

December 5, 2018

MEMORANDUM

To: Finance and Neighborhoods Committee
From: Jeff Simms, Central Staff Analyst
Subject: C.B. 119429 - Proposed Changes to Seattle Animal Shelter Fees

The Executive has proposed Council Bill (C.B.) 119429, which makes technical corrections to Ordinance 125702. The City Council passed [Ordinance 125702](#) as budget legislation related to the 2019-2020 Adopted Budget. The ordinance increased pet license fees, among other changes.

Central Staff does not have concerns with the proposed changes in C.B. 119429, which are discussed below. The Executive estimates that the proposed changes would create \$11,000 in additional annual revenue for the Seattle Animal Shelter (SAS) beginning in 2019.

Discussion of Proposed Changes

The technical changes in C.B. 119429 would ensure the new pet license fees align with previous practice in setting fees, simplify the calculation of senior discounts, and increase certain late fees that were inadvertently left unchanged when fees were last increased in 2016.

- **Section 1 amending [9.26.020\(A\)](#) of the Seattle Municipal Code:** This section would increase pet license fees for altered cats by \$1 compared to Ordinance 125702, which was passed in the 2019-2020 Adopted Budget. Ordinance 125702 increased all pet license fees by five percent, rounded up or down to the nearest dollar. It rounded the fee for altered cats down to \$25. Historical practice by SAS is to round license fees up to the nearest dollar (*i.e.*, to \$26). The cost of a license purchased with a 12-month renewal would also increase to match the historical approach.
- **Section 1 amending [9.26.020\(F\)](#) of the Seattle Municipal Code:** This change would remove rounding instructions when applying the 50 percent discount for seniors or individuals with disabilities. The Seattle Municipal Code currently instructs SAS to round up to the nearest dollar, which has caused confusion for individuals who expected a fee to cost \$0.50 less than their actual bill. This is particularly problematic for mail-in renewals where the individual calculates her own payment.
- **Section 2 amending [9.26.025\(C\)](#) of the Seattle Municipal Code:** This change would raise the late fee when a potbelly pig license is renewed more than 30 days after its expiration from \$15 to \$30. Excluding the recent changes in the 2019-2020 Adopted Budget, pet license and late fees had last been updated by legislation in 2016. The 2016 changes unintentionally omitted updates to the late fee for pot belly pigs. The changes proposed in C.B. 119429 would set late fees for pot belly pigs at the same level as late fees for other pets.

cc: Kirstan Arestad, Central Staff Director
Dan Eder, Central Staff Deputy Director