

# ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

KENNETH J. RONK, JR., Chairman  
JAMES F. MALONEY, Vice Chairman  
MARY BETH MAIO, Majority Leader  
HECTOR S. RODRIGUEZ, Minority Leader  
VICTORIA A. FABELLA, Clerk



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## MINUTES

MAY 8, 2018

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

6:15 PM

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY CHAIRMAN:** 6:49 PM

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:** Led by Chairman Kenneth J. Ronk, Jr.

**MOMENT OF SILENT MEDITATION:**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### FIRE EVACUATION PLAN

PLEASE NOTE THAT IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY THE FIRE DEPARTMENT HAS REQUESTED THAT LEGISLATORS AND ALL OTHERS MOVE AT LEAST ONE BLOCK AWAY FROM THE COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING IN ORDER NOT TO IMPEDE THE FIREFIGHTERS IN THEIR DUTIES

### CELL PHONES

Please silence cell phones for the duration of the Public Hearings.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: 19 Absent: 4 (Legislators Collins, Fabiano, Lopez, Roberts)

**6:51 PM - CALL OF THE 1<sup>st</sup> PUBLIC HEARING BY CLERK:**

On Proposed Local Law No. 11 of 2018, A Local Law Prohibiting Conversion Therapy Upon A Minor Within Ulster County

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was (1) speaker signed up for public comment.

1. Mathew Shurka, Great Neck, NY: Mr. Shurka while sharing his personal experiences spoke in support of Proposed Local Law No. 11 of 2018.

Motion by Legislator Litts, seconded by Majority Leader Maio to adjourn the public hearing. All in favor.

**PUBLIC HEARING ADJOURNED: 6:53 PM**

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**6:53 PM - CALL OF THE 2<sup>nd</sup> PUBLIC HEARING BY CLERK:**

On Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018, A Local Law To Adopt Countywide Notification Requirements For The Trapping Of Free Roaming, Feral And/Or Stray Cats

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There were (33) speakers signed up for public comment.

1. Gina Carbonari, Exec. Dir. UC SPCA: Ms. Carbonari spoke in support of Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018 and expressed the legislation is designed to ensure neighbors are made aware of trapping in their neighborhood ahead of time.
2. Gloria Stevenson, Bloomington: Ms. Stevenson spoke in opposition to Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.
3. Richard S. Feldman, Shokan: Mr. Feldman is a professor of Environmental Science at Marist College who spoke about domestic cats being among the world's 100 most significant invasive species, and a definitive host for Toxoplasma spread via cat feces.

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4. Robert Strong, Delmar, NY: Mr. Strong represents Responsible Animal Care USA in Rensselaer County (RAC). RAC USA has concerns with Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018 as written.
5. Liz Wassell, Tillson: Ms. Wassell read her email sent to the Legislature in support of Proposed Local Law No. 9.
6. Sue McDonough, Rensselaer, NY: Ms. McDonough a retired NYS Trooper of 26 years spoke in support of enforcing a cat licensing law.
7. Tracey Collins, Albany, NY: Ms. Collins read a statement opposing Proposed Local law No. 9 of 2018 written by Carol Ryan, Town of Denning who could not attend tonight's meeting.
8. Jean Daniels, Albany, NY: Ms. Daniels who represents the Board of NYS Human Association spoke in opposition to Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.
9. John Scheib, Burnt Hills, NY: Mr. Scheib feels it is our duty to protect all cats and raise the level of care - same as a dog. Mr. Scheib spoke in opposition of this proposed legislation stating it is legally flawed -TNR is against the law.
10. Gail Mihocko, Accord: Ms. Mihocko is the founder and Director of Project Cat. Ms. Mihocko spoke of her deep affection for cats and concern for their wellbeing and invited the Legislature to visit her small shelter to learn more about them.
11. Barbara Fornal, Accord: Ms. Fornal expressed the state Ag and Market Law 375 (5) 355 states TNR is illegal and a misdemeanor, therefore Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018 is illegal. Ms. Fornal would like to see new legislation that addresses both cats and dogs requiring registration and microchips.
12. Arlene Burhans, Kingston: Ms. Burhans spoke in support of Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.
13. Kim Kelly, Bloomington: Ms. Kelly spoke to the growing need for mandated laws to control the growing numbers of abandoned felines and afford cats the same rights as dogs.
14. Geri Ritchie, Highland: Ms. Ritchie a volunteer and supporter of the Project Cat opposed Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.
15. Rayna Clarke, Kingston: Ms. Clarke opposes Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.
16. Leslie Lansing, Kingston: Ms. Lansing opposes Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018 in favor of banning the return of feral cats to the wild and to establish regulations regarding domestic cats.
17. Annie Mardiney, Rosendale: Ms. Mardiney expressed cats should be regulated the same as dogs. This would have clear, helpful and humane guidelines to follow when making decisions.
18. Jean Jacobs, Kingston: Ms. Jacobs spoke in support of Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.

19. Lisa McEwen, Newburgh: Ms. McEwen spoke in support of Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.
20. Lee Isaacs, Kingston: Ms. Isaacs congratulated the Legislature for reinventing the wheel and shared her experiences previously on the City of Kingston Cat Task Force.
21. Janet Levinson, Kingston: Ms. Levinson cares for feral cats and shared her experience having her pet trapped and euthanized.
22. Stephen Hagopian, Kingston: Mr. Hagopian spoke to potential emanate domain, potential county lawsuits, and the proposed law being inconsistent with state law.
23. Kim Letus, Kingston: Ms. Letus formally served on the City of Kingston Cat Task Force and advocate for feral cats, spoke in support of Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.
24. Jodie Lomeli, Washingtonville, NY: Ms. Lomeli spoke in support of Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.
25. Howard Baul, Kerhonkson: Mr. Baul spoke in absolute opposition to Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.
26. Dr. Laura Stein, Cornwall, NY: Dr. Stein spoke in support of Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.
27. Terence P. Ward, New Paltz, NY: Mr. Ward supports Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018 and just as the county animal abuse registry protects those without a voice, so too would a rescuer registry.
28. Susan Kaplan, New Paltz: Ms. Kaplan spoke in support of Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018 and also a rescue registry.
29. Rachel McCrystal, Woodstock: Ms. McCrystal read a letter supporting Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018 on behalf of Jeff Lydon, Managing Director of the Woodstock Farm Sanctuary who could not attend tonight's meeting.
30. Jolie Dunham, Lake Katrine: Ms. Dunham spoke in support of Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.
31. Jill M. Spero, Kerhonkson: Ms. Spero runs a TNR program in NYC and spoke in support of Project Cat and Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.
32. Carnie Chapman, Rosendale: Ms. Chapman volunteers as a cat rescuer and supports Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018.
33. Rebecca Diamond, Hurley: Ms. Diamond strongly opposes Proposed Local Law No. 9 of 2018, noting TNR violates the Ag and Markets law section 374, subdivision 5 that prevents the release of animals once in custody of shelter or an animal control officer.

