

Tough choice – Animal Services Contract

The Animal Control Contract is up for discussion. It is a difficult decision. Everyone loves animals and wishes the best for them. NBAS has apparently had issues which were called out by the Grand Jury. A city staff report explained how the relevant issues were resolved and our police chief is making monthly visits as directed by the mayor to inspect their facility. There have been no issues identified during these visits.

Dr. Sarah Reidenbach's public comment lays out a great roadmap to deciding about which service to go with. She offers great suggestions to include in the contract regardless of which service is chosen. The city should consider soliciting her expertise on these matters in the future.

Left out of Dr. Reidenbach's comments are the current financial condition of the city and the implications of choosing a service that may cost almost 4 times more and offers the same basic services as the lower cost option.

	Bid amount	250 service calls/year
NBAS	\$18,900	\$75
HCCS/SCAS	\$68,174	\$273

It seems like in terms of priorities, saving money here is logical. There are about 250 calls per year for service and only about 30-40 animal intakes. The issues identified by the Grand Jury seem to be addressed. Our police chief has been showing up unannounced every month to inspect the facility and not uncovering any issues.

Given ½ the roads and streets are in poor condition, up to 100 unhoused people call Sebastopol home, local serious crime rates are higher than other cities and Sebastopol needs to divert water/wastewater rate payer dollars in order to balance the budget, it seems like the city might save a bit of money here.