

Incorporating Stakeholder Feedback into Ch. 6 Revisions

- Issue: Definition of feral cats (6-1)
 - At our October 1st stakeholder meeting, concerns were raised about the definition of feral cats in the ordinance. After some discussion, the definition has been changed to the following:
 - “*Feral cat* means any ~~homeless, wild, free-roaming~~ or untamed domestic cat.”
- Issue: Treatment of cats in TNR programs (6-3,6-22, throughout ordinances)
 - There were also concerns at the meeting about the ordinances not sufficiently recognizing the rather fluid nature of TNR programs, most of which do not have a definite start or end date. In order to accommodate this, we have changed the language throughout the ordinances to recognize the on-going nature of TNR programs.
 - “A feral cat that ~~has been subjected to~~ is a part of a trap, neuter, and return program approved by the director.” (6-3 b2)
 - “Are not ~~subjected to~~ part of a trap, neuter, and return program approved by the director.” (6-22 a3)
- Issue: Mandatory medical procedures (6-86 c and throughout the ordinances)
 - Some stakeholders expressed concern about the mandatory sterilizations and vaccinations required by the proposed ordinances. Stakeholders pointed out that these procedures could potentially cause harm to animals suffering from certain medical conditions. Exemptions for such animals have been added. In order to ease the licensing process and accommodate newer, longer-lasting rabies vaccines, the expiration date of a pet license is now tied to the expiration date of the rabies certificate.
 - A person may obtain a license for a cat or a dog (either sterilized or unsterilized) by completing the appropriate application therefor, paying the prescribed license fee, and furnishing proof of vaccination against rabies or proof that such vaccination is medically inadvisable. Additionally, for a sterilized pet license, proof must be provided that the animal has been sterilized. Except where the director is able to determine by external examination that the animal has been sterilized, the proof shall be provided by certificate of a veterinarian. The license must be renewed ~~each year~~ within 60 days of the expiration of the vaccination against rabies by providing proof of such vaccination ~~against rabies~~ and the payment of the renewal processing fee. (6-86c).
 - The fees specified above are stated in the city fee schedule. The fees specified above for unsterilized dogs or cats shall apply unless the ~~health~~ officer in charge of BARC is able to determine by external examination that the animal has been sterilized, the dog or cat is not yet of age to be sterilized, or the owner presents a certificate from a veterinarian establishing either that the

animal has been sterilized or that it is medically inadvisable to sterilize the animal. A \$20.00 refund may be obtained upon proof of sterilization within 30 days of the earlier of either the date of the animal's release or the date the animal is of age to be sterilized. Release of an unsterilized animal shall be conditioned as provided in subsection (g) below. (6-137a)

- Issue: The possibility of random inspections could alienate or cause undue concern for some potential fosters (6-121 c2)
 - Several animal fosters and humane groups brought it to our attention that the section concerning random inspections of foster homes needed to be changed. Because we at BARC believe that private fosters, rescues, and other humane organizations are crucial to our work together, we have completely removed 6-121(c)(2), which allowed random inspections.
- Issue: Rescue groups that do not maintain shelters would not be classified as “humane organizations” (6-1)
 - We have expanded our definition of a “humane organization” in Section 6-1 in order to provide protection to rescue groups that may not staff a permanent shelter. They will now be able to claim the same exemptions previously only available to other humane organizations that operated permanent shelters, as opposed to operating a foster network within the City.
- Issue: There is some ambiguity as to when the chain of ownership is broken if an animal is relinquished to a rescue group (6-137 and 6-138)
 - We have been looking at some language from Brazoria County and other municipalities in order to determine the best way to remove the uncertainty about the ownership of animals that are transferred to rescue groups. Once we establish the best way to do this, we will update Sections 6-137 and 6-138.
- Issue: Some of the text was unclear
 - After recommendation from the municipal courts, we have tweaked some of the legal aspects of the language to be clearer and more readable.