

**ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ACTION AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

Meeting Date: February 16, 2010

Action Agenda

Item No. 3-b

SUBJECT: Resolution Acknowledging February 23, 2010 as Spay Neuter Day USA in Orange County

DEPARTMENT: Animal Services

PUBLIC HEARING: (Y/N)

No

ATTACHMENT(S):

Spay Neuter Day Resolution

INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bob Marotto, Director, Animal Services
968-2287

Jean Austen, JD, Chair, Animal Services
Advisory Board, 563-3291

PURPOSE: To approve a resolution officially declaring February 23, 2010, as "Spay Neuter Day USA" in Orange County.

BACKGROUND: Animal Services staff and the Animal Services Advisory Board (ASAB) recommend that the (BOCC) adopt a resolution designating February 23, 2010 "Spay Neuter Day" in Orange County. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has nationally designated the last Tuesday of each February as "Spay Day USA".

Spay Day USA was originally created in 1995 by the Doris Day Animal League (DDAL). In 2006, HSUS assumed responsibility for Spay Day USA when DDAL combined operations with HSUS. Since its inception participants have spayed or neutered more than one million animals, preventing millions of potential births. As a result, millions of taxpayer dollars have been saved that may have otherwise been used to provide animal control, care and sheltering for the offspring of these animals.

In Orange County, pet overpopulation is a priority issue. At its January 28, 2010 work session, the BOCC received and discussed *Managing Pet Overpopulation: A Strategic Plan for Orange County, North Carolina*. Working closely together, Animal Services staff and the Animal Services Advisory Board (ASAB) prepared this five-year strategic plan on the basis of best practices in the field of animal welfare and public policy. Fundamental to this plan is targeting spay and neuter in the County to decrease the rate of reproduction of dogs and cats and thereby contain the number of animals that must be sheltered and the costs of caring for those animals.

Since the creation of the County's Community Spay/Neuter fund, Animal Services staff has worked with the ASAB to begin to establish a proactive and cost-effective spay and neuter program. Significant developments in this area in calendar year 2009 included:

- Spaying and neutering 220 dogs and cats through Orange County's "The \$20 FIX", a partnership of Animal Services and AnimalKind; and
- Spaying and neutering 92 dogs and cats belonging to clients of the Department of Social Service (DSS) on a "no pay" basis through Orange County's The \$20 FIX program.

As a part of the "Spay Neuter Day" recognition this year, Animal Services will work with Pet Overpopulation Patrol-NC (POP-NC) to spay or neuter up to 30 cats and/or dogs from families who receive service from the Department of Social Services. The event theme is "Beat the Heat." The intent of the event is to sterilize these animals before they have the opportunity to procreate and add to the number of "surplus" pets potentially entering the County's Animal Services Center during summer months.

In addition, Animal Services will continue ongoing outreach efforts. Outreach will consist of flyers and themed advertisements to promote the benefits of spaying and neutering pets as well as the opportunity for qualifying Orange County households to obtain low-cost or no-cost surgeries for their dogs and cats. 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 County residents who may not otherwise have the means to spay and neuter their pets.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: The resolution itself has no financial impact. Events and outreach done in conjunction with this year's Spay Neuter Day USA will involve budgeted expenditures from the County's Community Spay/Neuter Fund. POP-NC sterilization services will be obtained via an annual agreement that includes spay and neuter events such as Spay Neuter Day USA.

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

**ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
2010 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, 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, 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 the unwanted and homeless cats and dogs; 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 Animal Services Advisory Board and the Animal Services Department have made correcting pet overpopulation a priority, and prepared ***Managing Pet Overpopulation: A Strategic Plan for Orange County***; 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 has partnered with AnimalKind and the Department of Social Services to offer "low cost" and "no cost" spay and neuter through The \$20 Fix in Orange County; and

WHEREAS, veterinarians, animal care and control organizations, national and local animal welfare organizations, and private citizens work together each year to ensure the spaying or neutering of thousands of companion animals through "Spay Neuter Day USA"; and

WHEREAS, veterinarians, animal care and control organizations, national and local animal welfare organizations, and private citizens have joined together again this year to advocate and support the spaying and neutering of companion animals on "Spay Day USA 2010;"

Now, Therefore Be It Resolved by the Orange County Board of Commissioners that February 23, 2010 is declared "Spay Neuter Day USA", and 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 16th DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2010.

Valerie P. Foushee, Chair
Orange County Board of Commissioners