



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 22-1932A, **Version:** 1

Subject:

Proposed ratification of initiation of litigation in the case of Pinellas County v. Mahetab Bitar; County Civil Case No. 22-007149-CO - petition for custody of cruelly or neglectfully treated animals.

Recommended Action:

Ratification of the Chair's approval of authority to initiate litigation against Mahetab Bitar.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Summary:

On October 4, 2022, the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office requested the assistance of Animal Services at 2035 Philippe Parkway, Apt. 109, located in Safety Harbor.

The Sherriff's office was arresting the dog's owner on suspicion of animal cruelty and, during the arrest, found the owner's dog was being neglected. The dog was contained in a bedroom with no food or water, where there was a large quantity of animal feces present, as well as the overwhelming smell of ammonia. Following a veterinary inspection, the dog was transferred to Animal Services.

Due to the owner's inability to adequately care for the dog, Animal Services requested litigation be initiated in accordance with Section 828.073, Florida Statutes. Pursuant to Resolution No. 21-2, Pinellas County has now filed an action seeking custody and ownership of the dog and to enjoin the respondent from owning animals or, in the alternative, for the Court to enter an Order to Provide Care for the animals.

Background Information:

N/A

Fiscal Impact:

Unknown.

Staff Member Responsible:

Jewel White, County Attorney

Christy Donovan Pemberton, Managing Assistant County Attorney

Partners:

N/A

Attachments:

N/A