



Office of *Public Hearing 06/18/2019*
INDIAN RIVER COUNTY
ATTORNEY

Dylan Reingold, County Attorney
William K. DeBraul, Deputy County Attorney

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: William K. DeBraul, Deputy County Attorney

DATE: June 11, 2019

SUBJECT: Public Hearing: Tethering Ordinance Amendment

In September 2018, the Board of County Commissioners heard a presentation from Betsy Begens concerning proper and improper tethering practices for dogs. A draft ordinance was presented to the Board and the Board discussed various aspects of tethering dogs and the existing County code on the subject. Staff was directed to meet with Ms. Begens and a meeting was held with Ms. Begens, Tad Stone, Jason Ogilvie and Ilka Daniels from the Humane Society. The group discussed proposed changes to the current ordinance. On April 9, 2019, staff presented the attached proposed ordinance amendment to the Board for consideration and discussion. By a vote of 5-0, the Board directed staff to advertise and schedule a public hearing on the tethering amendment. The advertisement appeared in the Press Journal on June 7, 2019. The Board is to now conduct a public hearing on the tethering ordinance and take testimony from interested parties. The proposed ordinance amendment provides for the following:

- Provides a definition for tethering
- Prohibits tethering for more than one hour between the hours of 9 am and 5 pm when the outdoor temperature exceeds 90 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Prohibits tethering during any severe weather or natural disaster.
- Prohibits tethering if the animal is less than 6 months of age.

Staff researched whether any of the municipalities in the County have ordinances concerning tethering. Sebastian, Vero Beach and Fellsmere have no tethering ordinances and this ordinance would not apply unless adopted by one of the municipalities.

To date in 2019, no tethering violations of the existing ordinance have been issued. In 2018, two violations were issued with eight violations issued in 2017. Unless there would be an egregious violation of the tethering ordinance, Animal Control would issue warnings and provide education about the new tethering requirements.

Permission to Advertise: Tethering Ordinance Amendment

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Funding: The only impact to County funds for this item is the cost of \$119.70 to advertise for the public hearing and is being paid from Account No. 00125062-034910 (General Fund/Animal Control/Legal Ads).

Recommendation: Staff recommends the Board conduct the public hearing on the proposed tethering ordinance amendment and approve the amendment with any changes deemed necessary.

Attachment: Proposed Ordinance Amendment

Copies to: Tad Stone, Emergency Services Director
Jason Ogilvie, Animal Control Manager
Ilka Daniels, Humane Society of Vero Beach/Indian River County
Betsy Begens