,200**
- Avg Call Responses/Follow-Ups Per Year – **10,000**

Charlotte Co. Animal Control Organizational Chart



Animal Control Regulations & Requirements

Ordinance Requirements:

Charlotte Co. Ord. Sec. 1-4-26. - Administration and enforcement.

Animal Control **shall** investigate complaints of alleged violations of:

- Any Animal at Large
- Sick or Injured animals
- Dangerous/Aggressive Dogs
- Animal Bites & Bite Quarantines
- Rabies Exposures
- Nuisance Animals
- Unvaccinated or Unlicensed Animals
- Animal Cruelty, Neglect, or Abandonment

Animal Control Regulations & Requirements

Ordinance Requirements:

- **FY24/25 Stats** (incoming calls requiring a response – excludes follow-ups & case completion)

# of Dogs Running at Large Calls	354
# of Animal Cruelty/Neglect Calls	358
# of Animal Removal Calls	733
# of Wildlife Removal Calls	224
# of Sick/Injured/Distressed Animal Calls	436
# of Dangerous/Aggressive Dog Calls	341
# of Animal Bites & Quarantines/Rabies Exposures Calls	407
# of Nuisance Animals Calls	83
# of Public Assist Calls	123
Total	3,059



Animal Control Regulations & Requirements

Statutorial Requirements:

- **Florida Administrative Code 64D-3 – Rabies Control & Quarantines –**

Animal Control is required to:

- Quarantine dogs and cats that bite for a period of **10-days** from the date of the bite.
- Quarantine dogs and cats that have potentially been exposed to rabies through interaction with wildlife.

Animal Control Regulations & Requirements

Statutorial Requirements:

- **§767.12 – Dangerous Dog Enforcement.–**

Animal Control is required to:

- Investigate all reported incidents involving any dog that may be classified as dangerous under state law.
- Confiscate any dog that has killed a person or inflicted a dog bite that causes severe injuries to a person and hold the dog until the investigation is resolved.
- Confiscate any classified dangerous dog that attacks or bites a person or domestic animal without provocation and hold the dog until the investigation is resolved.
- Confiscate any classified dangerous dog that causes severe injury to or death of any person and hold the dog until the investigation is resolved.

Animal Intake Trends

	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024
# of Animals Transported to AWL Shelter by Animal Control (held pursuant to contract)	1,123	1,169	1,256
# of animals transported to AWL shelter by citizens (held pursuant to contract)	1,112	1,114	896
Total animal intake to Animal Welfare League (held pursuant to contract)	2,281	2,283	2,152

Source: Animal Control

Contract Overview

Animal Control maintains an annual contract with the Animal Welfare League of Charlotte County for animal housing services. We rely on this service to provide services to the community and to meet our statutorial and ordinance obligations. This agreement was established in 1974 and has been in effect for over 50 years.

Current AWL Contract Scope of Services:

- Animal Intake & Housing
- Boarding & Care
- Euthanasia Services
- Fee Collections
- Return to Owner Services
- Record Maintenance

Contract Overview

Current Contract Details:

- Renews automatically each year unless termination is requested by either party.
- Current contract increases **3% per year**
- If either party decided to terminate the current contract, at least **nine (9) months** advance notice must be provided.
- Current holding periods:
 - **5-days** for stray animals
 - **10-days** for bite quarantines
- Animals become the property of the Animal Welfare League if not claimed, unless a **HOLD** is placed by Animal Control.
- AWL is responsible for:
 - Creating space and providing care for county-impounded animals
 - Collecting fees on behalf of the County
 - Performing Euthanasia upon request
 - Notifying the County if a county animal becomes ill or dies
 - Maintaining accurate records
 - Returning animals to owners if claimed

Contract Overview

Cost to Pet Owners:

Pet owners are charged the following to claim their animal:

- **Daily Boarding Rate:**
 - **\$15.00** per day for standard board
 - **\$18.00** per day for bite case quarantine
- **Impoundment Fees:**
 - **\$40.00** per animal – 1st Impound
 - **\$80.00** per animal – 2nd Impound
 - **\$100.00** per animal – 3rd Impound
- **License & Rabies Fees:**
 - **\$17.00** license fee for an altered animal (if not current)
 - **\$35.00** license fee for an unaltered animal (if not current)
 - **\$15.00** charge for rabies vaccine (if not current)

FY24/25 - \$15,020 in Daily Boarding Fees & Impoundment Fees Collected in Revenue for Pets Returned to Owners.

