

Dear [NAME],

I am writing on behalf of Charlie's Place (Clear Creek/Gilpin County Animal Shelter) to request you continue to support our local animal shelter with Clear Creek County and renew the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to fund the shelter's operation.

While I am aware of the fiscal challenges faced by the county, I want to impress on you the far-reaching value Charlie's Place offers the residents of Clear Creek and Gilpin Counties. It is not just a dog pound. It is a community of animal lovers, many who adopted their beloved family pet from Charlie's Place. Countless dogs and cats have been saved from euthanasia and placed into loving homes.

The options that the Board are currently considering would negate the reasons Charlie's Place is so beloved.

- Gilpin County is only responsible for 20% of the operating costs of Charlie's Place yet benefits 100% from its programs (free dog training assistance, shot clinics, spay/neuter vouchers, safe place for lost/stray/abandoned animals, community medical assistance). There are no additional fees per dog or added billing for medical needs of these impounded Gilpin animals.
- Joining Foothills Animal Shelter, a kill shelter, is against every fiber of Charlie's Place values. Killing 10% of animals in your care does not make you a no-kill shelter. Helen Buck donated the shelter land in good faith to save animal's lives, which Charlie's Place has been doing since opening its doors in 2008.
- Personnel costs are the main driver of cost increases, yet the staff of 3.675 people keep the shelter running seven days a week. It has put an immense strain on staff and volunteers and is an unsustainable long-term solution, but abandoning Charlie's Place is not the answer.
- Caring for the animals at Charlie's Place takes commitment. The animals require food, water, clean facilities, consistent care, and daily interactions. Keeping costs down while operating with less than 4 fulltime people is difficult at best.

- Friends of Charlie's Place (FOCP) is committed to supporting the shelter animals, however, it does not have the consistent and reliable funding sources required to staff the shelter and maintain the structure. FOCP has helped with the expense of spaying and neutering to keep dog/cat populations in check, helped improve the shelter property; added roofs on outdoor kennels, built an exercise yard, created the Helen Buck memorial park complete with memorial windchimes and park benches, and provided specialized training to help animals become more adoptable, all to improve and support the county's animal shelter.

It is heart breaking that Gilpin BOCC sees the withdrawal of the county's support for Charlie's Place as an option to increase funding in the current budget. Who or what will replace the services Charlie's Place currently provides? Foothills is already too crowded and is known as a kill shelter. Gilpin residents support Charlie's Place and count in it to protect the counties lost/stray/abandoned animals.

Please reconsider the options currently on the table and keep Charlie's Place open in its fully functional capacity.

"The time is always right to do what is right!" Martin Luther King, Jr.

Yours Sincerely,
[YOUR NAME]
[YOUR COUNTY]