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Please Note: Complete content of the public comment period can be heard on the Ulster County Legislative Website.

Motion by Legislator Litts, seconded by Majority Leader Maio to adjourn the public hearing. All in favor.

**PUBLIC HEARING ADJOURNED: 8:12 PM**

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM:**

Ulster County Chairman

NYS Humane Association Board, Kingston  
Teresa Chagrin, PETA  
Concerned Citizens  
Concerned Citizens

NYS Ag & Markets Letter, Request  
For Information on PLL No. 9 of 2018  
Letter, Opposing PLL No. 9 of 2018  
Literature, Opposing PLL No. 9 of 2018  
(44) In Support of PLL No. 9 of 2018  
(23) In Opposition of PLL No. 9 of 2018

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next Regular Meeting of the Ulster County Legislature will be held next **Tuesday, May 15, 2018 at 7:00 PM** in the Legislative Chambers, Sixth Floor, Ulster County Office Building, 244 Fair Street, Kingston, New York.

I'm not going to stand here and argue about TNR versus euthanasia in handling community cats. Why? Because that is not within the scope of this legislation.

This legislation is designed to protect pet cats – an owner's personal property – that may inadvertently become trapped during any type of trapping operation.

This legislation is designed to ensure neighbors are made aware of any and all trapping operations and to therefore keep their cats specifically, indoors. It is also designed to ensure if a pet cat is missing during a trapping operation, the owner then knows who to contact to help locate their pet cat. Trapping for the purpose of TNR or euthanasia in controlling feral cat populations is not the issue here; ensuring pet cat health and safety, and providing every means to ensure the return of someone's property are the issues driving this legislation.

State law now requires rescues and shelters to scan all intakes within 24 hours to ensure a speedy reunion with owners; the statistics to support that bill included that 38.5% of microchipped cats specifically were reunited with their owners when scanned at intake. Clearly New York State -both its citizens and legislators sees the value in reuniting pets and owners, and the county legislation being considered tonight does the exact same thing – ensures pets are reunited with owners. Every step is outlined in a flowchart method to provide safeguards for pet cats; there is nothing that creates an undue burden on a trapper. No matter

protect feline family members. As the Executive Director of the Ulster County SPCA, and from my years of working in animal welfare across the country, I spend and have spent many occasions imagining if "it" happened to my pets. I would be devastated, and I know many who have been devastated when their pet cat was caught up in trapping operations and not returned to them. Not only is this legislation the most appropriate in legal terms of ensuring property rights, frankly, it is simply the neighborly way to do business when trapping to ensure your neighbors pets are looked after, the way you would hope someone would look after your own.

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May 8, 2018 Testimony at Ulster County Legislature hearing on  
*Proposed Local Law No. 9 Of 2018, County Of Ulster, A Local Law To Adopt  
Countywide Notification Requirements For The Trapping of Free Roaming, Feral  
And/Or Stray Cats*

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I am Richard Feldman, a cat owner from Shokan, and professor of Environmental Science at Marist College. My background includes public health and the study & control of invasive species.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognizes cats as the definitive host for *Toxoplasma gondii*, the disease agent of toxoplasmosis, spread via cat feces. The CDC recognizes toxoplasmosis as an important public health problem in the U.S., with at least 1 million people infected each year. Recent data estimates toxoplasmosis to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of deaths due to foodborne illness, and the 4<sup>th</sup> leading cause of hospitalizations due to foodborne illness. Livestock and game become infected by contact with contaminated soil and water. White-tailed deer are known to contract *Toxoplasma* where they overlap with cats; their venison is then a source of toxoplasmosis for people. Human symptoms include retina damage. Infected women can pass the parasite *in utero* to their embryos; an estimated 400–4,000 infants are born with congenital toxoplasmosis each year in the U.S. The FDA cautions pregnant women about exposure to *Toxoplasma* via soil when gardening in areas visited by cats. Untreated toxoplasmosis in children leads to mental retardation and blindness.

Toxoplasmosis is also a significant source of wildlife disease and deaths, ranging from songbirds to red fox to moose. Further, dozens of research studies around the world document predation of a wide range of wild vertebrates by domestic cats. The foremost international conservation organization, the IUCN, regards domestic cats as among the world's 100 most significant invasive species. A recent research article summarized the results of more than two dozen studies, indicating that 1.3 - 4 **billions** birds are killed by domestic cats each year in the U.S. The mortalities occur whether the cats are well-fed or not, as many cat owners know.



I'm Gail Mihocko, Director of Project Cat. I founded Project Cat because of my deep affection for cats and concern for their well being, as well as every other creature. Everybody who knows me is aware of this fact.

It is quite obvious that this [bizarre] proposal was created specifically to address the many unfounded and cruel accusations circulating about me for the past 2 years - by people who disagree with our policies and want to further their agenda of the trap-neuter-release (aka TNR) community.

Rumors lead some to believe that I surreptitiously search neighborhoods for outdoor cats to trap and remove. This is blatantly false. While Project Cat advocates for indoor-only cats - we neither intentionally nor unintentionally take beloved pet cats. The majority of the cats we take in are owner surrendered and from the properties of the owners.

Consider these all too common situations that we experienced in which even TNR is not an option:

- 1) a tenant gets evicted and opens the door to release 20 unsterilized cats onto the landlords property;
- 2) a family member intervenes when it is discovered that 60 cats have been breeding outdoors and they can no longer be fed or provided with medical care; the deck is saturated with urine and feces;
- 3) a grocery store has breeding feral cats in the parking lot - and they don't want them back.

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4) We won't hesitate, even on a Saturday evening, to take in an abandoned cat mauled by a dog;

5) or respond to a call about a yowling, stumbling feral cat and if necessary, have it tested for rabies.