Contract Overview

Facility Details:

- AWL is a non-profit **501(c)(3)** organization.
- Employs **26 FTE's & 19 PTE's** in various roles and is overseen by a Board of Directors and an Executive Director.
- The property includes two buildings:
 - Intake Building: **6,057 sq. ft.**
 - Adoption Center: **10,936 sq. ft.**
- Located on a low-lying tract off Harborview Rd, approximately **6-8 ft** above sea level, making it susceptible to evacuations during hurricane season.
- Capacity: AWL has **109** cat cages & **120** dog runs/cages.

Contract Overview

The contract was renegotiated in 2010 after the Suncoast Humane Society opted out of its agreement with the County, raising concerns at AWL about accommodating all impounded County animals. During this time, the contract was based on a 'per animal' cost structure.

Key Details:

- **Six (6)** stainless steel caging units (**8 cages per unit**) were purchased and placed at AWL to house additional small animals and cats, providing a total of **48 cages**. (language added to the contract)
- **Twelve (12)** large free-standing crates were purchased and placed at AWL to accommodate small to medium-sized animals with welded stands. (language added to the contract)
- **Four (4)** additional kennels were constructed/installed by Charlotte County Facilities and added to the existing kennel area to house medium to large dogs.
- The scope of service remained the same.

Contract Overview

In **July 2011**, an audit was requested by the BOCC to probe inflated operational expenses regarding feral cats being housed for 5-days.

It was determined that:

- less than **5%** of cats transported to the AWL were being claimed by an owner
- nearly **70%** of the monies appropriated to AWL from the County were spent on housing cats

It was called into question as to why we were holding them for a 5-day period

- This led to a fee of **\$65.00** for a removal of a stray cat to offset these expenses

Contract Overview

The contract was last renegotiated in 2013 in response to their reduced revenue. Up until this time, the agreement continued under a per-animal cost structure, which resulted in significant savings for the County but a considerable revenue loss for the Animal Welfare League.

Key Details:

- A flat-fee structure was adopted.
- The 'Feral Cat' **\$65.00** removal fee was rescinded.
- Initial rate (Sept. 2013): **\$19,167** per month with a **3%** annual increase (approx. **\$230,000** annually).
- Current rate: **\$27,327.56** per month or **\$327,931** annually.
- If either party decided to terminate the current contract, at least nine **(9) months** advance notice must be provided.
- The scope of services remained the same.

Contract Overview

The **\$65.00** fee to remove feral cats decreased the number of cats being impounded and removed resulting in a loss of **\$62,578** to the AWL.

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>AWL Expense</u>
FY11/12	\$159,248
FY12/13	\$96,670
FY13/14 <i>(new contract start)</i>	\$230,004
FY14/15	\$236,904
FY15/16	\$244,011
FY16/17	\$251,332
FY17/18	\$258,872
FY18/19	\$266,638
FY19/20	\$274,637
FY20/21	\$282,876
FY21/22	\$291,362
FY22/23	\$300,103
FY23/24	\$309,106
FY24/25	\$318,379
FY25/26	\$327,931

Source: Animal Control

HELP Program

In 2021, Animal Control partnered with the Animal Welfare League to launch the HELP Program (**Help End Local Pet-overpopulation**), a low-cost spay/neuter initiative designed to provide affordable services to residents.

