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Animal shelter to get makeover

BY STEPHANIE SALMONS • [SSALMONS@NKY.COM](mailto:ssalmons@nky.com) • DECEMBER 20, 2010

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The Boone County Animal Shelter will soon have nearly \$50,000 to complete renovations, thanks to a grant from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

The \$40,726 grant requires a 20 percent local match, about \$10,000, which will be met with cash donations given to the animal shelter and in-kind donations, Boone County Administrator Jeff Earlywine said.

"We won't have to spend any county money," he said. "The only thing we'll have to do from the county is an in-kind donation of some labor, some work and maybe some materials."

The total sum will help make some necessary upgrades to the facility, he said.

"This is a much-needed improvement," Commissioner Terri Moore said during the Dec. 7 Fiscal Court meeting.

Planned upgrades include rebuilding of the "quarantine kennels," where animals brought into the facility are placed to make sure they're not sick or diseased, Earlywine said.

That area of the shelter is "a bit older" and some parts don't meet standards in place today, he said.

Other upgrades include soundproofing and painting, as well as an expansion of the medical facilities, Earlywine said.

"The county, a year or two ago, entered into a partnership with Brown Mackie College for a veterinary technical program where they would bring some students over and do some training and clinical work in our facility," he said. "We would benefit by receiving some free and reduced veterinary and tech services. There's a treatment room (that will be) improved and have more and better capabilities to administer the basic medical needs of the animals."

According to Earlywine, the most recent expansion completed three or four years ago was "a modest expansion, primarily to just give us a bit more room."

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This grant not only helps with upgrades, Earlywine said, but allows the county to make much-needed renovations in tight economic times.

"Animal control and care is a statutory function for the county," he said. "It's not something we can say 'oh, we'd like to do it,' or 'if we have the resources we'll do it. By statute we are mandated to provide animal control and animal care, so it's part of our mission. Certainly it's important to make sure the animals are cared for. It's important because we really try to encourage adoptions and finding homes for animals and it's important to make sure we have healthy animals over there and this will help support that effort."

The upgrades should move fairly quickly once they begin, Earlywine said.

Though there's not a specific start date yet, Earlywine said the project will likely begin after the first of the year and "hopefully" finish before the end of the county's fiscal year, June 30.

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