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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Weatherford Parker County Animal Shelter receives \$500,000 grant for the Giving Second Chances Campaign

WEATHERFORD (CITY OF WEATHERFORD), Texas – The Weatherford Parker County Animal Shelter will receive \$500,000 toward the shelters Giving Second Chances capital campaign from The Rees-Jones Foundation to help fund the architectural designs and construction of the shelter’s new medical surgical center and classroom.

The Giving Second Chances capital campaign was authorized by Weatherford City Council and is designed to make the shelter’s master plan a reality by improving the standards of animal care for not only Parker County, but North Texas as a whole. The shelter master plan includes the construction of a new medical and surgical center, isolation and treatment center, community cat building, educational classroom and the shelters “Central Bark” park design.

To date, the campaign has raised over \$1.2 million of the overall goal and is still in need of \$700,000 to complete the campaign. All donations given to the Giving Second Chances capital campaign will be put into the Animal Shelter’s fund and will be spent specifically on the shelter campaign priorities. Ways to participate include cash donations, appreciated stocks and securities, real estate, life income plans, charitable lead trusts, remainder interest in residence/farm, gifts in kind and bequests.

This grant comes after the Weatherford College Board of Trustees unanimously approved moving forward in a partnership to offer a new Associates of Applied Science in Veterinary Technology degree. The partnership between the Weatherford Parker County Animal Shelter and Weatherford College will be a first of its kind in Texas, if not the first of its kind in the United States. The college will be able to teach a new associate degree program to students locally, which is in high demand to both students and local veterinarians. In a typical vet tech degree program, the college would have to build a medical center and kennels to hold animals. The partnership drastically reduces the capital costs and ongoing costs needed to start the program.

“We are very fortunate to have the support of The Rees-Jones Foundation,” said Director of Municipal and Community Services Dustin Deel. “This donation shows support for an idea that has been three years in the making. Not only will this benefit Parker County, but it will raise the standards for what animal welfare actually means.”



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Weatherford College has agreed to seek approval to offer a vet tech program with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS COC). The college will also seek additional funding and equipment donations, such as sonography, X-ray machines and dental equipment. If the donated equipment is procured, it will be available for use by the shelter and will extend the level of care the shelter can provide for its animals.

“We at Weatherford College are very eager to partner with the City of Weatherford to expand both animal care services and educational opportunities at the Weatherford Parker County Animal Shelter,” said WC President Tod Allen Farmer. “We are currently awaiting program approval and still need to secure program funding and equipment donations. All of these factors will determine if or when we are financially able to launch the vet tech program.”

If the degree is approved, Weatherford College may employ up to two licensed veterinarians and a registered vet tech to run the program. The staff will be teaching the students from the shelter, giving the students the hands-on experience needed in the industry and local economy. The new partnership and degree program could start as early as Fall of 2019, however, program approval, launch date and funding are still uncertain at this time.

“It’s partnerships like these that make our community the strongest in Texas,” said City Manager Sharon Hayes. “This is a very innovative project and it is really exciting to see the project come to fruition. This would not be possible without the support of so many people and organizations like The Rees-Jones Foundation.”

For more information about the Giving Second Chances capital campaign or if you would like to be a part of the campaign, call the campaign office at 817-598-4342.

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City of Weatherford

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