

**ORANGE COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**ACTION AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT**

**Meeting Date:** February 17, 2015

**Action Agenda  
Item No.** \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECT:** Resolution Acknowledging February 24, 2015, as Spay Neuter Day USA in Orange County, North Carolina

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**DEPARTMENT:** Animal Services

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

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**ATTACHMENT(S):**  
Spay Neuter Day Resolution

**INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
Bob Marotto, Director, Animal Services 968-2287  
Sarah Fallin, Program Director, Animal Services,  
942-7387, ext. 224  
Michelle Walker, Chair, Animal Services  
Advisory Board, 919-448-8029

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**PURPOSE:** To request that the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) officially resolve that February 24, 2015, is “Spay Neuter Day” in Orange County.

**BACKGROUND:** Animal Services staff and the Animal Services Advisory Board (ASAB) recommended that the BOCC adopt a resolution making February 24, 2015, “Spay Neuter Day” in Orange County. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has nationally designated the last Tuesday of each February as “International Spay Day.”

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

In Orange County, the issue of pet overpopulation is a priority. Working together, Animal Services staff and the ASAB prepared a five-year strategic plan on the basis of best practices in the field of animal welfare and public policy: **Managing Pet Overpopulation: A Strategic Plan of Orange County, North Carolina** (see <http://www.orangecountync.gov/animalservices/spayneuter.asp>). Fundamental to this plan is targeting spay and neuter in our 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 and Neuter Fund, Animal Services staff has worked with the ASAB to establish a proactive and cost-effective spay and neuter program. Significant developments in this area in calendar year 2014 included:

- Spaying and neutering a total of 473 cats and dogs in total on the basis of the partnership between Animal Services and AnimalKind (which offers The \$20 Fix);
- Spaying and neutering 289 dogs and cats belonging to clients of the Department of Social Service (DSS) on a "no pay" basis, due to DSS involvement in this program.
- Helping to reducing the number of animals admitted to Orange County's Animal Services Center from an annual average of 4315 for 2005-2009 and an average of 3419 for 2010 -2013 to 2939 in 2014, which is a record low for Orange County Animal Services.

As part of our spay neuter celebration this year, Animal Services is working with SNAP- (Spay Neuter Assistance Program) to spay and neuter up to 35 cats and dogs from families who receive services from DSS on "Spay Neuter Day" using our "Beat the Heat" theme since our intent is to sterilize these animals before they have the opportunity to procreate and add to the number of "surplus" pets that enter the County's Animal Services Center during the summer months when the animal shelter population peaks.

In addition, Animal Services will continue ongoing outreach efforts. Outreach that will consist of 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. These will be paired with media releases to further inform the public of the problem of pet overpopulation and help offer effective and low-cost solutions to County residents who may not otherwise have the means to spay and neuter their pets. In 2015, we will continue to use our "Beat the Heat" theme from January – March to get ahead of "kitten" season and prevent unwanted litters. We have rented a billboard facing 70 W in Hillsborough NC for 9 weeks starting January 5, 2015 and running through March 12, 2015. We also are increasing the number of Spay Neuter Days to four events, and we attended training on "Pets for Life", a new door to door campaign designed to meet our targeted population face to face and assist in spaying and neutering their pets

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

The FY1415 operating budget for the Community Spay and Neuter Fund is \$66,350. These funds primarily come from the \$20 differential cost for licenses for a reproductive cat or dog versus a spayed or neutered cat or dog, combined with reimbursement from the North Carolina Spay Neuter Reimbursement Program. Currently, the fund balance is approximately, \$79,140. These funds accrued from the licensing differential, donations and reimbursements from the state program. In coming years, these funds will be dedicated to supporting and promoting targeted spays and neuter in accordance with the plan in *Managing Pet Overpopulation: A Strategic Plan for Orange County, North Carolina*.

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

**Orange County Board of County 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, 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, 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 the 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 ***Managing Free-Roaming Cats in Orange County North Carolina***; 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 to households who are economically disadvantaged or who receive public assistance; 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 2014.”

Now, therefore be it RESOLVED by Orange County that February 24, 2015, is declared “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 17<sup>th</sup> DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2015.

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Earl McKee - CHAIR  
ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS