Animal Care of Davis County

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To: Davis County Budget Committee

From: Director Rollin Cook

Date: May 10, 2021

Re: Animal Control Officer (Field Training Officer) Pay

Summary:

When a person is hired to be an Animal Control Officer (ACO), he or she is traditionally sent to the classroom for basic training. This training is aimed at providing the newly hired recruit with a basic competency to perform the job of ACO. However, most recruit training programs leave a wide gap between the classroom and the "real world" of becoming an ACO. The classroom will not suffice alone to adequately prepare the new officer to understand the complex role of ACO. For this, field training plays an important role in the effective training of new recruits, similar to those used in other public safety careers. Through exposure to actual community engagement and the accompanying field problems, patrol situations, investigations, and crime incidents, the recruit learns to apply classroom principles to live situations.

Animal Care of Davis County (ACDC) would like to assign two Animal Control Officers the role and responsibility of “Field Training Officer” with an incentive pay increase of $35 per day that they have a trainee working and learning from them during the FTO training module. Again, this is comparable to other Davis County public safety stipends for similar positions. No additional pay would be provided during the first week of in-classroom training and would also cease at the end of the 16 week program.

Proposal:

ACDC’s 16 week program involves assigning specially selected and trained ACO’s, known as Field Training Officers (FTO's), to newly hired officers to provide tangible, on-the-street training, evaluation, and if needed, retraining. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the recruit ACO not only knows the law and departmental policies, but also is capable of handling responsibilities in the community before being allowed to work alone in the field.

The formal field training program divides the training into segments or phases. Although the length of the segments may vary, each program consists of an introductory phase which familiarizes the recruit with the functions and duties specific to Animal Care of Davis County, several training and evaluation phases, and a final evaluation phase. During the training and evaluation phases, the recruit is gradually introduced to the more complicated tasks of Animal Control. During the final evaluation phase, which

consists only of evaluation of the recruit's performance, the FTO may act strictly as an observer and evaluator while the recruit acts independently of the FTO. This is considered a final check or test to see if the recruit is ready to work alone.

In all phases of the field training program, the recruit is constantly evaluated and mentored to ensure that satisfactory progress is being made. Deficiencies are identified and remedial training occurs. Recruits who successfully complete the FTO program continue through the remainder of the probationary period and receive the typical monthly evaluations, etc.

We want to provide an additional $35 per day to our FTO's for taking on this added and important duty of training new recruits for the 15 weeks that they will be performing hands on training.

Costs of the proposal:

15 weeks * $35 per working day= $2,625 paid to the FTO per new recruit

Benefits of the proposal:

Implementation of our field training program will result in improved animal care services to the community and likely a reduction in turnover. Better trained and qualified animal control officers will increase Animal Care of Davis County's efficiency and effectiveness.

Another direct result of these field training programs will be an overall improvement in the relationship between the ACO's and the community. Specifically, these programs can reduce the number of common complaints and civil liability lawsuits.

Other considerations, if applicable:

Attached is our Field Training Officer handbook, which outlines daily duties and responsibilities of the FTO's.

I am happy to answer any questions you might have and appreciate your consideration of this proposal. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Animal Care Director