

NEWS RELEASE

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City Council Approves Firm to Design New Animal Services Facility *New Facility Will Better Protect and Promote Welfare of Animals*

SEGUIN, Texas – The City of Seguin has taken another step forward toward better protecting and promoting the welfare of animals. At its most recent meeting, City Council approved a firm to provide architectural and design services for a new Animal Services facility.

“We are thrilled to see the new facility project moving along,” Animal Services Supervisor Leah Lewis said. “We are very grateful to the city council and city staff for recognizing the importance and benefits of a new facility to serve the people and animals of our community.”

Quorum Architects is now authorized to move forward with design of a new facility. The firm will divide the work into two phases. Phase one is the design and development of the facility at a cost of \$222,500. Phase two will be for services during the actual construction phase at a cost of \$81,000.

The same firm was selected in mid-2014 to provide a needs assessment and preliminary design for a new Animal Services facility. The assessment indicated the existing facility is too small to handle demand. Quorum recommended a new 10,000 square foot facility at a cost of approximately \$3-million. The firm considered several potential locations and recommended City-owned property at the corner of Fred Byrd Drive and Austin Street. The final project design and location will be considered by City Council.

“A new facility will greatly benefit our mission of providing responsive, efficient, high quality services that protect citizen and animal welfare,” Lewis continued. “We believe a new facility would allow us to better promote responsible pet ownership, animal compassion and safe human-animal interactions.”

New animal service facilities typically provide inviting areas where the public can interact with animals they are considering adopting. This setting tends to greatly increase adoption rates. New

facilities also provide improved HVAC systems that cut down on airborne diseases and provide more comfortable environments for the animals, staff and visitors. Other benefits of modern facilities include unique and improved plumbing, floors, cages and other amenities.

The existing facility on South River Street was built in the 1970's and added onto in 1998. The current size is approximately 2,000 square feet. Seguin Animal Services impounded 1,683 dog and cats in 2014, 1,574 in 2013 and 1,468 in 2012. The staff responds to approximately 300 calls for service per month including canines, felines, wildlife, deceased animals, live traps, welfare checks, etc.

"The staff at Animal Services does a phenomenal job operating in the current facility," Mayor Don Keil said. "With that said, it's time we build a larger, more modern facility for them to continue their mission."

Funding and a timeline for construction of the new facility will be finalized as the process moves forward. City Council has expressed the desire to see this project expedited and that is the goal of City staff.

City Council approved the addition of an additional Animal Services Officer in the FY 2014-2015 budget, bringing the Animal Services staff to five.

About Seguin Animal Services

Seguin Animal Services is responsible for the enforcement of city ordinances and applicable state laws pertaining to animals. The department also promotes and protects the welfare of citizens and animals through community education, animal adoptions, and rescue programs. Animal Services enforces a restraint ordinance and impounds, cares for, and adopts-out stray and owner surrendered animals whenever possible. The removal of dead animals and unwanted wildlife are also functions of the department. Provisions of the Texas Rabies Control Act are strictly enforced by the department. The Animal Services Department also coordinates annual pet vaccinations.

About the City of Seguin

Seguin, Texas is located along Interstate 10, about 35 miles east of San Antonio. Seguin is big enough to boast a top-rated university and a state-of-the-art hospital. More than 25,000 residents enjoy a range of cultural, recreational and employment opportunities. Seguin's robust diversified economy features a steelmaker, a manufacturer of automotive parts, an engine manufacture and plants making roadside mowing equipment and building materials. In 2014, Seguin was proud to be selected by Siro Group USA as the future home of the company's North American manufacturing facility.

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