



Marion County Board of County Commissioners

Marion County Office of Public Information

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MARION COUNTY TO PROVIDE ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICE TO CITY OF OCALA RESIDENTS

Immediate Release

MARION COUNTY, Fla. (Oct. 20, 2009) – Marion County Administrator Dr. Lee A. Niblock and City of Ocala Manager Ricky Horst are working together unlike ever before to jointly plan and consolidate services in areas that make sense. As part of those cost-saving efforts, Marion County Animal Services will now provide animal control services for City of Ocala residents, effective Oct. 21, 2009. Marion County Commissioners unanimously approved the inter-local agreement during today's board meeting.

Marion County Commissioners and City of Ocala Council members first discussed this consolidation at a joint city/county public meeting on February 2, 2009. As part of the transition, the City of Ocala will pay Marion County the following over the next three years: \$150,000 during the 2009-2010 fiscal year, \$125,000 for the 2010-2011 fiscal year and \$100,000 for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. Marion County will invest \$172,732 in start-up costs to ensure a smooth transition. Both governmental agencies believe this transition will ultimately save taxpayer money.

As part of the inter-local agreement, the city's two animal services employees will become Marion County employees. They will retain their length of service as well as their accrued sick leave and vacation time. The City of Ocala will also permanently transfer ownership of its property to Marion County, including traps, nets, carriers, bite gloves, digital cameras and vehicles among other items.

Marion County Animal Services has 52 employees serving in the department's animal center and animal control divisions. The department is responsible for shelter operations, field operations and spay/neuter services as well as investigating animal nuisance, animal cruelty and aggressive animal cases. Marion County will provide these same services to City of Ocala residents.

The City of Ocala Council approved the inter-local agreement on Oct. 6, 2009.

If citizens have questions or animal control complaints, they should contact Marion County Animal Services at (352) 671-8700 or visit www.marioncountyfl.org.

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