

Nguyen, Julie

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

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

From: Dan Hester <dhesterfl@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, December 15, 2025 11:09 AM
To: Scherer, Chris <cscherer@pinellas.gov>; Scott, Brian <brscott@pinellas.gov>; Nowicki, Vince <vnowicki@pinellas.gov>; Eggers, Dave <deggers@pinellas.gov>; Latvala, Christopher <clatvala@pinellas.gov>; Peters, Kathleen <kpeters@pinellas.gov>; Robinson-Flowers, Rene <rflowers@pinellas.gov>
Cc: Renner, Jennifer <jrenner@pinellas.gov>; McGill, James R <jmcgill@pinellas.gov>; Lourdes Benedict <lbenedict@co.pinellas.fl.us>; Burton, Barry <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 This definition is so outdated I find it offensive in the 21st century. These definitions resulted from **Meaning of "Dumb":** In older statutes and historical documents, “dumb” refers to the perceived inability of animals to use human language to reason or communicate their interests, pain, and suffering in a way humans could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New Terminology: The term "dumb animals" is now considered outdated and derogatory in modern discourse.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