



Sutter County OKs \$1.33M for animal shelter

By [Ben van der Meer/ADbvandermeer](#)

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Sutter County supervisors approved their own way to pay for their share of the three-partner animal shelter on Tuesday night, though as typical with the long-sought building, the method to do so was a bit complicated.

With one supervisor absent, the board approved on a 4-0 vote a financing mechanism where half the county's tab of \$1.33 million for the shelter will come from the General Fund and the other half from a fund where developer impact fees for health and social services buildings have collected.

Interim County Administrative Officer Shawne Corley said the county has another development impact fee slated for an animal shelter, but it wasn't adopted until 2010. As a result, she said, the county hasn't collected any money for it, given the abysmal state of new home construction.

"We are on the hook as members of the joint-powers authority to provide our share of the cost," Corley said, which is about 25 percent.

Yuba City is responsible for the bulk of the shelter's cost, while Live Oak is contributing the smallest amount of the three partners.

As the county begins collecting the animal shelter development fee, Corley said — citing the pending Sutter Pointe development in the county's southern reaches as an example — the board would repay the health and social services impact fee from it.

But Corley's suggested mechanism received a skeptical response from county fiscal watchdog Elaine Miles, who said taking from one fund without a designated repayment plan was questionable.

"We've needed a new welfare building for years," Miles said. "There's no requirement here to pay it back, except for impact fees." Supervisor Stan Cleveland, citing similar concerns, said he supported the shelter, but also proposed reducing the impact fee share of the arrangement to \$377,000, and tapping more into discretionary General Fund dollars.

"Then, the possibility of getting paid back would be much higher than the 50/50 that was proposed," he said, adding that lessening the borrowed amount would also save the county about \$100,000 in interest.

Corley said while the financing's structure was the board's choice, using more discretionary money now limited opportunities to use it later. And if the animal shelter impact fee amounted to more than what the county borrowed now, she said, it would leave a pot of money with little flexibility for use.

Supervisor Jim Whiteaker said he acknowledged Cleveland's concerns, but voted for the originally suggested arrangement. "My thing is to get the shelter built," he said.

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