We care about and assess each and every cat that comes our way to make the best decision, with the resources available, for the kindest outcome. Abandonment via tnr is not an option in any scenario.

I invite each and every one of you to visit our small shelter to discover more about us.

The following pictures are from a Marlboro situation and one of many examples where the Ulster County SPCA won't get involved and rather than choose to euthanize the cats due to their "no-kill" policy, they leave them to suffer. This despite the pleading of the family that the cats were in such poor condition they needed to be euthanized. The following are excerpts of a conversation I had with Adam Saunders of the UCSPCA regarding this case.



Adam, I'm sure you are doing all you can within the policies of the UCSPCA. What everybody avoids discussing is the fate of all those animals that "no-kill" shelters turn away when they are full and have no more foster homes. People seem to be content just to turn a blind eye. I am going to Marlboro this week to work on a case with about 30 cats hoarded by a woman who is in the hospital and not expected to return home. I believe you might have visited this house. As a small shelter I have no room to take any of these animals in, nor would I as I understand they are all harboring viruses. All of these cats will be put down. The guy has been calling me incessantly to come and do something because the place is filthy and although well fed, the cats are sickly. This is what I get frustrated about. We probably euthanize about as many cats as the UCSPCA adopts out. We cannot bear to turn away from these situations where there is no other option. BTW, I was planning on calling you this week to discuss the situation on Briggs Hwy which I believe you visited 2 or 3 years ago.

June 15, 2014 at 9:18pm · Like



That Marlboro situation is on my list, and you are correct: my hands are tied because I cannot make room via euthanasia. All I can do, since no other shelters have room for cats, is let it slide until I have space. I'm aware of Briggs hwy, but I'm in a similar boat: no space. Worse, I have no space due to an uncooperative judge in that very jurisdiction holding up a case we opened in feb (48 cats). I do think no kill works, but not when there's only one real shelter in the county. All towns save saugerties ceased cat control, Diana banks is a small operation, 2nd chance is a boarder line hoarding situation...it's tough Gail. I don't necessarily agree with your approach but I understand why you take it.

I'm just an animal lover who happened upon this conversation. I agree, the piece is amazing and beautifully written. I must say though that my heart breaks for those cats in dire situations whose cases are placed on a list, unable to receive the immediate help they so desperately need and deserve. As we all know, many are suffering terribly and our response is to do nothing? say, "our hands are tied right now?" We stand by knowingly and allow the suffering to continue? Is this not neglect?

June 12, 2014 at 7:41am · Unlike · 1



That dark side is, Dana, precisely what you mentioned: space restrictions on intake because room can't be made via euthanasia. Does that make us perpetrators of cruelty by failing to act when logistically we can't? No. We are a non profit, limited by our available resources. Gail's approach is one to consider: better dead than suffering. I don't have that luxury though, philosophically or legally. You see, when animals are seized in conjunction with a criminal arrest, those animals become evidence and must be held as such. I legally CANNOT euthanize them even were I willing. The situation in Marlboro can be handled Gail's way as the owners will surrender the cats, leaving no restrictions on euthanasia. The other four hoarding situations I am aware of will not end that way. The owners will not willingly part with their animals, leaving rescue only via arrest, and unless I have space or others step up to provide housing, their arrest must wait.

June 16, 2014 at 9:14pm · Like · 1



Adam Saunders A county facility would solve an issue: the SPCA handles most cruelty cases because regular police can't house the evidence. A county facility would allow police to investigate, resulting in more prosecutions and more animals saved. It would leave the private shelters to handle rescues rather than neglect. Lacking that, some funding for the SPCA WOULD increase our ability to respond, and we would be HAPPY to do so.

June 16, 2014 at 9:19pm · Like · 1



Gail Mihocko Project Cat does not handle cases where people are charged with cruelty as we have no legal jurisdiction. We can only take on situations where the people willingly sign them over because they have contacted us for help. So, as Adam said, in those situations we do not have to hold animals and wait for court orders, but can make decisions immediately. Just because "no-kill" has shown to work in some areas does not mean it is suitable everywhere. Each town, county, area etc has to be assessed based on the economics and demographics. I disagree with the necessity of having more foster home, as these should be only temporary places for animals awaiting permanent homes. If you put more and more animals into foster homes, more than you know you can actually adopt out, then what happens to those animals? I have taken cats from "foster homes" that have gotten out of control and even received calls from NYC where the organization won't take fosters back when the people can no longer care for them. Many of these foster homes and rescue groups don't have the slightest idea how to house animals safely or how to identify animals that might be sick until they are very sick. They don't have knowledge of disease transference or how to prevent it. You cannot escape the facts that there are more animals than there are good, responsible homes for. I agree there should be a town/county facility that handles abuse cases so private shelters don't have to do it. But there does have to be a reasonable and rational approach to dealing with the overpopulation based on reality.

June 17, 2014 at 9:24pm · Like · 1

June 17, 2014 at 9:24pm · Like · 1

Adam, did the SPCA actually visit Marlboro at some point?

June 19, 2014 at 6:53am · Like



Adam Saunders Yes. Our lead investigator was out there shortly after I learned of the situation. He reported awful conditions, and wanted to arrest the owner and remove the cats. I told him we needed placement for the cats before we could remove them. The shelter is full to bursting already. There is no money, no more staff and no more room. So far, alternate housing (foster care) has been impossible to find, and other rescues with actual facilities are full or shuttered.