Program Highlights:

- The Board of County Commissioners approved a Funding Agreement in 2021.
- The County initially contributed **\$35,000** annually to subsidize the program.
- The Animal Welfare League provided veterinarians, facility resources, and administrative support to deliver services.
- Citizens could access spay or neuter procedures for dogs and cats—male or female—for a flat fee of **\$20.00**.
- Rabies vaccinations were included upon request.

Program Status:

- The HELP Program was discontinued in 2023 at the request of the Animal Welfare League due to resource challenges.

AWL Request for Contract Update

On September 22, 2025, the Animal Welfare League submitted a formal request to revise our current agreement, citing the following factors:

- Population growth
- Inflation
- Decline in donations
- Rising operational costs
- Facility upgrades to meet community needs

Key Elements of AWL Proposal

Requested Rate:

- Increase from **\$27,327** to **\$108,730** per month (approximately **\$1.3 million** annually) to house impounded animals **with a 5% annual increase**

Additional Overage Fees (not included in our current agreement):

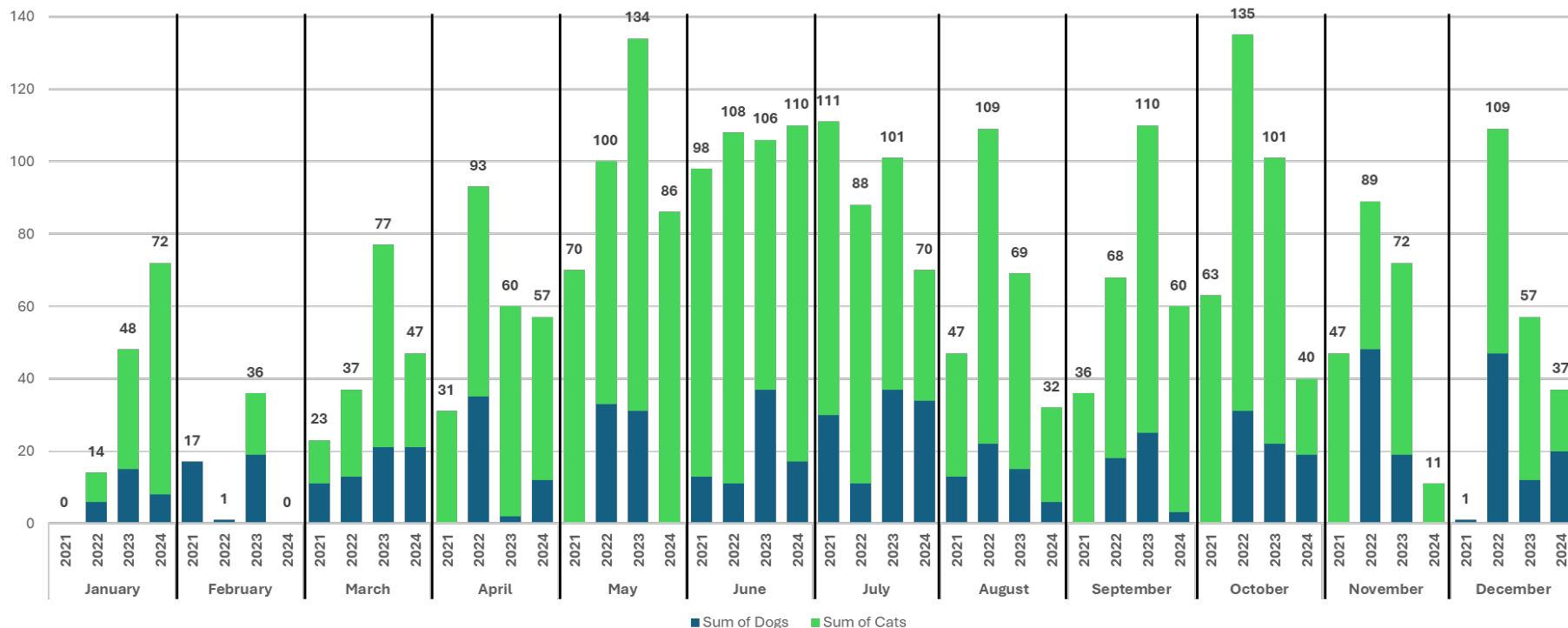
- **\$15** per day for any animal held beyond the required holding period
- **\$500** per dog for monthly intakes exceeding 50
- **\$300** per cat for monthly intakes exceeding 50

