



City of West Linn  
Citizens' Budget Committee  
May 19, 2010

## Issues & Options Related to Dog Licensing

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### Background:

- City responsibility for licensing dogs is defined in Municipal Code Section 5.275.
- When dogs are found off-leash, the West Linn Police respond with a Community Service Officer (CSO) who returns the dog back to the owners, or to the County if an owner cannot be located.
- The CSO has access to both the West Linn and Clackamas County dog databases.
- For many years, the West Linn Police Department managed licensing; in 2008, licensing was moved to the Finance Department at City Hall to consolidate the Accounts Receivable function.
- Clackamas County also requires dog licenses.
- In 2009, the City of West Linn launched online dog licensing and integrated the dog database with the County's database so dogs that are licensed with the City are also shown in the County database, because a lost dog knows no jurisdictional boundaries.
- The current licensing and renewal process takes approximately 0.25 FTE of Finance staff time each year. This does not include the time of the CSO.

### Revenue:

- FY 2008: \$18,677
- FY 2009: \$13,885
- FY 2010: \$10,000

### Issues:

- Dog licensing and renewal takes significant staff time and resources during the renewal months.
- Clackamas County provides an identical online licensing renewal service.
- There is no enforceable penalty for not licensing a dog. If a dog has a tag (for example, purchased at Pet Smart) with the dog's name and telephone number, the CSO will contact the owner before sending the dog to Clackamas County, as a matter of customer service.
- Staff begins the process for dog license renewals in the spring of each year. Solicitations are made via all communications channels for people to renew their dog licenses, or to license their new dogs.
- Staff attributes the slightly declining trend in dog license revenue over the last few years to two main reasons: 1) many owners opted for a two- or three-year license when it was first introduced a few years ago; and 2) other than newsletter and web messages, staff does not actively pursue collecting dog license fees.

### Options:

- **Option #1:**

- Remove the dog licensing requirement from Municipal Code and delegate the dog licensing function to Clackamas County.
- All other animal control provisions related to dogs will remain in the Code.
- City loses approximately \$10,000 in revenues, but gains the staff time currently dedicated to the licensing and renewal process.
- Clackamas County assumes all dog licensing functions and all licensing is run through the County. The County has indicated they are amenable to this option.
- The West Linn CSO continues to enforce the Code section related to dogs and to provide customer service to West Linn citizens and their dogs.



- **Option #2:**

- No changes; the City and County continue the existing dog licensing functions as is.



## Issues & Options Related to Business Licensing

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### Background:

- City responsibility for licensing businesses is defined in Municipal Code Section 7.000.
- In 2009, the City of West Linn launched online business licensing. As part of this service, licensed businesses can review a directory of other licensed businesses.
- The current licensing and renewal process takes approximately 0.50 FTE of Finance staff time each year, as well as additional review by Planning staff to review home occupation permits associated with some businesses.
- \$20,000 from the FY 2010 revenues was earmarked in the biennial budget for economic development consultant services; Small Business Management LLC was retained to provide these services.
- The business licensing process is administrative. The ways that the business license list is used:
  - Initial home occupation permit includes review of permitted uses in the zone.
  - Police Department uses list to double-check allowed business use; most commonly for door-to-door sales people.
- The current economic downturn has affected local businesses; there are businesses closing in West Linn and the City Council recently approved the creation of an Economic Development Committee (EDC) to specifically address economic development issues in West Linn.

### Revenue:

- FY 2008: \$53,841
- FY 2009: \$52,376
- FY 2010: \$52,000

### Issues:

- In the spirit of eliminating an expense for existing licensed businesses, staff seeks Citizens' Budget Committee consideration of reducing the business license fee in FY 2011 to zero, with explicit direction given to the EDC to carefully review revenue producing alternatives to fund EDC activities through the licensing process to ensure that it better provides benefit to local businesses.
- It is unclear at this time how the current business license process provides specific value-added benefit to local businesses above and beyond the administrative record-keeping of the service.