June 19, 2014 at 6:32pm · Like

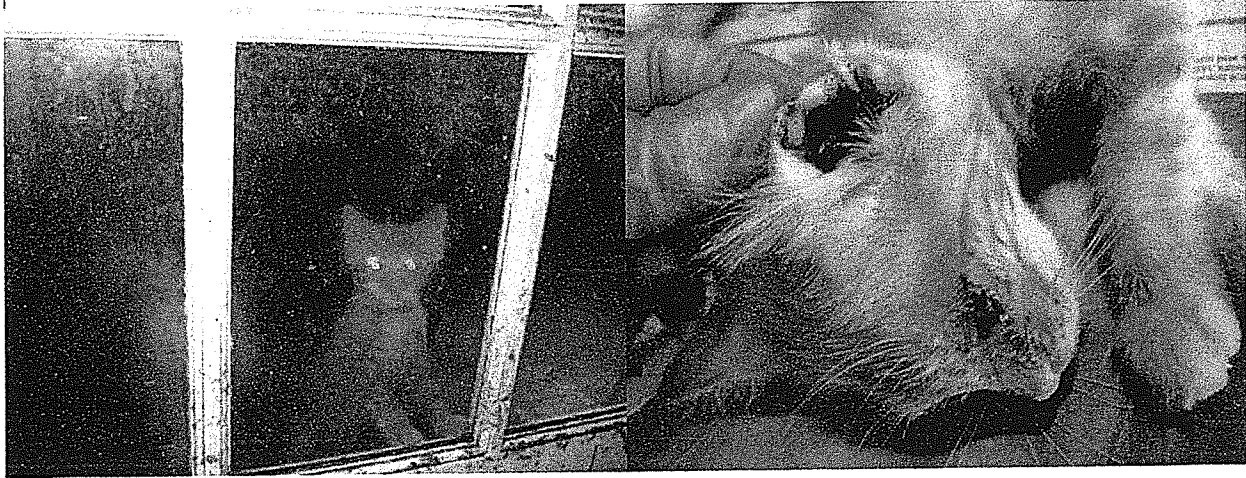


Write a comment...



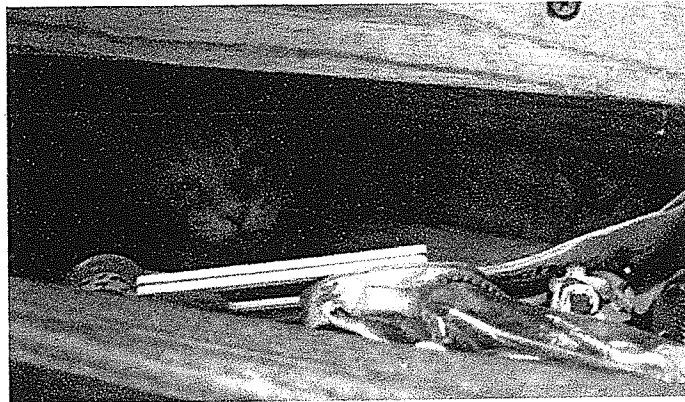
**June 2014 - Plattekill Rd, Marlboro - 31 very old and/or very sick, injured, parasite-ridden cats removed from indoor hoarding situation**

Family intervention; horrific, filthy conditions; Cats were pregnant; 1 dead, decaying corpse beneath bed; 2 cat skeletons found in shed.

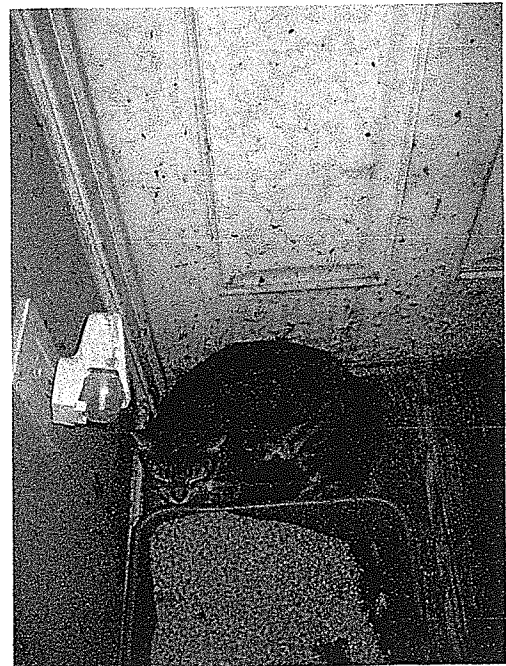


Filthy indoor conditions

Emaciated kitten with URI and terrible ear mites

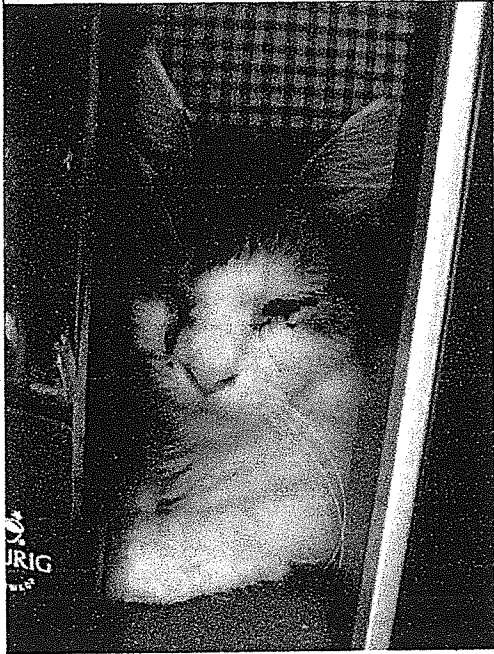


Cat in drawer for 3 days - trouble breathing, congestion, found this when we got him out...infected wound and necrotic tail from fighting with other intact male cats.

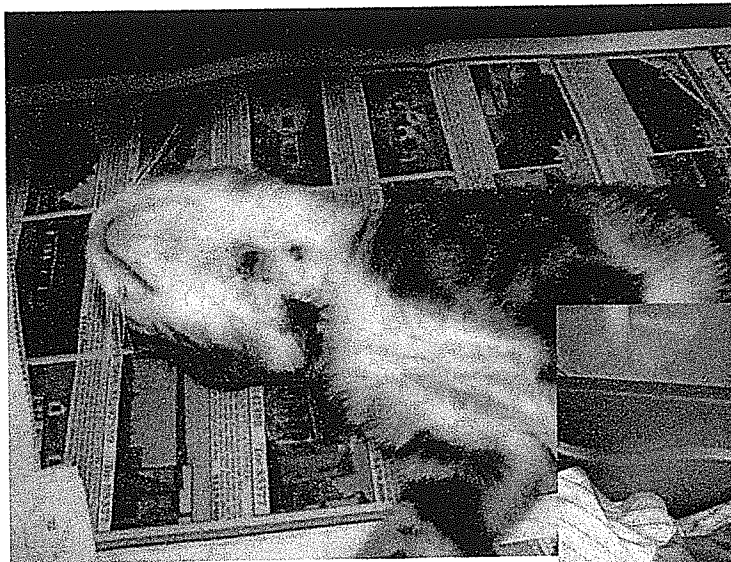


Mother cat with one kitten (floors and litter box were cleaned before our arrival.)

