



Snohomish County Council

## **NEWS RELEASE**

For Release: February 11, 2004

### **Renewed Animal Shelter Contract the Goal Of Council Action**

The Snohomish County Council on Wednesday, February 11, 2004 unanimously approved a motion authorizing the renewal of a contract with the Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) in Lynnwood to provide animal sheltering services for stray pets in unincorporated south Snohomish County.

A 2004 Council budget note addressed the need for PAWS to provide animal services for county residents. For the past three years, the County Council has taken the opportunity during the budget process to help encourage certain uses of public money through the use of budget notes.

Councilman Gary Nelson expressed relief that PAWS will continue to be utilized as a county subcontractor; providing citizens of unincorporated south Snohomish County with animal sheltering services.

“This is a great example of the county cooperating with an outside agency to provide public services without exceeding budget constraints,” Nelson said.

“PAWS has an outstanding record of service in our community and I am pleased their relationship with the county will continue.”

Nelson was Council Chair at the time the 2004 Budget was approved and is the representative of the district in which PAWS is located.

Nelson did caution that the service is not in place to be misused.

“Every pet owner has a responsibility to humanely care for their animals; not allowing dogs and cats to roam free, resulting in injuries to their pets, other animals or people. Owners should certainly be aware that the assistance of an animal shelter is available when they can no longer care for their pet.”

The county and PAWS will ask pet owners to reimburse the cost of some sheltering services, preventing the potential use of taxpayer dollars to cover incidental expenses of private individuals with animals. This includes any pet license if needed, \$7 transportation fee, \$3 per day boarding fee and any medical expenses. The cost of sending Snohomish County Sheriff's Department personnel to capture the animal is not passed on to county residents. Both the City of Seattle and King County ask owners to reimburse impound costs. Snohomish County has invested \$1.8 million in shelter costs over the past 10 years with only 20% of the revenues reimbursed by pet owners.

The contract with PAWS is comparable to the contract Snohomish County currently maintains with the Everett Animal Shelter.

(END)

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