

Grant to help control cat, kitten colonies

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Thanks to a grant from Petco Foundation, the city of Dallas has launched a program to address the growing number of feral, or “free-roaming,” cats who call the city home.

The \$10,000 grant will pay for a “trap, neuter, and return” (TNR) program, with the goal of preventing growth in the feral cat population.

To put the money to use, however, the city needs feline friendly volunteers to help trap and care for free-roaming cats. Once captured, they will be taken to be spayed or neutered, given vaccinations, and returned to where they were picked up under the supervision of a caregiver who provides food and water. Kittens younger than 14-weeks-old and “socialized” adult cats will be put up for adoption.

“This was one of those issues we couldn’t address,” said Dallas Animal Control Officer Carleen Danka. “We just didn’t have the



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

Dallas resident Edith Walters, with the Feral Cat Awareness Project, cares for and “socializes” feral cats to help find them homes.

manpower.” Danka said there are about 10 colonies of feral cats in the city that she knows of, but there could be more. While many of the cats captured through the program will

be returned to the community, getting them spayed or neutered and vaccinated will decrease the impact the colonies have on the surrounding area, Danka said. It will stop “breeding behaviors” and stop the spread of disease.

Danka said Salem Friends of Felines has already conducted a successful TNR program with a colony that used to roam in the area between Walmart and Burger King off East Ellendale Avenue. Now, the colony has been relocated by a caretaker who feeds them regularly. Since then, the colony has produced no new kittens.

“They are not bothering anyone and they are keeping the mice down,” Danka said.

Dallas resident Edith Walters, who runs feral cat rescue Feral Cat Awareness Project, also is caring for a colony out of her home on Levens Street. She works with the Willamette Humane Society to have the cats spayed and neutered and with Salem Friends of Felines to place adoptable cats or those

she has socialized. Walters also finds “barn homes” for cats who can’t be someone’s pet.

Walters helps with calls from all over the region — she takes 30 to 40 cats a month to be spayed or neutered — but doesn’t have a shortage of cats roaming her property here in Dallas even after just a few months.

Danka is looking for more people like Walters to assist with the program. She has caregivers for about five colonies now, but needs more people to step up.

“We’ve got to make sure they have a food source or we can’t release them,” she said.

Danka said the goal is to help as many cats as possible, and she will continue the program at least through the summer or until the funding is used.

“I would like to get a few big colonies (taken care of),” she said. Know of a colony of cats?

For more information or to volunteer to be a caretaker, call 503-831-3536.

MINET officials predict 7.4 percent raise in revenue

CFO says market share not there to pay \$25 million debt, operating expenses, capital improvements

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH/INDEPENDENCE — Revenue for Monmouth Independence

Networks (MINET) is expected to increase in 2015-16, but by about 7.4 percent, less than the 24 percent expected increase from last year.

The total annual revenue is expected to be \$4.886 million, compared to \$4.548 projected in 2014-15.

Chief Financial Officer Mark Thoenes said MINET’s income from operations is expected to be \$999,926 in 2014-15, 25 percent less than the \$1.345 million the company made in 2013-14.

The decrease is mostly because of unexpected, one-time expenses, Thoenes said, including storm damage that was not covered by insurance in December and large increases in fees from cable providers for content.

For 2015-16, Thoenes said MINET projects making about \$1.2 million in net ordinary income, a 20 percent increase over last year.

MINET’s total expected net income is 43 percent of

Up Next

• The MINET budget committee met Tuesday after press time. The MINET Board of Directors meets at 7:30 a.m. Thursday.

• In the next fiscal year, MINET hopes to address a number of issues in the data provider portion of the business, including updating documentation; updating and patching servers, nearly all of which are out of date and have never been updated; updating antiquated monitoring systems; identifying unidentified systems that are running in the data center; and completely redesigning of core ISP services, bringing servers up to date with the most applicable platforms.

was filled with too much optimism and not enough understanding of what the market really is, Thoenes said.

After further analysis and efforts to gain customers, it was found that those people were using competitors or had no interest in the services MINET could provide — some did not own computers.

“This marketplace you have out there is more highly penetrated, and it’s not as large as you think,” Thoenes said.

To increase revenue, MINET will need to look for other ways to bring in money, such as leasing excess capacity to other businesses, in addition to increasing data customers, Patten said.

In leasing MINET’s capacity, it would allow a private carrier to use MINET’s infrastructure.

what it needs to be able to fully fund its \$25 million debt, operating expenses and capital expenses, said Thoenes.

“The company is able to pay its operating costs, but it’s insufficient to pay debt,” he said.

After it pays its operating costs and capital expenses, MINET will be able to pay

\$956,446 of its \$2.046 million debt payments for 2015-16, leaving \$1.090 million for the cities to cover.

MINET Manager Don Patten told the budget committee that one of the reasons for the 7.4 percent total expected revenue was that the market was not in MINET’s coverage area to expand.

Last year’s budget forecast

West Valley Housing Authority will hold their Work Session Meeting on Thursday, May 28 2015 beginning at 11:00 a.m. at 204 SW Walnut in Dallas, Oregon. The Regular Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 28, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. at 204 SW Walnut in Dallas, Oregon. An Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660 will be held immediately following the Regular Meeting.

Agenda for the meeting is posted on the Housing Authority website at www.wvpha.org. The location for the meeting is handicapped accessible. Please advise the West Valley Housing Authority if you need any special accommodations to attend the meeting. For information, please call 503-623-8387, TDD 1-800-735-2900.

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