



# City of Muscatine



## MUSCATINE CITY COUNCIL

### Agenda Item Summary – Regular Meeting

Date June 16th, 2022

#### STAFF

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Courtney Patel, Animal Control Officer

#### SUBJECT

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Public Hearing regarding an ordinance amending Title 6, Chapter 8 regarding "Community Cats" and requirements related to a Trap Neuter and Return Program.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This public hearing is related to a proposed ordinance revising definitions and requirements related to allowing an outside organization to Trap Neuter and Return within the city of Muscatine.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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Staff does not have a recommendation related to the Public Hearing

#### BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

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##### **CITY AUTHORITY TO REGULATE TRAP-NEUTER-RELEASE**

During the past year there has been discussion within our community related to allowing the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) of free-roaming cats. The purpose of a TNR program is to limit the growth and/or reduce the population of feral/free-roaming cats in the community. Currently, we have a professional organization who would be willing to put the work into the TNR. The implementation of this program would allow organizations to complete the TNR and not violate other city codes.

The City of Muscatine has on average trapped and taken 228 cats to Muscatine Humane Society for the past 5 years totaling 1,138 cats. While on duty, the Animal Control Officer observes numerous cats that are free roaming in the city.

##### **TNR CURRENTLY VIOLATES THESE CODE SECTIONS**

Several sections of City Code currently prohibit the implementation of a TNR Program:

- Animal Care 6-8-7. Failure to provide food, water, shelter. Must not abandon animals.
- Animal at Large 6-8-6. Failure to contain cat.
- Registration and license 6-8-3 Failure to register cat with the city.
- Nuisance 6-8-5. Must not allow cat to enter another property or to interfere with it. Must pick up excrement immediately.

- Identification required 6-8-2. Must have durable collar with rabies tags attached, ID tag (animal's name, owner's name, owner's address, owner's phone number.), and city license tag.

## **PROPOSED NEW CODE LANGUAGE**

Staff proposes that the following code language be added to Title 6, Chapter 8 of the City Code to enable TNR programs:

### **DEFINITIONS**

Trap-Neuter-Return - A program in which healthy community cats are altered, vaccinated, ear-tipped, and returned to the areas where they are already living.

Community Cats- A cat which has met certain criteria to be allowed to freely roam city streets.

Ear Tipping- Removal of 1cm of the left ear in a straight line by a licensed veterinarian to show altered status..

### **COMMUNITY CAT REQUIREMENTS**

Along with a few other requirements, the city shall have no liability for the dispositions of any community cat. A community cat shall be returned to the area where it was captured unless the property owner requests that the cat not be returned or the cat is deemed adoptable and may be adopted out. The city shall have no responsibility for the care of community cats.

1. No person owns the cat in question.
2. The cat has been assessed by a veterinarian and deemed healthy.
3. The cat has been spayed or neutered
4. The cat has been vaccinated for rabies and ear tipped by a licensed veterinarian.

## **PROS/CONS OF PROPOSED CODE LANGUAGE**

Pros to this program could include- Free up shelter space, altered cats roam less, lessen euthanasia numbers and less stress for animal to name a few.

Cons to this program could include- Conservation issues/wildlife, possible uptake in the feral cat bites from community cat providers and owners not taking responsibility for pets.

## **CITY FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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City staff does not anticipate a financial impact related to adoption of the proposed code.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Powerpoint presentation from May 12 Council In-Depth meeting  
Proposed Code Language

**Title 6 – Police and Public Safety**  
**Chapter 8 – Animal Regulations<sup>1</sup>**

**SECTIONS:**

- 6-8-1 Definitions
- 6-8-2 Vaccination and Identification Required
- 6-8-3 Registration and License
- 6-8-4 Commercial Breeders
- 6-8-5 Actions Constituting a Nuisance
- 6-8-6 At Large Prohibited
- 6-8-7 Animal Care
- 6-8-8 Rabies Suspects and Animal Bites
- 6-8-9 Dangerous and Vicious Dogs
- 6-8-10 Dogs in Heat
- 6-8-11 Dangerous Animals
- 6-8-12 Penalties
- 6-8-13 Right to Appeal
- 6-8-14 Seizure and Disposition
- 6-8-15 Exemption for Police Service Dogs (K9s).
- 6-8-16 Community Cats