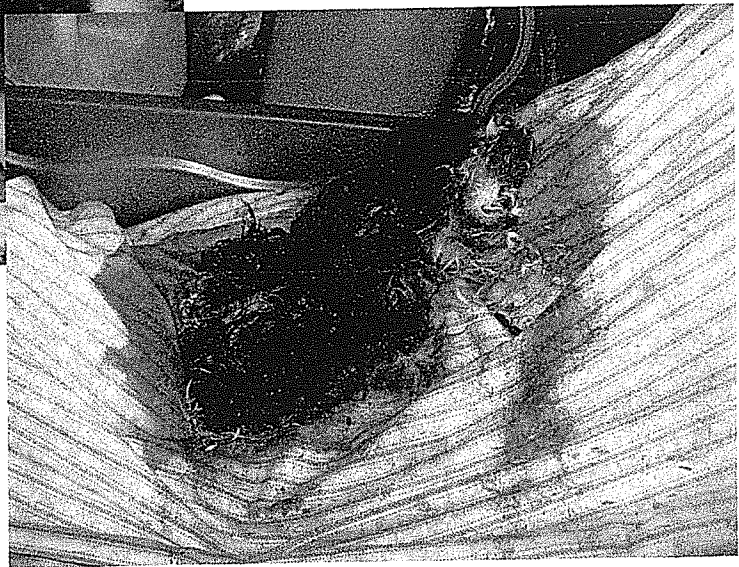
June 2014 - Plattekill Rd, Marlboro - cont'd



Severe upper respiratory infection (URI)  
with labored breathing



Infected, open wounds on this kitten



Decaying corpse found beneath bed; maggots and carrion beetles.

Hello, my name is Barbara Fornal . I live in Accord, NY in the town of Rochester in Ulster County.

I was an elementary school teacher in the Marlboro Central School District for 35 years and upon retiring 11 years ago, I started to volunteer at a no kill cat shelter in Accord. I volunteered for 10 years .

I became very aware of all the trials and tribulations, along with the diseases like FIV, Leukemia, Aids, upper respiratory infections, <sup>new tick born diseases</sup> that cats face and those like rabies and toxoplasmosis that can be a public health threat and all the emotional toll on both cats and humans that the free roaming cat problem poses.

I also discovered how everyone had their own idea how to solve the problem.

11 years later this problem still exists. So I am glad that this is finally getting attention at this level. Thank you.

Since there are no laws for cats like for dogs nor an animal control officer at the local level, The state Ag and Market Law 375(5) 355 states that TNR is illegal and a misdemeanor. Therefore the proposed local law #9 is illegal unto itself.

However this does not preclude its contents to attempt to address the growth of feral and/or stray cat population as a "public service". That is commendable.

Since cat owners are not held legally and lawfully responsible to that Ag and Market law that also states that a companion animal be it a cat or dog is one that is kept inside or near the home (that means if outside on a leash or for a cat inside a cage) individual citizens , either privately or through shelters or rescue organizations or the Ulster County SPCA, are being called to seek a solution to the problem. Each having their own philosophy and way of doing business. Very frustrating.

After spending the last 2 weeks reaching out to those doing that work and visiting their shelters, I discovered that some of them are doing TNR, some are doing TN and adopting, some TN and fostering, some are hoarding, some elderly are using their SS payment , some doing colony care, and some trapping and euthanizing,

Complaints are that people's chipped , and cared after pets are getting caught in that euthanizing process. Unfortunately there are less of these people spaying and neutering as they can not afford the SPCA raised costs from \$45.00 a cat to \$ 90.00 and they are limited to 2 cats. Spay neuter vans run\$75.00 It is more expensive for a vet to do this.

The shelter I volunteered at spent alot of time and fund raised money to help people "fix" their cats or at least attempt to help defray the cost.

I recently read a document from the NYS Humane Association located in Kingston , NY , to this body referring to the rights of UC residence and property owners who want feral cats removed from their properties. Yes, but by whom, when, where, how and who is going to pay for what is then needed.

The fact that this has gotten to the level it has with threats of lawsuits, mud slinging accusations and arguments, instead of working together to solve the problem, I say who suffers, the cats. Cats are domestic animals not meant to be out in the wild.

I suggest that the UC Legislature go back to the drawing board and create legislation for cats as for dogs. Obviously that is working as where do you see packs of dogs running around. *IF necessary go to the State level.*

Foremost put the responsibility onto the pet owners.

Require the animal be registered and microchipped.

Require that the animal remain indoors, leashed or caged outside according to Ag and Markets Law. They do it in Vermont.

Put fines and penalties in place.

Find ways to help the citizenry help themselves by helping fund the cost of spaying and neutering. This is what I think contributes so much to the problem.

Require town's to have an animal control officer for cats and when called , the people surrender the animal to that officer who will then adhere to the new law just passed by Gov. Cuomo in Dec. 2017 that states

" In Dec 2017 ,NY State Gov. Cuomo signed a new law requiring animal shelters including SPCA's and rescue organizations, scan for microchips in cats, within 24 hours of admission as an amendment to the agriculture and markets law, in relation to the registration of microchips; and in relation to the examination of seized animals taken possession of. "

In the mean time require that these organizations follow this law and must admit these animals to be checked for microchips, checked for health and adoptability. Not euthanized before hand " out in the field" as so charged.

Until then, I will continue to educate the public of their responsibility as pet owners, what resources are available to them when in need, the difference between a no- kill and kill shelter, who they are, what their policies and procedures are before making a decision and taking action they may regret.

Thank you for your time. *and attention to this matter,*



Kim Kelly

1174 Creek Locks Road 330

Bloomington, NY 12411

[castasidetosurvive@gmail.com](mailto:castasidetosurvive@gmail.com)

845-389-1178

My name is Kim Kelly. Have been doing successful TNR, rescue and re-homing of free roaming cats since 2004. It began as a Girl Scout Bronze Award Project. As the Troop Leader, I coordinated with the late, well known Marie Post, who directed and so generously gave financial support to cover TNR, vetting and re-homing costs.

Fast forward 14 years later and we still haven't seen the magnitude of the need for mandated laws to control the growing numbers of abandoned felines. Let's NOT lose sight of what this proposed cat law is about. It is NOT about any ONE entity, organization, person or individual. It is about protecting the warm blooded living mammals that WE humans have so irresponsibly allowed such disregard to life. We must rise up to be their voice!

