

June 16, 2004
Citizens Ordinance Review Committee Meeting
Animal Control Ordinance Amendment.

Mr. Chairman, members of the board.

We were excited to learn that the county was amending the animal control ordinance and asked the County Attorneys' Office to email a copy, which I received the next day. My excitement turned to disappointment however as I read the 3 amendments.

The amendments although well written and thought out do not address the animal control issues of the community. With only amendments such as these, chapter 14 will continue to be merely a dog and pot belly pig ordinance.

With the explosion of Pasco County's population, animal issues will substantially increase. Our Animal Control Ordinance as written does nothing to stop the imposition forced onto county residents by irresponsibly pet owners.

Chapter 14 does address issues that are common to cats, dogs, and other mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibian species when kept as a companion animal or "as a pet", however

Chapter 14 does not allow as written the prosecution of owners of companion animals or "pets" that unreasonably annoys humans, endangers the life or health of other animals or individuals, or substantially interfere with the rights of citizens, other than the owner, and thereby interfering with the reasonable use and enjoyment of one's own property unless it is caused by a dog or pot belly pig.

Cats are allowed to roam freely and destroy plants and flowers by defecating and urinating in flowerbed, leaving a horrible smell by spraying the side of homes or areas where people congregate such as patio, and pools. Cat owner can let their cat out at 6:00 a.m. and let in back in at 10:00 p.m. and as long as the owner feeds, waters, and check on the condition every 24 hours noting will be done to curb these practices.

Noises created by pet birds are not addressed in chapter 14. Cockatoos, Macaws and Congos are also popular species of pets and are found in our communities.

Cockatoos and Macaws require considerable space, make decent talkers and develop an intense bond with their caretaker however Macaws are incredible shriekers, screamers, and callers, but are prone to screech attacks and can be too loud to be kept in suburban neighborhoods.

The number of pets is not addressed as well as the type. We are used to Dogs, Cats, and birds as pets but what about miniature ponies that grows no larger than a Great Dane. Breeds like Alpacas are becoming more popular as pets.

These types of issues are not addressed and should be looked at now. What we call an animal control ordinance does not address animal nuisance issues found in our community.

Pasco County is in desperate need of a comprehensive Animal Control Ordinance that will include a wide range of issues that are present now and that will be encountered in the future.

We would recommend that the County attorneys Office ask for help in determining the types of animal control issues currently in the communities by asking the Council of Neighborhood Associations, both east and west to query their membership of homeowner and civic associations as these community organizations know the types of problems firsthand, and to look at larger municipalities animal ordinances in order to get ideas of the problems that will be encountered as Pasco grows in population.

The Animal Control Ordinance is not the only Pasco County Ordinance that is out of date due to the growth and diversity of our community.

Pasco County needs to look at all ordinances that have been effected by our growth, and the impact it has had and will have on how we all live together without interfering with the reasonable use and enjoyment of ones own property.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman