

Response to Grand Jury Report Form

Report Title: Animal Services Revisited: A City Asleep at the Wheel

Report Date: May 8, 2026

Response by: Rebecca Hermosillo Title: Chairperson

Agency/Department Name: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

FINDINGS:

I (we) agree with the findings numbered: **F6**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Recommendations numbered: _____ have been implemented.
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered: **R8** has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered: _____ require(s) further analysis.
(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. ***This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury report.***)
- Recommendations numbered: _____ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: _____ Signed: _____

Findings:

F6. No state or county authority exists for periodic inspection of animal shelters and regulatory oversight of animal services to ensure humane conditions for animals. This enabled NBAS to contract for services with multiple cities while lacking either the funding or organizational structure to meet professional standards for shelter care and

conform with state and municipal laws for rabies control and abatement of risks from dangerous animals.

Response: Agree

We agree with the finding that no state or county authority exists for periodic inspection of animal shelters and regulatory oversight of animal services.

Recommendations:

R8. By September 1, 2026, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors shall support previously endorsed efforts by the Department of Health Services to convene willing partners from Sonoma County cities to develop a county-wide system of uniformly humane, legally compliant, and cost-effective animal services, including centralized license management for the county's dogs.

Response: Implemented in the future

The Board of Supervisors has directed staff to evaluate longer-term county-wide animal service models in collaboration with participating jurisdictions and local non-profits service providers, and to return with recommendations, as appropriate. This includes assessing options to ensure sustainable, coordinated service delivery across the county. As part of this effort, several jurisdictions have expressed interest in exploring the potential for a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) as a future governance and service delivery model.

Given the complexity of a JPA, this would be a longer-term effort requiring thoughtful coordination among interested partners. To that end, County staff are seeking to identify jurisdictions and nonprofit partners who are interested in participating in an initial discussion to explore the feasibility, benefits, and considerations associated with a JPA or other collaborative models. Invitations for participation were sent on May 1, 2026, from the County Executive's Office and were extended to all Sonoma County cities and all animal shelters and rescues with physical kennels. The discussions are planned to begin during the summer of 2026 and will be ongoing as a model is decided upon and formalized.