CITY OF EUREKA CALIFORNIA

AGENDA SUMMARY CITY COUNCIL

TITLE: Bill No. 1059, Animal Ordinance Update - Introduction

DEPARTMENT: City Attorney

PREPARED BY: Robert N. Black, City Attorney; Gregory Holtz, Deputy City Attorney

PRESENTED FOR

☒Action ☐Information only ☐Discussion

RECOMMENDATION

Waive full reading, read by title only, and introduce an Ordinance amending Title IX, Chapter 91, Sections 91.101 through 91.1105 and adding Sections 91.206 and 91.1106 of the Eureka Municipal Code to update Animal Regulations, incorporate Uniform Administrative Hearing Procedures, and regulate the presence of dogs and other domestic animals at designated City-sponsored events, and set the Ordinance for adoption at the next regular City Council meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT

☐No Fiscal Impact ☒Included in Budget ☐Additional Appropriation

COUNCIL GOALS/STRATEGIC VISION

Improve participation and efficiency of our public meeting processes by increasing outreach to the community and defining the roles and responsibilities of elected officials, appointed board/commission/committee members, and staff.

DISCUSSION

The proposed ordinance updates Title IX, Chapter 91 of the Eureka Municipal Code to modernize and clarify the City's animal regulations, improve enforceability, and align existing provisions with recently adopted uniform administrative hearing procedures.

First, the ordinance incorporates cross-references to the City's Administrative Hearing Procedures codified in Title I, Chapter 10, Sections 10.110 through 10.118. This integration promotes consistency across City enforcement actions, ensures due process protections, and provides clear procedural standards for hearings related to animal control matters.

Second, the ordinance updates and refines existing animal regulations to address public health, safety, and quality of life concerns. These updates include clarifications to nuisance animal standards, excessive noise (barking) provisions, ownership limitations, and enforcement mechanisms. The revisions are intended to improve clarity for residents, enhance compliance, and support Animal Control in administering the code effectively.

Third, the ordinance establishes new authority to regulate the presence of dogs and other domestic animals at designated City-sponsored events. Large events such as the Friday Night Market and Fourth of July celebrations often involve dense crowds, food vendors, amplified noise, and fireworks. The presence of animals in these environments may pose safety risks, including bites, leash-related trip hazards, interference with emergency access, and animal distress.

The ordinance also supports compliance with California Health and Safety Code Section 114259.5, which restricts the presence of live animals in food facility environments, and helps reduce the City's potential liability exposure. Importantly, the ordinance includes explicit exemptions for service animals, ensuring compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and applicable state law.

Additionally, the ordinance emphasizes the equitable application of animal regulations across all City populations, including housed and unhoused individuals, and reinforces standards for humane treatment and responsible ownership.

Overall, the proposed amendments are intended to create a more comprehensive, consistent, and enforceable regulatory framework for animal control within the City of Eureka, while improving public safety and community well-being.