

**Nguyen, Julie**

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**From:** Chaney, Coleen  
**Sent:** Monday, December 15, 2025 11:26 AM  
**To:** BCC Agenda Comments  
**Cc:** Revie, Derelynn H  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed amendments to Chapter 14, Pinellas County Code-Restoration of Definitions

Related to Agenda item #65.  
Coleen

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**From:** Scott, Brian <[brscott@pinellas.gov](mailto:brscott@pinellas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 15, 2025 11:12 AM  
**To:** Chaney, Coleen <[cchaney@pinellas.gov](mailto:cchaney@pinellas.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed amendments to Chapter 14, Pinellas County Code-Restoration of Definitions

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**From:** Dan Hester <[dhesterfl@yahoo.com](mailto:dhesterfl@yahoo.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 15, 2025 11:09 AM  
**To:** Scherer, Chris <[cscherer@pinellas.gov](mailto:cscherer@pinellas.gov)>; Scott, Brian <[brscott@pinellas.gov](mailto:brscott@pinellas.gov)>; Nowicki, Vince <[vnowicki@pinellas.gov](mailto:vnowicki@pinellas.gov)>; Eggers, Dave <[deggers@pinellas.gov](mailto:deggers@pinellas.gov)>; Latvala, Christopher <[clatvala@pinellas.gov](mailto:clatvala@pinellas.gov)>; Peters, Kathleen <[kpeters@pinellas.gov](mailto:kpeters@pinellas.gov)>; Robinson-Flowers, Rene <[rflowers@pinellas.gov](mailto:rflowers@pinellas.gov)>  
**Cc:** Renner, Jennifer <[jrenner@pinellas.gov](mailto:jrenner@pinellas.gov)>; McGill, James R <[jmcgill@pinellas.gov](mailto:jmcgill@pinellas.gov)>; Lourdes Benedict <[lbenedict@co.pinellas.fl.us](mailto:lbenedict@co.pinellas.fl.us)>; Burton, Barry <[bburton@pinellas.gov](mailto:bburton@pinellas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Proposed amendments to Chapter 14, Pinellas County Code-Restoration of Definitions

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Honorable Pinellas County Commissioners, I write you today to ask you to consider a change in the definition of a word used in Chapter 14 of the Pinellas County Code of Ordinances.

Today you will vote on a suggested County Ordinance change as it applies to **ARTICLE II. ANIMAL SERVICES DIVISION 1. GENERALLY, Sec. 14-26. Definitions.**

**Current proposed definition of Animal reads** “*Animal* means any living dumb creature.” This definition is so outdated I find it offensive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These definitions resulted from **Meaning of "Dumb"**: In older statutes and historical documents, "dumb" refers to the perceived inability of animals to use human language to reason or communicate their interests, pain, and suffering in a way humans could easily understand and document. While scientific research consistently demonstrates that many non-human animals possess complex cognitive and emotional capacities, including intelligence, empathy, and the ability to feel pain, the legal framework has been slow to change.

**New Terminology:** The term "dumb animals" is now considered outdated and derogatory in modern discourse. I would hope each of you Commissioners would agree in principle with this observation. In lieu of accepting the existing definition, I ask you consider a more adequate and modernized definition. I will suggest a definition which I believe adequately replaces an outdated and offensive version of “**Animal.**”

**Proposed new definition: Animal Creature:** "any living creature other than a human being".

Thank you for your public service and Merry Christmas.

Respectfully,

Dan Hester

Co-Founder, Former Board President, MEOW Now Inc. (now a program of Friends of Strays)

Former Board Member, SPCA Tampa Bay

Former Vice Mayor, City of Seminole

45 years of working for change in the animal welfare industry