Additional Terms:

- AWL reserves the right to refuse housing for County animals during periods of overcrowding, with costs borne by the County

Source: Animal Welfare League

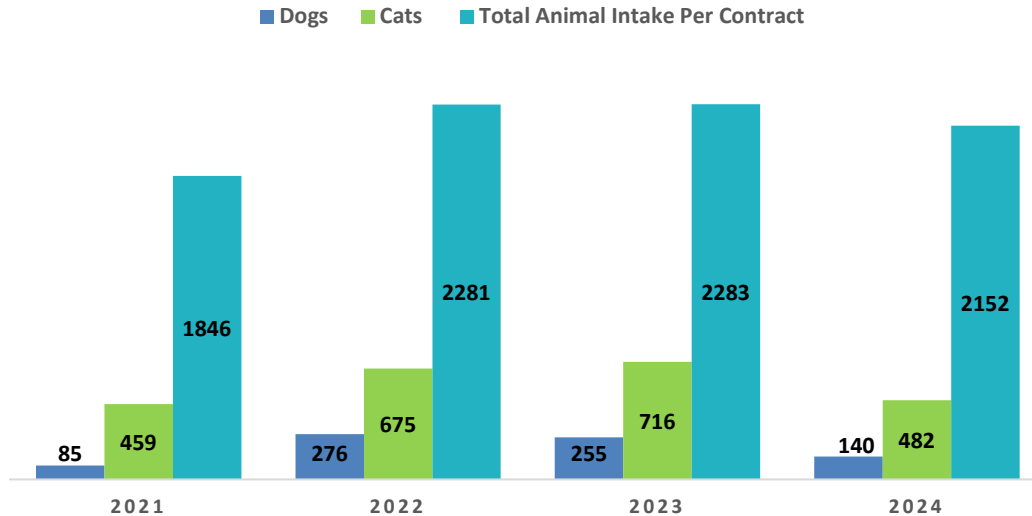
Annual Dog/Cat Intake Exceeding 50 per Month



	2021	2022	2023	2024
Annual Dogs	85	276	255	140
Annual Cats	459	675	716	482

Capacity Thresholds & Overage Cost Analysis

ANNUAL DOG/CAT INTAKE EXCEEDING 50 PER MONTH



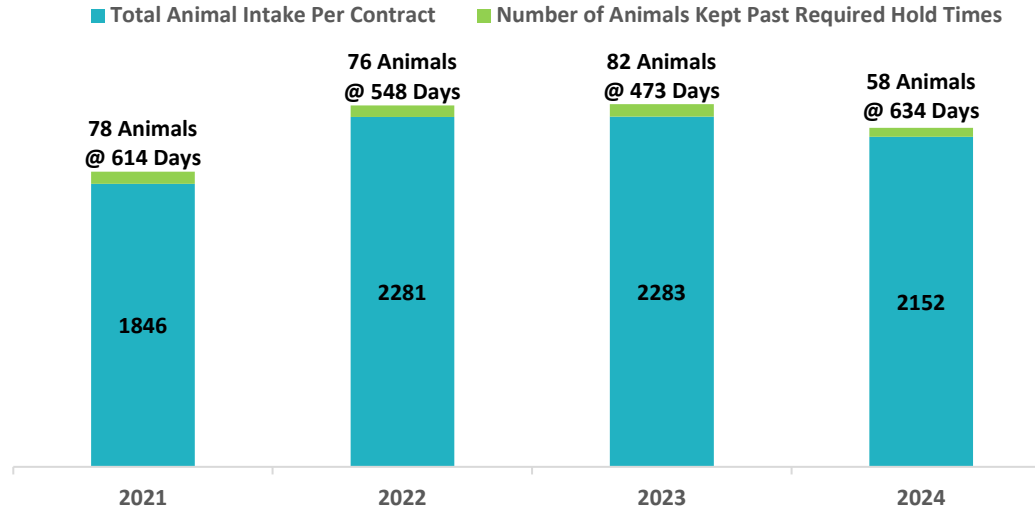
Estimated Additional Costs:

