

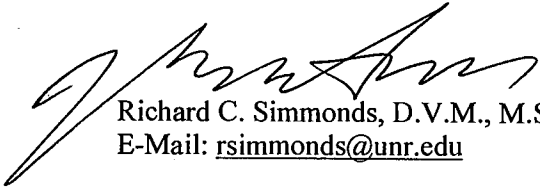
**COMMENTS REGARDING AGENDA ITEM 9.2, SPARKS CITY COUNCIL MEETING
AUGUST 10 27, 2015**

Mr. Mayor and Council Members, I'm Dr. Richard Simmonds, a Nevada licensed veterinarian and Vice Chair of the Washoe County Animal Control Board. Thank you for this opportunity to address you.

As you may know, I am actively involved in a number of local and state organizations involved in animal related issues and I need to emphasize that my comments today are my own and do not represent the opinions or positions of any of those organizations.

Since I have previously spoken to you regarding my objections to previous proposed changes in Washoe County Code, Chapter 55, I thought it only fair to express my opinion regarding this agenda item that involving changes in the code related to "Congested Areas," 'Licensing,' and other provisions." . I support the specific changes to WCC Code, Chapter 55 proposed by Washoe County Animal Services as described as in the supporting material for this agenda item.

Thank you again.



Richard C. Simmonds, D.V.M., M.S., DACLAM
E-Mail: rsimmonds@unr.edu

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 9059, Reno, NV 89507

COMMENTS REGARDING AGENDA ITEM 9.4, SPARKS CITY COUNCIL MEETING AUGUST 10 27, 2015

Mr. Mayor and Council Members, I'm Dr. Richard Simmonds, a Nevada licensed veterinarian and Vice Chair of the Washoe County Animal Control Board. Thank you for this opportunity to address you.

As you may know, I am actively involved in a number of local and state organizations involved in animal related issues and I need to emphasize that my comments today are my own and do not represent the opinions or positions of any of those organizations.

I'm here today to support the inclusion of feral cats in the prohibitions included in *Section 20.03.005 Animals, Subsection C, Prohibited Practices; Non-Domestic Animals* in the proposed revisions of the City of Sparks' Zoning Code.

In addition to all of the information that you have been provided regarding the public health hazards and nescience aspects of the feral cat issue, one of my major objections to the "official" endorsement of feral cat colonies, as established in the recent amendment to Washoe County Code 55, is that residents and property owners in the proximity of a "feral cat colony" have to say in the matter.

Washoe County Code, ¶55.390 requires county residents wishing to keep more than seven cats (over four months of age) to obtain a Cattery Permit issued by Animal Services. As part of the required review of the Cattery Permit application, county residents living around the applicant's property are notified of the permit application and accorded the opportunity to object to the granting of the permit. Residents objecting to the application then can file an objection to issuance of the permit with Animal Services.

If there are no objections to issuance of the requested cattery permit are submitted, and Animal Services' own review indicates that there are no reasons not to issue the permit, the permit is granted.

If there are objections to issuance of the cattery permit, or Animal Services has determined that there are reasons to deny the permit but the applicant wishes to challenge the decision, the application is referred to the Washoe County Animal Control Board for adjudication. Decisions of the Animal Control Board may be appealed by any aggrieved applicant or objector by seeking review of the action by filing a Petition for Judicial Review in the district court within 30 days of the Board's meeting.

The recently approved amendments to WCC 55 to permit the existence of feral cat "colonies" within the county includes no such mechanism for county residents living in the vicinity of a "permitted" colony, no matter whether or not the colony consists of four or forty cats, to object to the situation. Nor, do residents who do object have any recourse to appeal the "official" approval of the colony. Thus, under the newly passed amendment to WCC Chapter 55, Washoe County citizens who would object to "hosting" feral cats on their property, along with the animals' fecal deposits, public health hazards, and nuisance factors, have no opportunity to object or prevent such intrusions onto their property! [As an example of such a situation, please see copy of a recent RGJ Letter to the Editor on the reverse.]

The County's "endorsement of feral cat colonies is in direct conflict with what is required of responsible cat owners who wish to have more than seven cats. Isn't this another possible political endorsement of an illegal act (abandonment of an animal as defined in Nevada state statutes) in the face of more stringent legal impositions on law-abiding citizens?

In conclusion, I urge that the prohibition to feral cat colonies be included in the City of Sparks Zoning Code as proposed.

Thank you again.


