

ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

ACTION AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT
Meeting Date: February 17, 2009

Action Agenda
Item No. 4-j

SUBJECT: Resolution Declaring February 24 as Spay Neuter Day USA

DEPARTMENT: Animal Services

PUBLIC HEARING: (Y/N) No

ATTACHMENT(S):
Resolution

INFORMATION CONTACT:
Susan Elmore, DVM, Chair, Animal
Services Advisory Board, 541-3474
Bob Marotto, Director, Animal Services
968-2287

PURPOSE: To consider a resolution declaring February 24, 2009 as "Spay Neuter Day USA" in Orange County.

BACKGROUND: The Animal Services Advisory Board (ASAB) recommended at its January meeting that the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) adopt a resolution designating February 24, 2009 as "Spay Neuter Day USA" in Orange County. The Humane Society of the United States has nationally designated the last Tuesday of each February as "Spay Day USA".

Spay Day was originally created in 1995 by the Doris Day Animal League (DDAL) and outreach was assumed by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) in 2006 when DDAL combined operations with HSUS. Since creationist establishment participants have spayed or neutered more than 1,418,000 animals, preventing millions of potential births and thus saving taxpayers millions of dollars that may have otherwise been used to provide animal control, care and sheltering for these animals.

Pet overpopulation in Orange County is a priority issue for the ASAB and Animal Services Department. The ASAB has created a subcommittee charged with developing a strategic plan to address pet overpopulation and has been meeting since fall of 2007, collecting information and researching other jurisdictions in North Carolina and throughout the country. One subcommittee task is to work with staff to formulate program plans to best utilize the funds for the Community Spay/Neuter Fund collected from an increase in the license differential of intact and sterilized dogs and cats.

The Animal Services Department and the Department of Social Services have also partnered with AnimalKind's "The \$20 Fix" program aimed at providing targeted spay/neuter services to low-income

households in Orange County. In 2008 the BOCC approved a budget of \$15,000 to promote and provide these services to residents of the County for the current fiscal year.

As a part of its Spay Neuter Day USA celebration, Animal Services will be undertaking its first major outreach effort to the general public during the months of February and March 2009. Outreach will consist of flyers and themed advertisements to promote the benefits of spaying and neutering pets as well as the new opportunity for qualifying Orange County households to obtain low-cost or no-cost surgeries for their pets. Flyers and advertisements will be paired with a media release to further inform the public of the problem of pet overpopulation and help offer low-cost solutions to those who may not otherwise have the means to spay and neuter their pets.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: The resolution has no financial impacts. Events planned for Spay Neuter Day USA in Orange County will involve outreach funds from the County's Community Spay/Neuter Fund to promote "The \$20 Fix" program and the benefits of spaying and neutering pets. Total funds currently available to Animal Services to conduct Spay Neuter Day USA 2009 in Orange County are \$1,500.

RECOMMENDATION: The Manager recommends the Board approve the proposed resolution and authorize the Chair to sign.

ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPAY NEUTER DAY USA RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, cats and dogs provide companionship to and share the homes of thousands of individuals in Orange County; and

WHEREAS, humane societies and shelters throughout the country have to euthanize approximately four million cats and dogs each year, although many of them are healthy and adoptable, due to lack of critical resources such as money, space, and good adoptive homes; and

WHEREAS, the problem of pet overpopulation costs the taxpayers of Orange County hundreds of thousands of dollars annually through animal control and sheltering programs aimed at coping with unwanted and homeless cats and dogs; and

WHEREAS, the Animal Services Advisory Board and the Animal Services Department have made correcting pet overpopulation a priority; and

WHEREAS, the County has established a Community Spay/Neuter Fund to address the issue of pet overpopulation in the County; and

WHEREAS, spaying and neutering cats and dogs, among other animal companions, has been shown to drastically reduce overpopulation; and

WHEREAS, Animal Services is working with the Department of Social Services to offer no-cost spay and neuter surgeries to qualifying Orange County households; and

WHEREAS, Animal Services has partnered with AnimalKind to offer The \$20 Fix in Orange County, providing qualifying households the ability to have their pets spayed and neutered for \$20; and

WHEREAS, spayed and neutered animals are less likely to have certain health problems or exhibit certain undesirable behaviors that can create community-wide problems and use community resources; and

WHEREAS, veterinarians, animal care and control organizations, national and local animal welfare organizations, and private individuals worked together to ensure the spaying or neutering of more than 20,000 companion animals nationally through "Spay Neuter Day USA" in 2008; and

WHEREAS, veterinarians, animal care and control organizations, national and local animal welfare organizations, and private individuals have joined together again to advocate the spaying and neutering of companion animals on "Spay Day USA 2009";

Now, Therefore Be It Resolved by the Orange County Board of Commissioners that February 24, 2009 is declared as "Spay Neuter Day USA." The Board of County Commissioners calls upon the people of the County to observe the day by having their own cats or dogs spayed or neutered or by sponsoring the spaying or neutering of another person's cat or dog.

THIS THE 17th DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2009.

Valerie P. Foushee, CHAIR
ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS