Animal Control to Return Beyond City Limits

Wednesday, 29 May 2013

{audio}/images/stories/mp3/animal_control.mp3{/audio}

Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

Animal control beyond city limits was wiped from the borough’s budget a number of years ago, but thanks to substantial public input the service is set to be reinstated. During last night’s joint borough assembly and city council work session, Borough Manager Bud Cassidy said animal control was included in the borough’s 2014 budget.

“What you have in your packet really is the contract that we had with the city for a number of years. And it really just sort of splits the cost, but the city really pays for the employee, the vehicle, some of the accounting and some of the licensing, but we split that cost.”

Cassidy said there is $86,000 set aside for animal control in the 2014 budget. While the past contract with the city works well, Cassidy said there is one glitch.

“The city has the shelter for really dogs and cats. And the issue that we’re hearing most about is large animals, horses mostly. And in the past we’ve worked with the fair and rodeo grounds and had folks act as caretakers in this particular case, so that’s something that we’ll have to work out as well. Because again, the kinds of things I’m hearing, we’ve been hearing, horses out in Chiniak and Pasagshak that are being neglected. So we’ll probably be in the horse business here for a little bit.”

Assemblywoman Chris Lynch said the state has money specifically for those particular concerns, so the borough should seek out those funds and factor that into its contract with the city.

City Manager Aimee Kniaziowski said the city welcomes the borough’s partnership, especially as it will offset costs at the animal shelter.

“I really appreciate the assembly’s interest in doing this. I know it was a tough transition and it has been, as Bud said, a couple years since we have patrolled in that area and outside city limits. But we are certainly appreciative of the fact that the assembly wants to reinstitute that and that will really

help us offset the costs to run the shelter and provide that service.”

Cassidy said the hope is to have the service offered again at the beginning of the fiscal year, which starts in July.