Richard C. Simmonds, D.V.M., M.S., DAACLAM
E-Mail: rsimmonds@unr.edu

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 9059, Reno, NV 89507

4A • WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2015**ANIMALS****Feral cats are not pets;
euthanasia is kindest**

After seeing Sunday's full-page article on the trap-neuter-return program, my blood boiled ["Sparks may ban hosting feral cats," News, July 26].

This program is so irresponsible to pet owners *and* their pets. My elderly cat, who stays in *her/my* yard, which is surrounded by a 5 1/2-foot cyclone fence, which she can't climb due to her age, has had her rear end kicked three times by feral cats who can climb.

One time she suffered 41 bites and scratches that cost \$400+ to treat and nearly killed her! These cats are not pets, they are vicious wild animals. I'm sure I am not the only pet owner who has encountered this. We need to stop this program. Euthanasia is the kind thing to do for feral cats who will suffer from lack of food and our cold winters. It is also the right thing to do for the owners of domesticated pets. I now have to babysit my pet just so she can lie on her lawn and be happy.

Gail Perry, Sun Valley

EVEN PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF ANIMALS (PETA) IS OPPOSED TO FERAL CAT TRAP, NEUTER, AND RELEASE (TNR) PROGRAMS!!!

<http://www.peta.org/features/31-outdoor-cat-stories/>, accessed 31 Jul 15

If You Think You're Doing Your Cats a Favor Letting Them Outside, You're Wrong.

Share on facebook Share on pinterest share

Advocates of the “no-kill” movement may be telling you only half of the story. Some animal shelters manipulate their euthanasia statistics by instituting policies that leave animals to struggle for survival and die painfully on the streets.

Turning away homeless cats who are at risk, many shelters promote so-called “trap-neuter-release” programs, which may allow them to spin their intake and euthanasia numbers while doing nothing to protect cats from the horrors that befall them when left outdoors to battle harsh surroundings, sickness, and sadistic people.



In addition, many animal guardians allow their cats to roam freely outdoors. While they likely assume that nothing terrible will happen to their companions, sadly, cats often encounter horrible situations.

Below are 31 heartbreaking stories (**all of which took place within just two months**) that highlight the dangers of leaving cats outside to roam the streets:

Distributed at
8/10/15 meeting
AI 4



I learned during a recent (last year) interaction with vector control that they have no enforcement powers over persons attracting high risk vectors into our residential, gaming & commercial districts.

The Health Dept is considerate.. They visit the site of the problem feeder, however the BOH can only function in an *advisory capacity*
The Health Department has no enforcement authority on the attracting of high risk species health & public safety issue.

WC 55 has an ordinance on the books, but I was told by Bobby Smith, WCRAS left that to BOH because it was “ really a health issue”

NDOW has nothing on their books to deal with attracting high risk rabies species, they sent me to WCRAS..

Sparks needs an ordinance to prevent the increasing attraction of rabies vectors into Sparks neighborhoods, which is a natural by-product of allowing TNR
The most cost efficient way to handle this is, prohibition of feral cat colonies.

Trap and remove is a one time expense for the City of Sparks. This is not about the dubious merits of TNR, this is about land use and property rights, and equally public health and safety for our citizens and companion animals from zoonotic disease .

The use of land for sharecropping of cats is relentlessly impactful on all parcels within a 3 mile radius.

Ardena Perry

me
m. — a
and,
ears
inhabit
River-

ity
weath-
on the
ects
nd
eno.
oo bad
al cor-
line

ed in
ars.

the charge to the bottom
again, Nevada.
Vic Williams, Reno

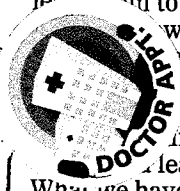
ANIMALS

Feral cats are not pets; euthanasia is kindest

After seeing Sunday's full-page article on the trap-neuter-return program, my blood boiled ["Sparks may ban hosting feral cats," News, July 26].

This program is so irresponsible to pet owners and their pets. My elderly cat, who stays in her/my yard, which is surrounded by a 5 1/2-foot cyclone fence, which she can't climb due to her age, has had her rear end kicked three times by

interviewer, hired a new
le... to interpret open
... while retain-
... who misad-



ies and elect
ize resources
lead responsibly.
What we have is not leader-
ship. The city is not address-
ing its long term liabilities
but has time for frivolous,
insulting endeavors.

The school board is a
joke but will soon ask voters
to spend millions on infra-
structure. Do you think they
would spend it prudently?

