

Item Title: Approval of Revisions to the Wake County Animal Control Ordinance Regarding Rabies

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners adopts the attached revisions to the Wake County Animal Control Ordinance regarding Rabies.

Item Summary:

Purpose: The Board of Commissioners approves all amendments to Wake County Ordinances.

Background: These recommended changes to the Animal Control Ordinance were prompted by a change in state law after publication of the updated Compendium for Animal Rabies Prevention and Control. These changes offer pet owners more flexibility when animals are found out of compliance with rabies vaccinations. Owners with documentation of prior vaccinations will be able to get an updated vaccination and monitor the animal at home. Owners without documentation of prior vaccination will face a four-month quarantine requirement, instead of six months.

Board Goal: This action supports routine County operations.

Fiscal Impact: This action has no fiscal impact.

Additional Information:

The Wake County Animal Control Ordinance is administered and enforced by Wake County staff throughout the County except within the municipal limits of Cary, Garner, Holly Springs and Raleigh. Animal control services are provided by these municipalities in accordance with their own adopted animal control ordinances.

After the release of the updated Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control (Compendium) in 2016, the state proceeded to update the state statute regarding post-exposure management. The updated state statute, G.S. 130A-197, went into effect on October 1, 2017. It now states, "*The recommendations and guidelines for rabies post-exposure management specified by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians in the most current edition of the Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control shall be the required control measures.*" The post-exposure management currently outlined in the Wake County Animal Control Ordinance is not in alignment with the State nor with the recommended guidelines of the Compendium. A Rabies Ordinance Subcommittee was appointed by the Human Services Board's Public Health Committee, which brought together two representatives from Human Services Board, Dr. Seth Wexler

and Mr. John Myhre, a Communicable Disease Nurse from Wake County, Ruth Lassiter, Wake County Animal Services Director, Dr. Jennifer Federico, Wake County's Chief Veterinarian, Dr. Sandra Strong and Wake County's Animal Control Manager, Ms. Karen Rogers. The subcommittee convened to make revisions to the current Wake County ordinance.

These revisions will better align the ordinance with the state statute as well as improve the options for owners of pets that may have been exposed to rabies.

The key revisions include the following:

1. Management of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets Exposed to Rabies.
2. Added Ferrets where appropriate and in alignment with the state statute.
3. Changed "Destruction" to "Euthanasia"

The final draft was brought before the Human Services Board on December 21, 2018 where the Human Services Board endorses the revisions to come before the Board of Commissioners.

Attachments:

1. Proposed Changes to Wake County Animal Control Ordinance