**6-8-1 Definitions.** For use in this Ordinance, the following terms are defined:

- A. "Adequate Food" means providing, at suitable intervals of not more than twenty-four (24) hours, unless the dietary requirements of the animal so require, a quantity and quality of wholesome foodstuff, suitable for the physical condition and age of the animal, served in a clean receptacle or container, sufficient to maintain an adequate level of nutrition for such animal.
- B. "Adequate Indoor Shelter" means a properly ventilated and illuminated facility, sufficiently regulated by heating or cooling to protect the animal from extremes of temperature and sufficient to provide for the animal's health and comfort.
- C. "Adequate Outdoor Shelter" means a structurally sound and weatherproof shelter made up of four (4) solid sides, a roof and a floor off the ground, which provides adequate protection from exposure to weather conditions and is placed in an area free of debris, feces and standing water. An adequate outdoor shelter must meet the requirements of adequate space. An animal crate is not an adequate outdoor shelter.
- D. "Adequate Sanitation" means cleaning or sanitizing of enclosures and housing facilities to remove excreta and other waste materials and dirt so as to minimize health hazards, flies or odors.
- E. "Adequate Space" means primary enclosures and housing facilities constructed and maintained so as to provide sufficient space to allow each animal to make normal postural and social adjustments with adequate freedom of movement to maintain physical condition.

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<sup>1</sup> 3-3-2022 [Ordinance 2002-0046](#) adopted amending Title 6, Chapter 8

- F. "Adequate Veterinary Care" means prompt reasonable care provided to a sick, diseased or injured animal by a licensed veterinarian, euthanized in a manner deemed appropriate by the City, or turned over to the City with approval of the Chief of Police, or designee.
- G. "Adequate Water" means reasonable access to a supply of clean, fresh, potable water, provided in a sanitary manner.
- H. "Altered" means a neutered male dog or cat which has been rendered sterile by a surgical procedure (orchietomy), or a spayed female dog or cat which has been rendered sterile by a surgical procedure (ovariohysterectomy).
- I. "Animal" means dogs, cats, all domestic animals, and any other animal owned by a person.
- J. "At large" means any animal found off the premises of his owner and not under the control of a competent person, restrained within a motor vehicle, housed in a veterinary hospital or kennel, on a leash, or "at heel" beside a competent person and obedient to that person's command.
- K. "Commercial Establishments" means an animal shelter, boarding kennel, commercial breeder, commercial kennel, dealer, pet shop, pound, public auction, or research facility as defined in Iowa Code §162.
- L. "Dangerous animal" means:
  - 1. Any animal as defined in this Chapter and is not a dangerous dog which is not naturally tame or gentle; which is of a wild nature or disposition; and which is capable of killing, inflicting serious injury upon, or causing disease among human beings or domestic animals and having known tendencies as a species to do so.
  - 2. Any animal declared to be dangerous by the City Council.
  - 3. The following animals which shall be deemed to be dangerous animals per se:
    - a. Lions, tigers, jaguars, leopards, cougars, lynxes, cheetahs, and bobcats;
    - b. Wolves, coyotes, and foxes;
    - c. Badgers, wolverines, weasels, and skunks;
    - d. Raccoons;
    - e. Bears;
    - f. Monkeys and chimpanzees;
    - g. Alligators and crocodiles;
    - h. Scorpions;
    - i. Snakes that are venomous or constrictors;
    - j. Gila monsters; and
    - k. Any crossbreed of such animals which have similar characteristics to the animals specified above.
- M. "Dangerous Dog" means any dog that, while on public or private property (including the owner's property)

1. Behaves in a manner that a reasonable person would believe poses a serious and unjustified imminent threat of serious physical injury or death to a person or domestic animal, chasing or approaching a human upon the streets, sidewalks, or any public or private property in a menacing or threatening manner and in an apparent attitude of attack without provocation;
  2. Causes injury to a domestic animal; or
  3. Has caused a bite injury and is not a vicious dog.
- N. "Dogs" means both male and female animals of the canine species whether altered or not.
- O. "Domestic Animal" means an animal that has been tamed and kept by humans as a work animal, food source, or pet.
- P. "Irresponsible Owner" means an owner that has violated this Chapter one (1) or more times on three (3) separate occasions within a rolling twelve-month period.
- Q. "Owner" means any person or persons, firm, association, or corporation owning, keeping, sheltering, or harboring an animal, including but not limited to feeding, watering, and providing veterinary care.
- R. "Serious injury" means any physical injury that results in one or more broken bones, multiple bites, or one or more lacerations requiring sutures, or an injury requiring reconstructive or plastic surgery.
- S. "Tethering" means fastening an animal to a fixed object, including a trolley or pulley, so as to limit its range of movement using a rope, chain, or similar device.
- T. "Unaltered" means a dog or cat that has not been altered as defined in this Section.
- U. "Unattended dog" means a dog that is outdoors without the supervision of a person.
- V. "Vicious Dog" means any dog that, while on public or private property (including the owner's property), without provocation or justification bites or attacks a person and causes serious physical injury or death or is declared vicious under this Chapter.
- W. "Community Cat" outdoor, unowned, free-roaming cats.
- X. "Ear Tipping" One centimeter (1 cm) is removed from the tip of the left ear in a straight line cut, by a licensed veterinarian, to represent the cat has been altered.
- Y. "Healthy" No obvious sign of injury or illness.

#### **6-8-2 Vaccination and Identification Required.**

- A. All dogs and cats six (6) months or older shall be vaccinated against rabies. The owner of any dog or cat shall cause to be placed upon the neck of such dog or cat so owned, kept, or harbored, a collar made of durable material having attached thereto a durable tag showing that the dog or cat has a current rabies vaccination and a durable tag indicating the name of the animal, if any, the owner's name, current address and telephone number, if any, and the license tag as provided in Section 6-8-3 of the City Code of Muscatine. The collar with the attached tag shall be kept on such dog or cat at all times.
- B. All licensed veterinarians shall monthly furnish to the City Department of Finance and Records or designee a list of those dogs and cats receiving rabies vaccinations or inoculations listing the name, address and telephone number of the owner securing the rabies vaccination or inoculation.

### **6-8-3 Registration and License.**

- A. All dogs or cats six (6) months of age or older shall be registered by an owner who is 18 years of age or older and the owner, except owners of seeing-eye dogs or owners who are confined to a wheelchair who are exempt from paying the registration and licensing fee but shall register their dogs or cats, shall pay the fee to the City in the office of the Department of Finance and Records or designee. The fee required by this Section shall be set by resolution of the City Council and is listed in the Schedule of Permit and Licensing Requirements in Appendix B to this Code of Ordinances. The license will be in full force and effect until the anniversary date of the rabies vaccination or inoculation of the animal and thereafter shall be renewable as determined by the animals' vaccination schedule.
- B. It is the responsibility of the owner to furnish written proof that the dog or cat being registered is altered. Persons making a license renewal application received after thirty (30) calendar days of license expiration date shall pay as a penalty as listed in the Schedule of Permit and Licensing Requirements in Appendix B to this Code of Ordinances.
- C. The provisions of this Section shall not apply to dogs or cats in the custody of a veterinarian or animal shelter or animal rescuer or Animal Control Officer or Police Officer or whose owners are nonresidents temporarily within the City for a period not exceeding thirty (30) calendar days.
- D. It shall be a violation of this Section for any person to knowingly issue a check for which funds are insufficient or to stop payment on any check written in payment of fees contained in this Section. Any license(s) or penalties paid for with such checks are, in the case of the license, invalid, and in the case of the penalty, still outstanding.
- E. No dog or cat shall be registered or licensed under this Section unless a certificate of a licensed veterinarian certifying to the fact and date of rabies inoculation of such dog or cat shall have been filed with or exhibited to the authorized agent of the City in the Department of Finance and Records or designee, showing vaccination or inoculation as required by Section 6-8-2 of the City Code.

- F. Upon payment of the fee as provided in this Section and upon producing a certificate of inoculation or vaccination, the agent of the City in the Department of Finance or designee shall furnish to the person paying such fee a numbered license tag and memorandum of registry for each dog or cat for which such fee has been paid. It shall be a violation of this Section for any person to sell or transfer ownership of any dog or cat over six (6) months of age without a dog or cat license.
- G. The Department of Finance and Records or designee shall keep a complete registry of all licensed dogs and cats, their breed, color and sex, and shall also enter therein the name and address of the owner as given and the number of the license tag.

**6-8-4 Commercial Establishments.** An owner of a commercial establishment as defined in this Chapter is exempt from the provisions of this Chapter with regard to identification, registration, and licensing, however, such owner shall register with and pay an annual Commercial Establishments fee to the City in the office of the Department of Finance and Records or designee and shall have proof of valid rabies vaccination as required by this Chapter. The fee required by this Section shall be set by resolution of the City Council and is listed in the Schedule of Permit and Licensing Requirements in Appendix B to this Code of Ordinances.

