



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 17-1177A, **Version:** 1

Subject:

Ordinance amending Chapter 14 of the Pinellas County Code relating to animals.

Recommended Action:

Adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 14 of the Pinellas County Code (Code) relating to animals.

Strategic Plan:

Ensure Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

2.1 Provide planning, coordination, prevention, and protective services to ensure a safe and secure community

Deliver First Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

5.3 Ensure effective and efficient delivery of county services and support

Summary:

The proposed changes brought forth to Chapter 14, Section 14-37 of the Code will remove Paragraph (f), the sunset provision of Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate and Return (TNVR). This removal would make Section 14-37 a permanent part of Chapter 14.

Section 14-37 of the ordinance defines a community cat as any feral or free roaming cat under the care of a colony caregiver. Colony cats are required to be sterilized with a current vaccination for rabies and shall be distinguished from other cats by being ear tipped and tattooed.

This change will make TNVR, an industry recommended best practice, a permanent and important component of the Code. This change will continue to positively influence the cats and the community.

The current TNVR Pilot program of the Code was developed by a working group of partners, community advocates, Parks & Conservation Department staff, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission staff, and Animal Services staff. The mission of the pilot program was to demonstrate that the implementation of a TNVR program with targeted focus areas would have a positive impact on enforcement complaints related to cats and shelter intake. TNVR is a widely accepted industry best practice that reduces cat nuisance complaints, cat intake for shelters, and birth of kittens in community cat colonies while improving public health by providing rabies vaccinations for community cats. Care was taken to provide for private property rights of other citizens, and conservation/park land and beaches.

During the three year pilot period, TNVR organizations were tasked with the following:

1. Implement a colony data collection/tracking system

2. Develop/Implement a training/certification program for any current colonies wishing to be given the legal exemption status as a colony caregiver under the ordinance
3. Identify existing managed colonies in targeted zip codes and provide up to 1,000 surgeries in year one, 1,500 surgeries in year two and 2,500 surgeries in year three

It is recommended that the proposed ordinance change be approved to become effective January 1, 2018. It is our continued belief as supported by the initial data that a properly structured TNVR program can continue to reduce the number of cats living and reproducing outdoors. Despite the pilot program targeting two zip codes for data consistency, the program was operational countywide.

If approved, the ordinance will be in effect countywide to include incorporated and unincorporated areas. It is desired that additional parties would participate in the TNVR efforts within Pinellas County.

Background Information:

On August 1, 2017, the Board of County Commissioners granted authority to advertise and schedule a public hearing regarding the attached proposed ordinance.

Fiscal Impact:

The approximate cost per day to intake, vaccinate, feed, and house each animal is \$10.00. Animal Services has multiple initiatives, including TNVR, which focus on reducing the number of animals entering the shelter system.

Staff Member Responsible:

Doug Brightwell, Director, Animal Services

Partners:

MEOW Now
Humane Society of Pinellas
Operation SNIP
SPCA Tampa Bay

Attachments:

TNVR Additional Information
Proposed Ordinance
Ordinance Support Email from MEOW Now
Ordinance Support Email from Humane Society of Pinellas
Ordinance Support Email from Operation SNIP
Ordinance Support Email from SPCA Tampa Bay
Animal Ordinance Advertisement