



DO YOU CARE ABOUT ANIMALS IN WEST DES MOINES?

Furry Friends has provided care for animals in West Des Moines since 2013—for free for several years and under a contract when the city stopped operating its own animal shelter in 2017. Before Furry Friends became involved in helping the city's animals, city staff killed 68% of the cats that came in to the city shelter. Since Furry Friends has stepped in, the city of West Des Moines has become one of the safest cities in the nation for animals in need. The city now is determined to abandon this and the extensive services Furry Friends has provided to West Des Moines. This decision is in retaliation to the organization speaking up for harsh policies requiring dogs die or remain in a shelter for life based after very minor bites when preventative measures can easily be implemented to provide safety for the community and the animals. There is no current plan by the city on how to ensure the 800-950 animals from West Des Moines that come to Furry Friends every year will be kept safe and receive care.

What you need to know: The city has provided citizens no information about where their new city-run shelter will be or how much it will cost taxpayers. The city has no history of operating a safe shelter and has no proven ability or commitment to maintaining a high live release rate for animals in its care (the live release rate of Furry Friends in 2022 was 98%). The city's intention to partner with other organizations to try to get some of the animals adopted will only cover some of the animals in need. An organization outside of WDM indicated they would help with placement of some dogs, but they are a limited admission facility and will not accept the owner surrenders from West Des Moines. They additionally are not licensed and will not become licensed to handle animals other than dogs and cats. They do not have an on-call veterinarian to handle emergencies for West Des Moines. They were not willing to handle animal control matters, including housing strays and attempting to reunify them with owners. There is no veterinarian on staff with the city, meaning the city will go back to immediately killing injured animals rather than trying to save them while attempting to locate their owner.



What can you do to protect animals: contact your city councilmember and the mayor and tell them animals matter to you and you expect the high live release rate that has been achieved for years for West Des Moines to continue. Ask how your tax dollars are going to be spent responsibly to ensure the animals receive medical care and are safe.

**Pictured: Ruby, Sadie, and Lt. Dan—all WDM animals who received costly emergency medical care this past year thanks to Furry Friends*

WHERE HAVE YOUR TAX DOLLARS GONE IN WEST DES MOINES

JANUARY 1 2017- MARCH 31 2023:

Furry Friends took in 4,989 animals from WDM (including 1,666 owner surrenders). We also directly handled the impound of 1,528 WDM animals without assistance of the city animal control officers. We were available for more than 21,290 hours to the community and were paid \$112,355. These payments were not just for staffing, but also providing the building (at a rate of \$15,475 for the entire contract) for the city for that timeframe as well as the cost of supplies for intake vaccinations (with \$12.50 average cost at an expense of \$62,362). This leaves Furry Friends with \$34,518. Our staff handled all animal care for these animals for the duration of their stay, provided medical care-both routine and emergency on-call needs, and facilitated returns to owners or adoptions for animals who were not able to be reunited. Animals placed for adoption were tested for diseases, spayed and neutered, and microchipped. The average cost for Furry Friends personnel per animal handled was \$6.91 (including only animals from WDM).



City employees hired for animal control purposes impounded 1,795 animals from WDM in the same timeframe (and also 1,170 animals from Clive and Urbandale from a prior dissolved partnership). This means they drove the animals to the shelter and entered them in the computer system. The costs for "personal services" or compensation only to the taxpayers for this was \$1,430,393. This does not include the cost of equipment and materials. The average cost for city personnel per animal handled was \$482 (including animals from Clive and Urbandale).