

MINUTES
Public Hearing of the College Park City Council
Tuesday, August 9, 2011 - 7:30 p.m.

Ordinance 11-O-11
An Ordinance Of The Mayor And Council Of The City Of College Park, Maryland, Adding Chapter 102, “Dogs And Other Animals”, §102-16 “Adoption And Microchip Fees”, Amending Chapter 110 “Fees And Penalties” To Set Fees For Dog And Cat Adoption And Placement Of Microchips.

PRESENT: Mayor Fellows; Councilmembers Nagle, Wojahn, Catlin, Cook, Afzali and Mitchell

ABSENT: Councilmembers Perry and Stullich.

ALSO PRESENT: Joe Nagro, City Manager; Janeen Miller, City Clerk; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Chantal Cotton, Assistant to the City Manager; Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services; Vivian Cooper, Animal Control Officer; Marcella Morris, Student Liaison.

Mayor Fellows opened the Public Hearing on Ordinance 11-O-11 at 7:30 p.m. and invited Bob Ryan to give an overview.

Mr. Ryan explained that the Animal Control Officer often acquires adoptable animals and there is a cost involved in getting those animals ready to place into homes. The City’s Animal Welfare Committee and the Animal Control Officer recommend that the City implement adoption fees to help defray those costs. Mr. Ryan then invited Animal Control Officer Vivian Cooper to provide details.

Officer Cooper said the cost to fully vet an animal for adoption is about \$120 per cat and about \$160 per dog. The cost for young or abandoned animals may be higher. The proposed adoption fees do not fully cover vet expenses, but do help to defray the cost. She reviewed the typical costs and proposed adoption fees. People who adopt two animals would get a discount off the adoption fees; senior citizens or disabled individuals would have the fees waived.

Comments from the Audience:

Linda Lachman, 7503 Creighton Drive, Animal Welfare Committee: Research points to the fact that anything we get for free is devalued and considered disposable so there needs to be some monetary value attached to soliciting committed families to adopt our animals. If they can afford adoption fees it helps ensure that they can also afford veterinary care and other fees involved in being a responsible pet owner.

Christiane Williams, 4712 Muskogee Street: She is in support of the fees for adoption because most of the places that adopt animals in the Washington area charge fees. She can't see letting our animals go for nothing because then they would become disposable.

Harriet McNamee, 9514 51st Avenue: When she has adopted from shelters there has always been a fee, and when you think about all of the vet bills the fee seems reasonable and appropriate. It is important because it puts into mind that the animal has some value and alerts the adopter about the financial responsibilities of being a pet owner. She thinks the fees are reasonable and helpful for the ongoing program. She is fully in support of the ordinance.

There being no further testimony, Mayor Fellows closed the Public Hearing at 7:37 p.m.

Janeen S. Miller, CMC Date Approved
City Clerk