RESOLUTION 2013-59
A RESOLUTION OF MUNICIPAL SUPPORT FOR RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP PROGRAMS IN THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER ALLOWAYS CREEK

RECOGNIZING that 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

UNDERSTANDING that municipalities have an important role in ensuring the well-being of animals while balancing the needs of pet owners and non-pet owners.

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 State 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, and;

WHEREAS New Jersey impounds over 100,000 animals per year in animal shelters and impoundment facilities, and;

WHEREAS approximately 37% of the animals that enter New Jersey's impoundment facilities are euthanized, at a rate of around 3000 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 and cats are required to be licensed in the municipality where they are housed, and;

WHEREAS all municipalities are required to canvass their residents to locate unlicensed dogs, and;

NOW THEREFORE, we the municipality of Lower Alloways Creek, resolve to take the following steps with regard to our municipal responsibilities with the intent of making Lower Alloways Creek a truly sustainable community.

It is our intent to do our utmost, within the bounds of our jurisdiction, to ensure that companion animals are treated humanely, respectfully, and responsibly through public education and through exercise of powers vested within New Jersey municipalities as follows:

Authority of municipalities:
Pursuant to New Jersey Statutes, all municipalities must appoint a certified animal control officer who shall be responsible for animal control within the jurisdiction of the municipality, including providing emergency veterinary care for injured stray animals and coverage outside of normal working hours;

The municipality in which an animal facility is located is responsible for issuing the license for that facility to operate;

The NJ Vicious Dog Law establishes a state-wide standard for municipalities to effectively address situations of vicious or potentially dangerous dogs, regardless of breed;

The Animal Population Control Program provides for low-cost spaying and neutering for pet owners adopting dogs and cats from New Jersey shelters, pounds, and animal adoption referral agencies and pet owners participating in one of several Public Assistance Programs.

The Municipality pledges to:

- 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 (Trap, Neuter, and Release) programs.
- Work to improve the enforcement of animal cruelty statutes.
- Educate our community, including school children, about their responsibilities towards the pet animals they chose to keep.
- Institute, as appropriate, cat licensing ordinances and increase the percentage of licensed dogs and cats through ease of licensing and licensing enforcement measures.
- 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.
- 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.
- Assist in identifying resources to improve the conditions and increase the capacity of animal shelters and impoundment facilities and animal control services.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a Resolution Adopted at the Regular Township Committee meeting held on May 20, 2013.

ATTEST: LOWER ALLOWAYS CREEK TOWNSHIP

_____ By: _____

Ronald L Campbell Sr. Clerk Mayor, Robert F. Breslin III

ADOPTED: May 20, 2013