Laws are created and needed for unity, for the betterment of all, in the utmost moral perspective possible. **What if everyone just did whatever they wanted? What they believed was best or right, without any ramifications?**

Let me put it into a better perspective:

You come home from working a long day to find that your young daughter's cat somehow escaped the safety and comfort of the only home it's known since you brought it home as a kitten, for a birthday gift for your child some four years ~~previously~~. You're tired and hope that "Marvin" will just show up at the door, cold and hungry in the morning but that doesn't happen.

So you leave for work and decide that you will knock on some doors after work if Marvin isn't waiting when you return home. After knocking on a few doors you are informed that 'someone' was in the area hauling cats in traps to their car and leaving.

You suddenly glance at the countertop and realize that “Marvin” slipped out of his quick release collar just a few days before but hope it’s okay, because he’s also micro-chipped, registered and up to date on all his vaccines. After many hours of frantic phone calls and a crying child that just wants their beloved “Marvin” back with them to cuddle, you locate the trapper, organization or person that was in the area. You hold your breath while the phone rings and rings. The person on the other end answers, only to tell you that you are too late, all cats from the area where the trapping took place have already been euthanized. In less than 48 hours, “Marvin” is gone. How do you tell your child that ‘somebody’ just killed your pet because they could? Because THEY believed they SHOULD?

Pause for a second and THINK how you would feel if that happened to your family, your pet. Yet this HAS and will continue to happen to many more families if something isn’t changed!

It’s time! Time to create, instill and enforce laws that afford cats similar rights like dogs have! How many more “Marvin’s” will there be before we finally decide it’s time to do something.....a humane something!

TNR and trapping requirement laws will be a step in the right direction. TNR does work. I’ve neutered over 1,000 cats since 2004. For every 2 cats that I neutered, it saved the lives of 200 more. Educating the community about low cost spay/neuter clinics is how we can control this situation. We can do this Ulster County, we can be the role model for many other counties and municipalities. Let’s start something for the good, for the lost pets, the stray, the homeless and cast aside, whether cared for or uncared for, these are warm blooded felines that we humans are completely responsible for!

PAWsomey yours,

Kim Kelly

Good evening. My name is Geri Ritchie, and I am a resident of Highland. I am a retired public school teacher who has been involved in the animal welfare movement for the past 20 years, beginning ~~with~~<sup>in</sup> 10 years as a volunteer at the Ulster County SPCA, including serving on its board of directors for 9 years, where I chaired the Humane Education Committee.

I have been a supporter and volunteer of Project Cat for several years, and for the past 4 years I have volunteered my time cleaning the shelter and socializing cats.

Project cat is an impeccable shelter where cats live safely and comfortably until they are adopted. Executive Director Gail Mihocko runs the organization with the utmost professionalism, compassion, and integrity. She receives countless calls from people who ask for her help with cats, often times after they have exhausted their options by calling other agencies that either don't return their calls or decline to help.

The homeless cat situation is overwhelming. There are thousands upon thousands of needy cats in our county and sadly, many of them will never receive help. Gail and Project Cat provide a much needed service to the cats and the people in our community, and I am happy to be a small part of the good work that she does.

In conclusion, I think the proposed law we are discussing tonight is unfeasible and cumbersome, and more importantly it will impede the efforts of organizations like Project Cat from helping vulnerable, needy cats. The county needs to adopt a more practical, effective way of solving the problem by creating a law for cats like there is for dogs, one that includes licensing and ordinances that will demand more responsible behavior of cat owners.

Thank you for your time.

Good evening,

I must preface everything I read with the fact that I am a cat lover. I currently own three rescue cats, one which was feral. I know that a **responsible** cat owner does not allow their cat(s) to roam freely through the neighborhood, they are kept indoors.

We have spent considerable time, money and effort to establish gardens that encourage wildlife to our yard. Free roaming cats and feral cats, however, have become a bane to our home. Defecating in our gardens, ruining shrubs with repeated spraying, killing rabbits and tormenting our own cats by sitting on the windowsills. Our cats have ripped through the screening in their frustration. Our yard is fenced and I have observed them scaling the fence with baby rabbits in their mouths and continually find the remains of birds.

Supporters of TNR state this practice works to reduce feral colonies. So, while they wait for TNR to reduce a feral population, the cats continue to annihilate wildlife. I ask the TNR supporters, why is it okay to have wildlife killed and maimed by cats but not okay to humanely euthanize a feral cat that cannot be rehomed? In my opinion, TNR supporters contradict themselves, professing a desire to save cats but no interest in preserving wildlife. ~~Responsible~~

The "American Bird Conservancy" has indicated that the now numbering 100 million outdoor cats in the United States kill approximately 2.4 billion birds resulting in declining species. If you do a web search for "Australia And New Zealand, feral cats" you will see that both countries are taking extreme measures to save their native wildlife.

Instead of supporting Local Law 9, a law should be passed to ban the return of feral cats to the wild and to establish regulations regarding domestic cats. Cats are not a native creature of nature and should not be allowed to live out their lives causing destruction to native wildlife.

Ulster County promotes itself as a place for tourism and some of that business is generated by the wildlife experience. How can you support returning feral cats to the wild **AND** wildlife tourism simultaneously when they are such opposing ideas?

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# TNR Is Dangerous Both to Cats and to Other Animals

In [Changing Planet](#) Tags [Guest Blogger, Voices for Wildlife](#) March 8, 2017 139 Comments

[Guest Blogger](#)

By Daphna Nachminovitch

By the time she called PETA for help, one of the stray cats the woman had been feeding was in critical condition, suffering from a massive tumor that had closed off his ear canal. In another case, a cat appeared at a feeder's home with grotesquely swollen paws oozing with pus, a symptom of feline infectious peritonitis. These cats' suffering was prolonged and agonizing but not uncommon. This is how homeless cats live—and die.

