

**HEALTH from page 1A**

and has spent many hours considering how best to address the varied and often dangerous situations presented to the law enforcement community. The need for additional tools in the law enforcement toolbox was one of the main points of his presentation.

has collated data and law enforcement statistics and proposed creating a new plank of the plan currently in place to help the public, and by extension first responders. Surprisingly, funding for the program is already in place.

The OHA report strongly suggests one of the ways that the community can be better served by law enforcement is for officers and other first

responders to have a support system in place to deal with individuals that should not be incarcerated but still must be dealt with in some manner.

"It's really a wonderful filler between the police, the fire department and the hospital. A lot of times there are gaps that just can't be filled, and these people are an exemplary service that does that well," Turner said. "What Lane County is trying to do is utilize some of the money that they have from OHA to duplicate that service, or something very similar to it, in Florence."

The OHA has acquired funding to begin a program in Western Lane County to introduce a mobile team of councilors and EMTs to work in conjunction with county and municipal entities.

Turner recommended Florence accept the county funding and begin the process of creating an entity

with that goal in mind.

"Lane County got about \$600,000 to pursue this. They earmarked \$250,000 for the Western Lane County area, specifically for the Florence area, which is fantastic for us," he said. "The reason we are bringing it forward to you tonight is because this money is actually coming a little quicker than expected, so it may be approved as early as July 1 to start our seed project."

Turner then described the successful model the OHA is suggesting be considered and implemented by participating municipalities.

The program is run by the non-profit social service organization White Bird and the mobile component of its services, Crisis Assistance Helping Out On the Streets (CAHOOTS).

CAHOOTS and White Bird have been assisting lower wage earners, the homeless and the mentally ill since 1970. The organization is

staffed by volunteers and has become an important element of the services offered to those in crisis in the Eugene area over the past 50 years.

Turner had nothing but positive comments to share with councilors regarding this work.

"CAHOOTS has been a very successful model for the Eugene area by providing the type of services they provide: crisis counseling; suicide prevention, assessment and intervention; conflict resolution and mediation; dealing with grief and loss; substance abuse, medical care and resource selection; and referrals and transportation to services," Turner said. "I have a lot of experience with CAHOOTS in the past, during the 24 years I worked with the City of Eugene, and I can tell you from my own personal perspective that they were an absolute godsend to have available to us. If we could do something like that

in Florence, or something similar, that would be a wonderful asset, not only for the City of Florence but to Western Lane County as well."

Turner then explained the program has a three-year implementation plan and the bulk of the first year will be spent selecting personnel, equipment and training those selected.

Importantly, Turner explained, Lane County has hired a project manager that has helped the Chief and his staff prepare the necessary paperwork to receive the funding and administrative support to fully realize the benefits of the program.

Turner also shared his feelings about Florence Police Department's participation in the new initiative.

"I am really excited to assist with this project and what I see is a very productive methodology to helping our community with these issues and to better focus our resources," he said.

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## Tips on keeping pets safe in hot weather

As the weather gets warmer, Greenhill Humane Society has some important tips to share on keeping pets safe. When it comes to furry family members remember to leave pets at home when running errands. Leaving an animal in a parked car even for just a few minutes can easily cause heat stroke or brain damage. A car's interior temperature can increase in minutes, even with the windows slightly open. Dogs are especially vulnerable to heat stress because they do not sweat in the way that humans do; they release body heat by panting.

- Keep pets inside during the heat of the day; do not leave them outside unattended.
- Make sure pets have access to bowls of cool, fresh water.
- When pets are outside, be sure there are shaded areas for them to rest in. Invest in a misting hose or kiddie pool for a cool place for your pets to play.
- Limit or skip on exercise at the dog park during the heat of the day.
- Always test the pavement or sand with your hand before stepping out. Too hot to touch is too hot for your pet.

Walk early in the morning or late at night when it's cooler, carry water and take frequent breaks in shady spots. If you suspect your pet's paws have been burned, contact your vet immediately.

- Dogs should not ride in uncovered pickup truck beds. The hot metal truck bed can burn your pet's paw pads.

Heatstroke symptoms can include restlessness, excessive thirst, heavy panting, lethargy, lack of appetite, dark tongue, vomiting and lack of coordination. If your animal is overcome by heat exhaustion, consult your veterinarian right away.

Oregon's "Good Samaritan" law (dogs / kids in hot cars) states the following:

- Anyone - not just law enforcement - may enter a motor vehicle, "by force or otherwise," to remove an unattended child or domestic animal without fear of criminal or civil liability, as long as certain requirements are met.

The full text of Oregon's "Good Samaritan" law can be found under ORS 30.813.

To learn more about Greenhill or tips on keeping your pet safe in hot weather, visit [www.greenhill.org](http://www.greenhill.org).

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