**6-8-5 Actions Constituting a Nuisance.**

- A. It shall be unlawful for any person who possesses, harbors, or is in charge of any dog or other domestic animal not to immediately remove excrement deposited by said animal upon a common thoroughfare, street, sidewalk, play area, park, or upon any other public property, or upon any private property when permission of the owner or tenant of said property has not been obtained, and such is hereby deemed to be a public nuisance and prohibited. All excrements removed shall be placed in an airtight container until it is removed pursuant to refuse collection procedures or otherwise disposed of in a sanitary manner.
- B. It shall be unlawful for any owner of any animal to allow or permit such animal to pass upon the premises of another thereby causing damage to, or interference with, the premises.
- C. It shall be unlawful for an owner of any animal to allow or permit such animal to cause serious annoyance or disturbance to any person or persons by frequent and habitual howling, yelping, barking, meowing, or otherwise; or by running after or chasing persons, bicycles, automobiles, or other vehicles.

**6-8-6 At Large Prohibited.** It shall be unlawful for any owner or person having the care, custody, or control of any animal to allow such animal to run at large within the City.

- A. Any animal found running at large shall be taken by the Animal Control Officer or any Police Officer and impounded in the local animal shelter and there confined in a humane manner for a period of not less than seven (7) days, and thereafter disposed of in a humane manner as authorized.
- B. When animals are found running at large and their ownership is known to the

Animal Control Officer or Police Officer, such animal need not be impounded, but such officer may cite the owners of such animal to appear in court to answer charges of the violation of this Chapter.

- C. Immediately upon impounding animals, the Animal Control Officer or Police Officer shall make every possible reasonable effort to notify the owners of such animal so impounded and inform such owners of the conditions whereby they may regain custody of such animal.

#### **6-8-7 Animal Care.**

- A. An owner is responsible for the care of their animal as defined in this Chapter, including adequate food and water, indoor and outdoor shelter and protection from the weather, adequate sanitation and space, and veterinary care needed to prevent suffering, and with humane care and treatment.
- B. Outdoor Confinement Areas: No owner shall fail to provide their animal with an outdoor confinement area that does not allow for adequate space as defined in this Chapter.
- C. No person shall beat, cruelly treat, torment, overload, overwork, or otherwise abuse an animal.
- D. No owner of an animal shall abandon such animal.
- E. Any person who, as the operator of a motor vehicle, strikes a domestic animal shall stop at once and render such assistance as may be possible and shall immediately report such injury or death to the animal's owner; in the event the owner cannot be ascertained and located, such operator shall at once report the accident to the appropriate law enforcement agency or to the local humane society.
- F. No person shall expose any known poisonous substance, whether mixed with food or not, so that the same shall be liable to be eaten by a domestic animal, provided that it shall not be unlawful for a person to expose on his own property common rat poison mixed only with vegetable substance.
- G. Owners of animals shall notify the U.S. Postal Service and utility companies when an "invisible fence" is in place to advise them of animals being kept on the premises of such owners and shall post a sign on the premises visible to the public indicating the presence of an "invisible fence". Proof of notification to the U.S. Postal Service and utility companies shall be filed with the City Clerk.
- H. **Tethering.**
  - 1. No person shall tether an animal as defined in this Chapter under any of the following conditions:
    - a. A tether that is less than ten feet (10') in length and more than fifty (50') feet;
    - b. A tether that does not have swivels on both ends as to prevent twisting and tangling;



- c. A tether that contains chain links more than one-quarter of an inch thick or that has weights attached;
  - d. A tether that exceeds one-eighth (1/8) of the dog's weight; or
  - e. With a collar made of metal or chain, excluding the buckle, or using a collar, even if made of cloth, designed to continue to tighten, such as a slip lead or noose, when pulled tightly, unless such collar is a limited-slip or no-slip collar.
2. No person shall allow an animal to be tethered and unattended continuously for more than four (4) hours in any given 24-hour period.
  3. No person shall allow an animal to have access to a public sidewalk or street while tethered.
  4. No person shall allow an animal to be tethered to a utility pole, parking meter, building, structure, fence, sign, tree, bush, bench, newspaper or advertising rack or other object on public property.
  5. No person shall allow an animal to be tethered in extreme weather or in an unsafe location. An unsafe location includes, but is not limited to, near a fence whereby the animal could asphyxiate itself if it jumped over the fence or on a deck whereby the animal could asphyxiate itself if it jumped off of the deck.
  6. No person shall allow an animal to be tethered in a manner that allows it to become entangled with another tethered animal.

**6-8-8 Rabies Suspects and Animal Bites.** Any dog or cat which is suspected of having rabies, or which has bitten a person or other animal, shall be impounded and confined, either at the residence of the owner of said animal, or under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian, for observation. All fees for such impoundment and observation shall be the sole responsibility of the owner of such animal. Owners choosing to impound or confine animals at their residence shall complete a "Voluntary Animal Confinement Form" which shall be provided to them by the Animal Control Officer. At the completion of the fourteen (14) day confinement period, the owner shall present the confined animal along with the Animal Confinement Form to a licensed veterinarian. The veterinarian shall then examine the animal and complete the appropriate section of the Voluntary Animal Confinement Form. The owner of the animal shall then return this form to the Animal Control Officer.

- A. Any dog or cat impounded under the provisions of this Section shall be placed in a suitable facility and quarantined for a period of not less than fourteen (14) days at the sole expense of the owner.
- B. Any such animal impounded under the provisions of this Section shall be destroyed upon determination that such animal is infected with rabies.
- C. It shall be the duty of the owner of any dog, cat, or other animal which has bitten or attacked a person or any person having knowledge of such bite or

attack to report this act to the Animal Control Officer. It shall be the duty of physicians and veterinarians to report to the Animal Control Officer the existence of any animal known or suspected to be suffering from rabies.

*(Code of Iowa, Sec. 351.38)*

**6-8-9 Dangerous and Vicious Dogs.**

**A. Determination of Status.**

1. A dog may be declared dangerous or vicious based upon any of the following:
  - a. A complaint of a person; and any one of the following:
  - b. Dog bite report filed with an animal control officer; or
  - c. Actions witnessed by an animal control officer or law enforcement; or
  - d. Other substantial evidence.
2. The declaration shall be in writing and shall be served by an animal control officer or law enforcement on the owner in person, by regular mail or certified mail, or if the owner is not known by publication in a newspaper of general circulation and posting a notice on the property of the owner.
3. The declaration shall contain the following information:
  - a. The name and address of the owner if known and if not known that fact.
  - b. A description of the dog.
  - c. The whereabouts of the dog.
  - d. Facts upon which the declaration is based.
  - e. Restrictions placed upon the dog and when the owner is not known the intended disposition.
  - f. Penalties for violation of the restrictions, including possibility of destruction of the dog and fine and imprisonment of the owner.
  - g. The right to appeal the declaration as described in this Chapter.
4. Dogs shall not be declared dangerous or vicious under any of the following conditions:
  - a. The dog is engaged in the performance of duties while under the supervision and control of law enforcement officials performing law enforcement work.
  - b. The dog attacks or bites a human who is engaged in or attempting to engage in criminal activity at the time of the attack.

- c. The dog attacks or bites a human who, at the time, is willfully trespassing on the property of the owner, or is tormenting, abusing or assaulting, the dog or its owner or a family member.
- d. The dog is protecting or defending a human within the immediate vicinity of the dog from an unjustified attack or assault.
- e. The dog attacks or bites another dog or domesticated animal that, at the time, is on the property of the attacking dog's owner without the owner's consent, is at large, or was tormenting or attacking the dog.
- f. The dog is engaged in any legal hunt or training procedure, including training or exhibiting in legal sports such as obedience trials, conformation shows, field trials, hunting/retrieving trials, and herding trials; however, such dogs at all other times and in all other respects shall be subject to this Chapter. Dogs already classified as dangerous shall not be used for hunting purposes.

## **B. Dangerous Dogs.**

1. *Keeping of a Dangerous Dog.* Once a dog has been declared dangerous, it shall be kept in a secure enclosure subject to the following requirements:
  - a. *Leash.* No person having charge, custody, control or possession of a dangerous dog shall allow the dog to exit its enclosure unless such dog is securely attached to a leash not more than four (4) feet in length and walked by a person who is both over the age of eighteen and who has the physical ability to restrain the dog at all times. No owner shall keep or permit a dangerous dog to be kept on a chain, rope or other type of leash outside its enclosure unless a person capable of controlling the dog is in physical control of the leash.
  - b. *Confinement.* Except when leashed as provided in this Section, a dangerous dog shall be securely confined in a residence or confined in a locked pen or other secure enclosure that is suitable to prevent the entry of children and is designed to prevent the dog from escaping. The enclosure shall include shelter and protection from the elements and shall provide adequate exercise room, light, and ventilation, and shall be kept in a clean and sanitary condition. The enclosed structure shall have secure sides and a secure top or all sides must be at least six (6) feet high and shall have a bottom permanently attached to the sides or the sides must be embedded not less than one (1) foot into the ground. The structure must be of such material and closed in such a manner that the dog cannot exit the enclosure on its own.
  - c. *Indoor Confinement.* No dangerous dog shall be kept on a porch, patio or in any part of a house or structure that would allow the dog to exit such building on its own volition. In addition, no such dog shall be kept in a house or structure when the windows or screen doors are the only obstacle preventing the dog from exiting the structure.
  - d. *Signs.* All owners, keepers or harborers of dangerous dogs shall display in a prominent place on their premises a sign easily readable from the

public right of way using the words "Beware of Dangerous Dog."

- e. *Liability Insurance, Surety Bond.* The owner of a dangerous dog shall be required to present to the Animal Control Officer proof that he has procured liability insurance in the amount of not less than one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) covering any damage or injury that may be caused by such dangerous dog. The policy shall contain a provision requiring that the City be notified immediately by the agent issuing it if the insurance policy is canceled, terminated or expires.
  - f. *Identification Photographs.* All owners, keepers, or harborers of dangerous dogs must within ten (10) days of determination provide to the Animal Control two color photographs of the registered dog clearly showing the color\_and approximate size of the dog.
  - g. *Microchip.* All owners, keepers or harborers of dangerous dogs must within ten (10) days of determination microchip the dog and provide microchip information to the Animal Control Officer to register the dog as dangerous.
  - h. *Spaying/Neutering.* All owners, keepers or harborers of dangerous dogs must within ten (10) days of determination spay or neuter the dog and provide proof of sterilization to the Animal Control Officer.
  - i. *Sale or Transfer of Ownership Prohibited.* Sale - No person shall sell, barter or in any other way dispose of a dangerous dog registered with the City to any person within the city unless the owner discloses the dog's status as a dangerous dog to anyone to whom the owner transfers custody or care of the dog. If a dangerous dog is transferred to another owner, the Animal Control Officer must be notified in writing and the animal's microchip must be updated with any new information. All provisions of this Chapter apply to the dog regardless of ownership.
  - j. *Notification of Escape.* The owner or keeper of a dangerous dog shall notify the Animal Control Officer immediately if such dog escapes from its enclosure or restraint and is at large. Such immediate notification shall also be required if the dog bites or attacks a person or domestic animal.
2. *Failure to Comply.* It shall be a separate offense to fail to comply with the restrictions in this Section. Any dog found to be in violation of this Section shall be subject to immediate seizure and impoundment pursuant to this Chapter. In addition, failure to comply with the requirements and conditions set forth in this Chapter shall result in the revocation of the dog's license and the keeping of such dog.
3. *Waiver of Designation.* A dangerous dog owner may apply to the Police Chief or designee to have the declaration waived after three (3) years upon meeting the following conditions:
- a. The owner and offending dog have no subsequent violations of this Chapter of the Code; and

- b. The owner of the dog has complied with all the provisions of this act for a period of three (3) years; and
- c. The owner provides proof to the Animal Control Officer of successful completion of a behavior modification program administered by a Certified Pet Dog Trainer (CPDT), Certified Dog Behavior Consultant (CDBC), or Veterinary Behaviorist, certified through the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists (ACVB) or equivalent training.

If the Animal Control Officer finds sufficient evidence that the dog has complied with all conditions in this subsection, and has sufficient evidence that the dog's behavior has changed, the application shall be forwarded to the Police Chief or designee to rescind the dangerous dog declaration.

### **C. Vicious Dogs**

1. *Keeping of a Vicious Dog.* It shall be unlawful to keep, possess, or harbor a vicious dog within the city limits.
2. The Police Chief or designee may order a dog euthanized that has been declared vicious.
3. The owner of a dog that the Police Chief or designee declares to be vicious may be appealed to the City Council as described in this Chapter. If a timely appeal is filed, the order to euthanize the dog is suspended pending the final determination of the City Council except when the Police Chief declares that public health and safety require the immediate destruction of the dog.
4. The owner of a vicious dog shall be liable for and shall pay all costs associated with impoundment, removal, or euthanasia of said animal. The owner shall pay any other associated costs incurred.

### **D. Impoundment**

1. A dog suspected of being dangerous or vicious may be immediately impounded when the Police Chief, Animal Control Officer, or designee determines such immediate impoundment is necessary for the protection of public health and safety.
2. The owner must pay all of the cost of the impoundment and upon request must post sufficient funds to cover the anticipated costs for continued impoundment.
3. If the Police Chief determines that the dog does not pose a risk to public health and safety, the Police Chief may refund to the owner any costs paid for the impoundment.

### **E. Continuation of Dangerous Dog Declaration**

1. Any dog that has been declared dangerous or vicious by any agency or

department of this City, another municipality, county, or state shall be subject to the provisions of this Ordinance. The person owning or having custody of any dog designated as dangerous by any municipality, county, or state government shall notify the Animal Control Officer of the dog's address and conditions of maintenance within ten (10) days of moving the animal into the City. The restrictions and conditions of maintenance of any dog declared dangerous by this City, another municipality, county, or state may remain in force while the dog remains in the City.

**6-8-10 Dogs in Heat.** Every female dog in heat shall be confined in a building or secure enclosure in such a manner that such female dog cannot come into contact with another animal except for planned breeding.

**6-8-11 Dangerous Animals.**

- A. No person shall keep or permit to be kept any dangerous animal as defined in this Chapter as a pet nor for display or for exhibition purposes, whether gratuitously or for a fee, except that this prohibition shall not apply to the keeping of dangerous animals in a public zoo, public aquarium, bona fide educational or medical institution, humane society, or museum where they are kept as live specimens for the public to view or for the purpose of instruction, research, or study; or for exhibition to the public by a bona fide traveling circus, carnival, exhibit, or show licensed to perform in the City; or in a bona fide licensed veterinary hospital for treatment. It shall be the duty of the persons permitted to keep dangerous animals under this Section to immediately report to the Police Department when any dangerous animal is found missing.
- B. The Police Chief or designee may order an animal euthanized that has been declared dangerous.
- C. The owner of a dangerous animal shall be liable for and shall pay all costs associated with impoundment, removal, or euthanasia of said animal. The owner shall pay any other associated costs incurred.
- D. The owner of an animal that has been declared dangerous may be appealed to the City Council as described in this Chapter. If a timely appeal is filed, the order to euthanize the animal may be suspended pending the final determination of the City Council except when the Police Chief declares that public health and safety require the immediate destruction of the animal.

**6-8-12 Penalties.**

- A. Any person or owner of property who violates the provisions of this Chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a penalty as set out in Section 1-2-14 of this Code of Ordinances.
- B. Any owner or person charged with a first or second violation of this Chapter may present such summons at the Public Safety Building in the City of Muscatine and pay such fine without appearance in court, and upon payment of the fine, shall be deemed to have pleaded guilty to the offense charged. Nothing herein contained shall be construed to prohibit any person charged with a violation of this Chapter from contesting such charge. The provisions of this Subsection shall not be applicable upon the filing of a complaint and

summons for the third or subsequent violations of this Chapter.

C. Irresponsible Owner.

1. Any owner found to be an irresponsible owner as defined in this Chapter shall be revoked of the right to reside with or maintain any animal at any premises owned, leased, or controlled by the irresponsible owner for a period of twelve (12) months.
2. Notice that an owner has been declared an irresponsible owner shall be in writing and promptly served by an animal control officer or law enforcement on the owner in person, by regular mail or certified mail, or by publication in a newspaper of general circulation and posting a notice on the property of the owner."
3. The notice shall contain the following information:
  - a. The name and address of the owner declared to be an irresponsible owner;
  - b. Facts upon which the declaration is based;
  - c. Requirements for the irresponsible owner not to reside with or maintain any animal at any premises owned, leased, or controlled by the irresponsible owner;
  - d. Penalties for noncompliance, including possibility of fine and imprisonment of the irresponsible owner;
  - e. The right to appeal the declaration as described in this Chapter.
4. An irresponsible owner who maintains any animal at any premises owned, leased, or controlled by the irresponsible owner in violation of this Chapter shall within 48 hours but not more than 72 hours upon receipt of notice:
  - a. Surrender the animal(s) to the Chief of Police or designee; or
  - b. Certify in writing to the Chief of Police that the animal(s) have been surrendered to an animal welfare or animal rescue organization, including the name and contact information of the organization, or that the animal(s) have been surrendered to another person over the age of eighteen and include that person's name and contact information."
5. The City may issue a municipal infraction against an irresponsible owner for violations of this provision and request a court order that the animal(s) become the property of the City.

**6-8-13 Right to Appeal**

- A. The owner of an animal or dog that the Police Chief or designee declares to be dangerous or vicious, or an owner that has been declared an irresponsible owner as defined in this Chapter, may appeal the declaration to the City

Council. In order to appeal such a declaration, a written notice of appeal must be filed with the City Clerk within three (3) days after receipt and shall state the grounds for such appeal and shall be delivered personally or by certified mail to the City Clerk. If a timely appeal is filed, the declaration is suspended pending the final determination of the City Council except when the Police Chief declares that public health and safety require the immediate impoundment or destruction of an animal or dog. Failure to file such written notice of appeal shall constitute a waiver of right to appeal the order.

- B. The hearing of such appeal shall be scheduled for the next regular Council meeting after receipt of notice of appeal. The hearing may be continued for good cause. After such hearing, the City Council may affirm or reverse the order of the Police Chief or designee. Such determination shall be contained in a written decision provided to the owner.