People who consider themselves “cat lovers,” including proponents of trap-neuter-release (TNR) — programs that sterilize but then abandon domestic cats and so should more aptly be called “trap-neuter-abandon”—don't mean to consign cats to such ghastly fates, but in leaving them outside to fend for themselves, they do. The average life expectancy of an “outdoor cat” is about two to five years compared with 12 to 15 years for a cat who lives indoors. Feral cats, as well as homeless domesticated cats who have been set loose outdoors by shelters seeking to avoid the criticism that they might face from euthanizing them, commonly suffer and die from feline leukemia, feline AIDS, and other infectious diseases—even rabies. They also succumb to ailments like anemia and upper respiratory infections—conditions that are easily treatable were the cats to be taken to a veterinarian—but they are not. In winter, cats in cold climates endure subzero temperatures, some losing ears, tails, or limbs to frostbite; others being cut to shreds when they climb into car engines seeking warmth; and still others simply freezing to death.

Many cats “disappear”—and while some are hit by cars or attacked by dogs or wild predators and some succumb to parasites or starvation because they depend on humans for everything and can't fend for themselves, others are victims of foul play. PETA's files are bursting with cases in which cats who were put outdoors without supervision, including those in “managed colonies,” have been shot, poisoned, drowned, bludgeoned, or even set on fire by cruel people who view them as easy targets or “pests” and don't want them climbing on their cars or defecating in their yards. Recent attacks include a cat in Mississippi who died after someone doused her with hot liquid, a cat in New York who suffered extensive chemical burns, and a cat in Maryland who was found dead with “visible injuries” and next to a note that read, “The cats must go.”

TNR programs are doomed to failure because of basic population dynamics: Even if all of the cats in a “colony” are eventually spayed and neutered (which is nearly impossible), the food set out for them will always attract “new” cats. And feeding cats also promotes abandonment, since people are more inclined to abandon their cats if they believe that someone else will “take care of” them.

Dr. Michael W. Fox—well-known veterinarian, columnist, and author—wrote in a column recently, “Obviously, cats that are neutered and then released outdoors are not going to breed, but they are likely to suffer far more than indoor cats (and those unadopted ones kept in enclosed sanctuaries) from injuries and disease, kill wildlife and pose a public health risk from some of the diseases they can transmit to humans.” Indeed, TNR programs are both a threat to public safety and harmful to native wildlife. Cats were recently dubbed the most deadly invasive species in the world by the authors of a study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* and are believed to be responsible or partly responsible for the extinction of 63 species. They pose a serious threat to wildlife, including mammals, reptiles, and birds, who are already struggling with habitat destruction and environmental degradation. One study estimates that free-roaming cats kill up to 24 billion wild animals and birds every year, by far the largest human-caused toll on birds.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has warned that maintaining feral cat colonies can lead to an increase in the incidence of rabies transmission from cats to humans. Cats can also spread other diseases to humans, including typhus, an outbreak of which in California was thought to be linked to feral cats. A man in Oregon was diagnosed with bubonic plague after being bitten by a cat who was allowed to roam outdoors. And at least seven wallabies died in a Virginia zoo because of toxoplasmosis transmitted by a colony of outdoor cats.

Trapping and abandoning cats is hazardous to all involved, certainly including the cats themselves. Homeless cats deserve to be treated like any other cat. They deserve a chance to be adopted into a loving home or, if that isn't possible, to be peacefully euthanized in a safe and quiet environment, rather than turned out onto the street to fight daily battles for survival that they will ultimately lose. Cat abandonment is illegal because it's inhumane, and it's not the answer to the homeless-cat crisis. The answer is to require that *all* cats be spayed and neutered, licensed, microchipped, and kept indoors.



*Daphna Nachminovitch is the senior vice president of cruelty investigations for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. She has overseen many undercover investigations and countless cruelty cases that have led to criminal charges against animal abusers. Under her leadership, PETA has spayed and neutered more than 139,000 dogs and cats since 2001.*

17/  
NAME

ROSENDALE

4 PERMITS FROM NYS DEC & US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE  
FOR PAST 13 YEARS

TAKE IN 300 BIRDS/YEAR, RELEASE 65%

MAIN CAUSES OF INJURIES: ACCIDENTAL COLLISIONS  
AND  
CAT ATTACKS

**Wild birds are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918.**

If enforced, and culprits are known, consequences could be \$10,000 per incident and/or up to 3 years in federal prison

Most of the 10,000 species of wild birds in the world are protected. You cannot purposely harm nor kill wild birds, with the few exceptions being invasive species such as starlings & house sparrows. Bird hunting is strictly regulated.

**POINT: WILD BIRDS HAVE CLEAR, LONG-STANDING FEDERAL PROTECTION**

**OUTSIDE CATS AND FERAL CATS HAVE DIRECTLY CAUSED THE EXTINCTION OF AT LEAST 35 SPECIES OF WILD BIRDS AROUND THE WORLD. MORE ARE ON THE EDGE OF EXTINCTION BECAUSE OF INVASIVE SPECIES, PARTICULARLY CATS.**

If you love birding, get to Hawaii, New Zealand and Australia very soon. Their native species of birds are disappearing fast.

**POINT: OUTSIDE CATS ARE NOT A NATURAL PART OF OUR ENVIRONMENT, AND CAUSE THE SUFFERING AND DEATH OF BILLIONS OF WILD BIRDS, SMALL MAMMALS AND AMPHIBIANS AROUND THE WORLD. OUTSIDE CATS AND FERAL CATS HAVE NEVER BEEN NATIVE SPECIES IN ANY ENVIRONMENT IN ANY COUNTRY.**

**NOT ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL IN VALUE  
NATIVE SPECIES ARE MORE VALUABLE THAN INVASIVE SPECIES.  
OUTSIDE CATS AND CAT COMMUNITIES ARE DESTROYING NATIVE SPECIES. THIS IS SCIENTIFIC FACT, NOT AN OPINION, NOT MY PHILOSOPHY.**

Under NYS Ag & Markets: all domestic animals including cats cannot be abandoned, neglected nor abused. **POINT: TN & R is, to me, is trap neuter and re-abandon.**

Rehab permit particularly for wild birds have strict guidelines:

If you cannot emotionally cope with the damaged wildlife that comes to us, and you do not euthanize wild animals that will never be able to survive in the wild on their own, state and federal laws require humane euthanasia.

If you choose to disobey these guidelines, you become a hoarder and/or burnt out, and you are now causing animals to suffer. You lose your permits, and you may face legal consequences.