### Options:

- **Option #1:**

- Reduce the renewal portion of the fee for existing licenses in FY 2011 to zero (existing license holders would be requested to update data so database remains current, but not charged a fee).
- Only require the standard fee for new licenses.
- Direct the EDC to evaluate business licensing as part of the overall EDC review of how the City should best engage the business community on sustainable funding for economic development activities.
- This option has the support of the City's Economic Development consultant.

- **Option #2:**

- No changes to licensing program; City continues to license businesses at the **current** rate.

- **Option #3:**

- No changes to licensing program; City continues to license businesses at an **increased** rate.





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## Issues & Options Related to City Beautification

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### Background:

- Over the past year, there has been increased citizen interest in "City beautification" efforts – specifically related to medians and public spaces in West Linn.
- To date, the City has played a limited role in paying for City beautification because of lack of funding for these types of projects.
- The City of Lake Oswego has an established beautification program that includes seasonal plantings of medians and public spaces as well as the associated maintenance and water costs.
- Lake Oswego's program costs are listed below for the Citizens' Budget Committee to consider.

### Expense Estimate:

- The following expense estimate is based on the actual cost to maintain city beautification efforts for the City of Lake Oswego; this assumes two separate seasonal plantings, at most West Linn sites ranging from facilities to water sites to small corners to large medians.
- The expense shown is the annual portion of a multi-year contract to maintain existing areas.
- Annual estimated cost: \$83,000

### Revenue Estimate:

- The above expense estimate could be raised by billing each street fee customer (9,500 customers) an extra \$0.75 per month.
- This fee increase would be reflected in the "Street Maintenance Fee" and would be earmarked for City beautification efforts.

### Issues:

- The City does not have discretionary income available for City beautification efforts.
- Funds must be specifically raised for these types of beautification activities if they are to occur on a citywide scope and scale equivalent to Lake Oswego.

### Options:

- **Option #1:**
  - Increase the Street Maintenance Fee by \$0.75 and specifically earmark additional funds for City beautification efforts.
  - City would engage in a multi-year contract to attain similar pricing for West Linn beautification.
- **Option #2:**
  - Do not increase the Street Maintenance Fee by \$0.75 and continue the City's minimal beautification efforts for medians and other public spaces.
  - The current economic climate is such that City staff does not recommend any discretionary fee increases at this time.





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## Issues & Options Related to Community Grants

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### Background:

- The adopted biennial budget includes \$25,000 in FY 2011 for community grants.
- The citizen members of the Citizens' Budget Committee met on May 10, 2010 to review the 20 requests received totaling more than \$50,000.

### Issues:

- The City received substantially more grant requests than it has grant funds available to fulfill.
- The citizen members of the Citizens' Budget Committee developed the following guidelines for request evaluation that they used to make their attached recommendations:
  - Priority given to organizations or causes that directly benefit West Linn residents.
  - A complete, descriptive, and thorough application is important.
  - No funding allocated for advertising or promotion.
  - No funding allocated to Neighborhood Associations.
  - Any undesignated balance left in the "community grants" account can be used by the Parks Department to assist with other community organizations that need financial assistance during the fiscal year which did not complete an application or receive full funding.
  - For Event Specific requests - The guiding purpose of grant money for festivals and events is seed money. Organizations are encouraged to apply for funding for new or emerging West Linn-focused purposes. Organizations that depend on West Linn community grant funding year after year should recognize that the Citizens' Budget Committee discourages complacency in grant funding requests, and therefore limits overall festival and event funding to 30 percent of the total available in the grant program up to a maximum of \$1,500 per request, with no more than a three year grant cycle per organization. Priority is given to new festivals and events.
  - Reporting Back - For all funded grant requests, after the organization incurs the costs that are funded with the grant monies, the organization must report back with a summary of how the funds were used, the value that the grant program provided to the citizens of West Linn, and how the funds helped the purpose of the organization.

### Options:

- **Option #1:**
  - Accept the recommendations of the citizen members of the Citizens' Budget Committee and fund the grant requests as indicated on the attached spreadsheet.
- **Option #2:**
  - Make modifications to the recommendations of the citizen members and fund the grant requests based on these modifications.