Wake up people! It's time
to clean out the dead wood
in the city and school board
and elect teams who can do
the job.

Lorna Hoff, Reno

RENO GAZETTE-JOURNAL/RGJ.COM

CONTACT
MARK ROBISON » 775-788-6420
MROBISON@RGJ.COM



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PARKS

City dragging its feet on fix for Virginia Lake

Following up on Bix Santana's letter ["Why does city let Virginia Lake languish?" Voices, Aug. 2], the biggest improvement that can be made to Virginia Lake is to get the trash out. Since December of 2014, I have ask parks maintenance to remove a WM trash can and three orange traffic cones from the lake. I have called park maintenance numerous times and received no response. Councilperson Duerr suggested I call Reno Direct. After three calls they removed the trash can.

The parks department claims they can't find the traffic cones, I have offered to show them where they are but they aren't interested. The lake has been a health hazard for over a year and the city can't seem to get their maintenance

feral cats who can climb.

One time she suffered 41 bites and scratches that cost \$400+ to treat and nearly killed her! These cats are not pets, they are vicious wild animals. I'm sure I am not the only pet owner who has encountered this. We need to stop this program. Euthanasia is the kind thing to do for feral cats who will suffer from lack of food and our cold winters. It is also the right thing to do for the owners of domesticated pets. I now have to babysit my pet just so she can lie on her lawn and be happy.

Gail Perry, Sun Valley

Stiff' answer,
not s

I rtment
of W trapped
a bear the re-
quest of owners who
had not secured their home
or food and, subsequently,
attracted a bear. The bear



oo
ELT/AP

Nevada Department of Wildlife Position Statement on Feral Cats

Thank you for the opportunity to submit public comment to the Sparks City Council today. The Nevada Department of Wildlife (Department) is very concerned about the effects of feral cats on native wildlife, both from predation as well as from disease transmission. Trap/neuter/vaccinate/release (TNVR) practices concern the Department because of the serious harm it poses to native wildlife and potential negative effects on human health.

Feral and free-ranging domestic cats are exotic species to North America. Exotic species are recognized as one of the most widespread and serious threats to the integrity of native wildlife populations and natural ecosystems. A growing body of literature is increasingly documenting these effects. For example, a 2013 study showed that feral cats are responsible for an estimated 1.4 to 3.7 billion bird deaths and 6.9 – 20.7 billion mammal deaths annually in the United States (Scott et al., 2013). Many of the birds that are often preyed upon by feral cats are protected by Federal law and are rare and sensitive species.

Feral cats are also a significant source of mortality of native reptiles. Because free-ranging cats often receive food from humans, they can reach unnaturally high population levels, that in turn creates areas of abnormally high predation rates on wildlife. Feeding cats does not deter them from killing wildlife for they do not always eat what they kill; even well-fed cats still respond to their innate desire to hunt and kill.

Feral cats also present a human and wildlife health risk, as feral cat colonies can be a source for the spread of diseases and parasites. Diseases such as rabies and Toxoplasmosis may be transmitted to humans and wildlife, and feral cats have been identified as vectors for avian flu. Feral cats may be reservoirs for parasites such as roundworms and fleas. Additionally, a study in Florida found that 75 percent of cats within a colony were infected with hookworms, a parasite known to affect humans and other wildlife. For your information, two policies from the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) on abandoned owned and Feral Cats can be found online at: <https://www.avma.org/KB/Policies?Pages?free-roaming-Abandoned-and-Feral-Cats.aspx>.

The goal of TNVR programs is to reduce colony sizes over time due to a lack of reproduction in animals that have been sterilized. However, several scientific studies have shown that TNVR fails to reduce populations within a colony.

A recent study in Conservation Biology looked at common claims regarding TNVR, such as the idea that feral cats do not contribute to the decline of native species and are not significant vectors or reservoirs of disease. A review of relevant literature revealed that these claims are untrue. The authors also noted that these programs usually do not receive the level of environmental analyses normally afforded to projects with potentially adverse environmental impacts.

Feral cats can and do have significant effects on native wildlife and ecosystems by directly preying on birds, mammals, and reptiles. Additionally they pose a significant risk to wildlife and human health. Releasing cats after sterilization does not lessen impacts to wildlife, does not adequately control feral cat populations, and compromises feral cat welfare by subjecting them to potentially hazardous conditions outdoors.

David Catalano, Nevada Department of Wildlife