- 2021 – **\$180,200**
- 2022 – **\$340,500**
- 2023 – **\$342,300**
- 2024 – **\$214,600**

Source: Animal Control

Extended Holding Periods

ANNUAL DOG/CAT INTAKE KEPT PAST REQUIRED HOLDING PERIODS



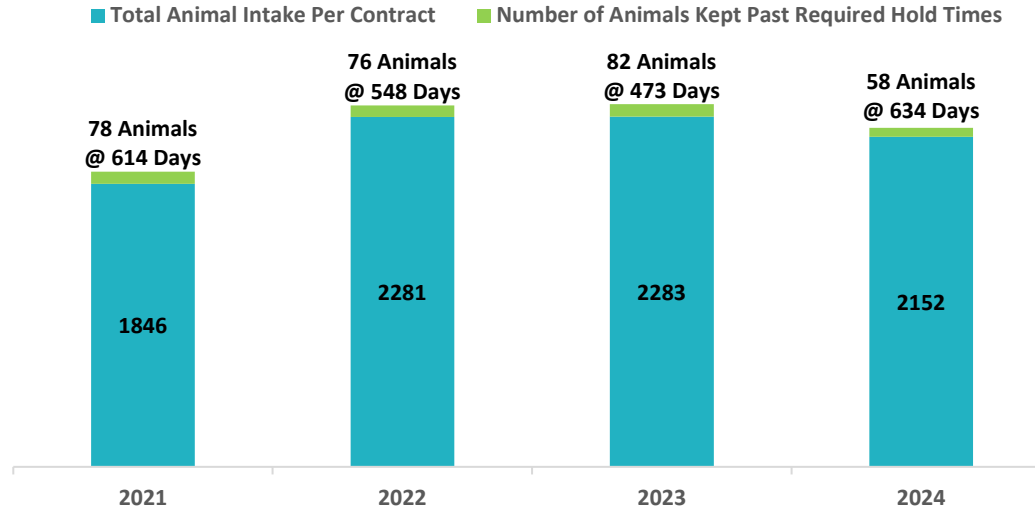
Annual Overall Percentage:

- 2021 – **78** animals ~ **4%**
- 2022 – **76** animals ~ **3%**
- 2023 – **82** animals ~ **4%**
- 2024 – **58** animals ~ **3%**

Source: Animal Control

Extended Holding Periods

ANNUAL DOG/CAT INTAKE KEPT PAST REQUIRED HOLDING PERIODS



Estimated Additional Boarding Costs:

- 2021 – \$9,210
- 2022 – \$8,220
- 2023 – \$7,095
- 2024 – \$9,510

Source: Animal Control

Extended Holding Periods

Reasons animals may remain beyond their required holding period at the request of Animal Control:

- **Medical Care or Hospitalization** – Extended stay for treatment or recovery.
- **Owner Arrest or Incarceration** – Time allowed for owner to reclaim the animal.
- **Court-Ordered Hold** – Legal directive requiring continued custody.
- **Animal Cruelty Investigations** – Held as evidence or pending case resolution.
- **Custody Hearings & Appeals** – Retained until ownership is legally determined.

Source: Animal Control

Animal Welfare League Contract Proposal

Proposed AWL Contract Scope of Services:

- Animal Intake & Housing provided only as space is available
- Boarding & Care with overage fees
- Euthanasia Services only provided with their authorization
- Mandatory preventative care upon intake
- Fee Collections diverted directly to Animal Control
- Return to Owner Services
- Record Maintenance

Contract Comparisons

Selected Counties: Shelter Housing via Local Contracts

	Charlotte County (Current)	Animal Welfare League (Proposed)	Martin County	Okaloosa County	Indian River County	City of Port St. Lucie (St. Lucie Co.)	St. Lucie County
Population*	186,847	186,847	158,431	211,668	159,788	204,851	329,226
Current Contract Cost	\$327,930	\$1,582,669	\$853,664	\$824,018	\$609,310	\$1,631,448	\$531,480
County Animal Intake†	2,152	2,152	3,089	5,931	2,537	1,409	1,442
Cost per Population	\$1.75	\$8.47	\$5.38	\$3.89	\$3.81	\$7.96	\$1.61
Cost per Animal	\$152.38	\$735.44	\$276.34	\$138.94	\$240.17	\$1,131.38	\$368.58

Source: * www.census.gov (2020 Decennial Census)

† University of Florida (2024). *Florida Shelter Animal Census*

Scope of Services Comparison

	Animal Welfare League	Charlotte County	Martin Co	Okaloosa Co	Indian River Co	St Lucie Co	City of St. Lucie
	(Proposed)	(Current)					
Annual Contract Cost	\$1,582,669	\$327,930	\$853,664	\$824,018	\$609,310	\$531,480	\$1,631,448
Population *	186,847	186,847	158,431	211,668	159,788	329,226	204,851
Animal Intake †	2,152	2,152	3,089	5,931	2,537	1,442	1,409
Animal Intake – Limited	✓						
Animal Intake – 24/7		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Boarding & Care	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Return-to-Owner Services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Euthanasia Services Upon Request		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Collect Fees on Behalf of County		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Record Maintenance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Disaster Support Services			✓	✓	✓		✓
Veterinary Services – Included			✓	✓		✓	✓
Veterinary Services – Outsourced	✓	✓			✓		
Capacity for Care/Overcrowding Clause	✓				✓	✓	✓
Low Cost Spay/Neuter Services			✓				
Required Sale of Pet Tag w/Adoption						✓	✓
Disease Mgmt. – Preventative Care	✓		✓			✓	✓
Disposal/Cremation Services Provided			✓	✓	✓		✓
Disposal/Cremation Services Outsourced	✓	✓				✓	

Source: * www.census.gov (2020 Decennial Census)

† University of Florida (2024). Florida Shelter Animal Census



Scope of Services Comparison

	Animal Welfare League	City of St. Lucie (St. Lucie Co.)
	(Proposed)	
Annual Contract Cost	\$1,582,669	\$1,631,448
Population	186,847	204,851
Animal Intake	2,152	1,409
Animal Intake – Limited	✓	
Animal Intake – 24/7		✓
Boarding & Care	✓	✓
Return-to-Owner Services	✓	✓
Euthanasia Services Upon Request		✓
Collect Fees on Behalf of County		✓
Record Maintenance	✓	✓
Disaster Support Services		✓
Veterinary Services – Included		✓
Veterinary Services – Outsourced	✓	
Capacity for Care/Overcrowding Clause	✓	✓
Low Cost Spay/Neuter Services		
Required Sale of Pet Tag w/Adoption		✓
Disease Mgmt. – Preventative Care	✓	✓
Disposal/Cremation Services Provided		✓
Disposal/Cremation Services Outsourced	✓	

Side by Side Comparison:

Animal Welfare League vs City of St. Lucie

- City of St. Lucie Animal Shelter offers more services such as:
 - 24/7 animal intake
 - Disaster Support Services
 - Required registration of adopted animals
 - Veterinary Services Provided
 - Fee collection on behalf of the County
 - Euthanasia services upon request
 - Cremation services provided

Discussion

Next Steps