

**TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF MOUNT HOLLY TOWNSHIP
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

RESOLUTION NO. 2016 -46

**RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF MOUNT HOLLY TOWNSHIP
AUTHORIZING THE COMPANION ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLEDGE**

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 like the Township of Mount Holly 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, the State has a 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 (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 pursuant to section 4 of P.L. 1983, c. 525; and

WHEREAS, over 100,000 animals per year are impounded in animal shelters and impoundment facilities in the state of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, approximately 37% of the animals that enter New Jersey's impoundment facilities are euthanized, at a rate of approximately 3,000 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; 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 in New Jersey also require licensure of cats; 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 Mount Holly **PLEDGES** that within the bounds of the Township of Mount Holly, the Township shall ensure that companion animals are treated humanely, respectfully, and responsibly through public education and through exercise of powers vested within New Jersey municipalities and that the Township shall take the following steps with regard to our municipal responsibilities with the intent of making Mount Holly a truly sustainable community:

- 1) Enforce all animal and rabies control statutes and regulations, including the requirement to pick up and impound all stray dogs and cats, excepting stray and feral cats in managed TNR programs; and
- 2) Work to improve the enforcement of animal cruelty statutes; and
- 3) Educate our community, including school children, about their responsibilities towards the pet animals they chose to keep; and
- 4) Institute, as appropriate, cat licensing and ordinances and to increase the percentage of licensed dogs and cats through ease of licensing and licensing enforcement measures; and
- 5) Identify and work to implement best practices to prevent unwanted breeding through effective animal control, availability of low-cost pet spaying and neutering services, public education, and pet-friendly rental and senior housing; and

- 6) Identify alternatives to euthanasia of adoptable companion animals, including utilizing foster homes, adoption networks and providing remedial behavior training services to existing and future owners; and
- 7) Assist in identifying resources to improve the conditions and increase the capacity of animal shelters and impoundment facilities and animal control services; and

On a motion by Mr. DiFolco, seconded by Ms. Sykes, the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted.

Yeas: Brown, DiFolco, Sykes, Thiessen and Jones

Nays:

Abstain:

Recuse:

Absent:

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy of a Resolution adopted by the Mount Holly Township Council at a meeting held on February 8, 2016.



Jason Jones, Mayor



Nikima S. Muller, RMC/CMC
Township Clerk