#### **6-8-14 Seizure and Disposition**

- A. If the City Council affirms the action of the Police Chief or designee, the City Council shall order in its written decision that the individual or entity owning, sheltering, harboring, or keeping a dangerous animal or vicious dog to remove such animal or dog from the City; permanently place such animal or dog with an organization or group allowed to possess dangerous animals or dogs; or destroy it.
- B. The decision and order shall immediately be served upon the person or entity against whom rendered in the same manner as the notice of removal. If the original order of the Police Chief or designee is not appealed or is not complied with within 48 hours of the order of the City Council after appeal has been served, the Police Chief, or his or her designee, is authorized to seize and impound such dangerous animal or vicious dog. An animal so seized shall be impounded for a period of seven (7) days. If, at the end of the impoundment period, the person against whom the decision and order of the Police Chief or designee, or City Council was issued has not petitioned the Muscatine County District Court for a review of said order, the Police Chief or designee, shall cause the animal or dog to be disposed of by sale, permanently placing such animal with an organization or group allowed to possess dangerous animals, or destroy such animal in a humane manner. All impoundment fees shall be at the expense of the owner of the animal or dog, which said fee shall be the actual cost of the feeding and care of the animal.

**6-8-15 Exemption for Police Service Dogs (K9s).** This Chapter shall not apply to police service dogs (K9s) used by a law enforcement agency that is acting in the performance of its duties.

#### **6-8-16 Community Cats**

A cat meeting the following requirements shall be allowed to roam freely and shall be known as a "community cat" if all of the following conditions are met:

- 1. No person owns the cat;
- 2. The cat has been assessed by a veterinarian and deemed healthy;
- 3. The cat has been spayed or neutered;



4. The cat has been vaccinated for rabies; and
5. The cat has been ear tipped by a licensed veterinarian.

A community cat that creates a nuisance may be captured and impounded. For purposes of this section, "nuisance" means those acts described in 6-8-5 herein or as anything which interferes with the enjoyment of life or property as determined by the chief of police or designee.

A community cat shall be returned to the area where it was captured, unless the property owner requests that the cat not be returned, then the cat shall be taken to another previously designated area for release, or the cat is deemed adoptable.

The city shall have no liability for the disposition of any community cat.

The city shall not have responsibility for care of community cats.

# Feline Trap-Neuter-Return

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05.02.22

CAROL WEBB, CITY ADMINISTRATOR

COURTNEY PATEL, ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER



# Strategic Alignment

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## Safe Community



Provide exceptional public safety and community services to ensure a safe community in which residents may live, work, and play.



Meet or exceed community expectations regarding the quality and level of police, fire and emergency services.

# Direction Sought

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- Does City Council support code language to enable TNR?
- If so, does City Council have feedback on code requirements?

# Definitions

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- TNR- Trap, Neuter, Return. Altering, vaccinating, ear-tipping, and returning healthy community cats to the areas where they've already been living.
- Community cat- Not owned by any person(s). Often referred to as a stray cat, feral cat, or barn cat. Meets certain criteria to be allowed to roam freely in the city.
- Ear tipping- tip of left ear removed(approximately 1cm) to show that the cat has been vaccinated and altered.

# Why Now

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- We have had citizens and organizations requesting permission to TNR.
- City of Muscatine has a rather large feral/free-roaming cat population.
- TNR allows options for other organizations to assist with cat population and control.
- Backlogged list for trapping cats-5 year total of 1,138 cats taken to the Muscatine Humane Society.



# Minimum requirements before returning community cats to public

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- Has been assessed by veterinarian and deemed healthy.
- Has been altered(spayed or neutered).
- Has been vaccinated for rabies.
- Has been ear tipped by a licensed veterinarian.
- Has been assessed for adoptability.

# Pros vs Cons

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## Pros

- Frees up shelter space.
- Less stress for animals(short term confinement).
- Reduces euthanasia numbers.
- Altered cats have a lower noise level, lower aggression levels, and roam less.

## Cons

- Conservation issues/wildlife(cat colonies may need to be moved due to habitat issues).
- Possible uptake in feral cat bites from community cat providers.
- Owners not taking responsibility for owned pets.



# Around the State/Peer Cities

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- Clinton- Allows TNR.
- Mason City- Does not allow TNR.
- Marshalltown- Allows TNR.
- Burlington- Allows TNR.
- Ft. Dodge- Allows TNR.
- Bettendorf- Allows TNR.

# Next Steps

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- Depending on Council direction, City staff will further develop code language and associated processes and return to Council with a draft for City Council consideration.

# Direction Sought

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- Does City Council support code language to enable TNR?
- If so, does City Council have feedback on code requirements?