

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, cats and dogs are an integral and valuable part of all communities, and contribute to the well-being of humans, whether as companions, service animals, or therapy pets, and

WHEREAS, municipalities have an important role in ensuring the well-being of animals while balancing the needs of pet owners and non-pet owners; and

WHEREAS, legislators and municipal officials report that the number of calls from citizens about animal related issues rival any other issue(s); and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 2.2 million owned dogs and 2.5 million owned cats in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey was the first state in the nation to develop an innovative state-wide spay/neuter program and all proceeds from the sale of Animal Friendly License Plates are used to reimburse participating veterinarians for spaying and neutering surgeries; and

WHEREAS, State responsibility for promoting responsible pet care and ensuring that pets do not suffer due to abuse, neglect, or lack of proper care in kennels, pet shops, shelters, and pounds (animal facilities) is vested in the Office of Animal Welfare within the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Society to Prevent Cruelty to Animals (the “NJSPCA”) and municipal Animal Cruelty Investigators (“ACIs”) are responsible for investigating and acting as officers for the detection, apprehension, and arrest of offenders against the animal cruelty laws; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey mandates training requirements for animal control officers and Animal Cruelty Investigators; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey impounds over 100,000 animals per year in animal shelters and impoundment facilities; and

WHEREAS, approximately 37% of the animals that enter New Jersey's impoundment facilities are euthanized, at a rate of around 3000 every month; and

WHEREAS, free-roaming unvaccinated cats and dogs present a potential health threat to humans through the spread of such zoonotic diseases as rabies, leptospirosis, toxoplasmosis, roundworms, animal bites, and environmental contamination from animal feces; and

WHEREAS, stray and unwanted pets place an enormous financial burden on municipalities and non-profit humane agencies organized to care for these animals; (To calculate an average per animal cost for your municipality, divide the total shelter expenditures - municipal animal control and shelter expenses -by the total number of animals served per year); and

WHEREAS, it is more humane and cost-effective to reduce the number of unwanted animals than it is to impound and euthanize unwanted or unclaimed dogs and cats; and

WHEREAS, all dogs are required to be licensed in the municipality where they are housed and the majority of municipalities also require licensure of cats. (Current vaccination against rabies is a pre-requisite to licensure); and

WHEREAS, all municipalities are required to canvass their residents to locate unlicensed dogs;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WEST ORANGE that the Township of West Orange pledges to take steps towards making the Township of West Orange a truly sustainable community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township of West Orange pledges to ensure that companion animals are treated, humanely, respectfully, and responsibly through public education and through the exercise of powers vested within New Jersey Municipalities.

Karen J. Carnevale, R.M.C.
Municipal Clerk

Jerry Guarino
Council President

Adopted: May 29, 2019