**POINT: I APPRECIATE AND FOLLOW ALL THE REGULATIONS IN MY PERMITS BECAUSE I WANT TO SET THEM FREE, EASE THEIR SUFFERING, AND CONTINUE DOING WILDBIRD RESCUE AS LONG AS I AM ABLE.**

**POINT: IF CATS WERE REGULATED EXACTLY AS DOGS ARE, WE'D HAVE CLEAR, HELPFUL, HUMANE GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW WHEN MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT FERAL CATS OR THOSE WHO FEED CAT COLONIES. IF DOGS WERE FREE TO DO WHATEVER WHENEVER, AS CATS PRESENTLY ARE, THAT WOULD BE CRAZY. CATS DESERVE LEGAL PROTECTION JUST AS DO DOGS.**

**POINT: LIVING IN THE WILD IS ...WILD, HARSH AND OFTEN BRUTAL**  
Estimates vary, but scientists generally say that %65-85 of wild birds born this year will not survive a second year. Mostly because of weather, starvation, wild predators, injuries and diseases.

**CATS ABANDONED OUTSIDE, THRU TNR PROGRAMS, FACE SHORT LIVES, MULTIPLE CAUSES OF INJURIES AND DISEASE. AND, FYI, CATS ARE ROUTINELY HUNTED BY COYOTE, FOX, FISHERS, GREAT HORNED OWLS AND RED TAILED HAWKS. CATS DESERVE BETTER.**

**LACK OF OPTIONS IN ULSTER COUNTY: WHAT IS A PERSON TO DO WHEN THEY HAVE AN UNKNOWN, UNOWNED CAT IN THEIR DRIVEWAY, A CAT THAT NEEDS HELP AND IS SUFFERING? THE UC SPCA WILL DO NOTHING BUT TELL CALLERS TO TAKE THE CAT (COULD BE VERY DANGEROUS) TO A VET AND PAY OUT OF THEIR OWN POCKETS FOR TREATMENT OR EUTHANASIA.**

**THANKFULLY, PROJECT CAT OFTEN IS ABLE TO STEP IN AND HELP.**

**THANKFULLY, THERE ARE SOME...NOT ENOUGH...BUT SOME...VOLUNTEER WILDLIFE REHABBERS IN OUR AREA FOR PEOPLE TO CALL FOR SIMILAR WILDLIFE EMERGENCIES.**



## Support Proposed Local Law #9

1. Some towns in Ulster have used the "catch and kill" method to exterminate cats in the past and have paid ~~the~~<sup>a</sup> local organization ~~to~~ ~~do~~ to do so. This obviously hasn't worked and has wasted taxpayer money using an inhumane method of population control.

2. In this County, people's pets have been trapped and killed. This Proposed Law will protect pet owners and their innocent pets. The law will require a mandatory holding period to allow time for owners and trappers to safely get owned pets back to their homes.

3. Most importantly, this law will require that ONLY a Licensed Veterinarian can euthanize an animal. The animal has to be deemed so unhealthy, diseased, or maimed that humane euthanasia is the only option. Currently, healthy

animals are being euthanized without any type of appropriate medical evaluation done by a Licensed Veterinarian. A local civilian should NOT be able to diagnosis illness and be able to euthanize ANY animal, let alone healthy ones for the sole purpose of their own self-fulfilling agenda.

4. You are going to hear opponents of this Proposed Law discuss (Toxoplasmosis and Rabies), especially from PETA, NYSHA and Cornell Ornithologist's. However, they don't give the whole truth. The biggest risk of contracting Toxoplasmosis is from ~~raw meat~~ unwashed fruit and vegetables, and raw or undercooked meat, not from cats. They will speak of cats spreading Rabies. However, Rabies is often misguidedly used to justify the continued use of "roundups" of feral/stray cats, which has resulted in decades of catch and kill

schemes. There has not been a single case of a human contracting rabies from a cat in the past 40 years in the U.S.

5. This County needs to adopt a humane method in dealing with cat overpopulation. This Trapping Law will encourage proper practice and appropriate guidelines and regulations for EVERYONE that traps in this County.

Lisa McEwen

118 High Point Circle

Newburgh, NY 12550

themcewens@hvc.rr.com

May 8, 2018

Hi,

My name is Kim Letus. Most of you don't know me, but for those of you who do, you may be aware that I am an animal lover and advocate for feral cats. I served on the City of Kingston Cat Task Force, which, unfortunately, was short-lived. Over the years I've employed TNR to control the population of feral cats. I bought three traps to get started, specifically tackling a large community in Hurley and one in Saugerties, plus a number of smaller colonies over the years. Marie Post, a well-known area animal advocate in years past, was kind enough to help me with the spay/neuter through the Animal Emergency Fund. It was a rewarding task. TNR works, and after a few years of the cats not reproducing, the feral communities diminish. Additionally, young feral kittens can be domesticated quite easily. I have five cats, all of which started out as feral kittens. All are loving, healthy and well-behaved in the house. They seem almost grateful that they were saved. It literally can take only days for a feral kitten to adjust to life inside. Many feral colonies have "caretakers", animal lovers who live nearby and feed and create shelters for the animals. If a cat is fed, it will not prey on wildlife for food. The feral cat overpopulation was caused by the selfish and irresponsible behavior of people. These innocent creatures do not deserve to be abandoned and then systematically eliminated. I'm not a starry-eyed, unrealistic animal fanatic. I understand that some animals are sick, and euthanasia is sometimes appropriate. However, I believe only a veterinarian is qualified to make that determination. It's up to us, as responsible and compassionate people, to acknowledge this and address the issue of feral cats.

Good evening members of the legislature, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Howard Baul and I live in Kerhonkson. I am here to speak tonight in absolute opposition to proposed Local Law #9. We currently have a feral cat population in my small neighborhood that ranges between 5 and 15 cats at any given time. At one time, this population easily exceeded 40 cats. Over the years, through a variety of efforts of my neighbors and I, we have fortunately been able to keep that number down to the lower, but still very unacceptable numbers we have today. In more recent years, trapping and euthanasia has been the more humane method of elimination in my neighborhood.

Many years ago, I had to shoot one of these cats that went after one of my children. In addition to the myriad of health risks to our families and pets, the damage these cats are and were doing to our neighborhood included damaging and scratching vehicles; defecating in our children's play areas; taking up shelter under porches (with the Impossible task of removing the cat urine smell from our living spaces); tearing out insulation and damaging our homes; damaging gardens and lawns; antagonizing our pets; and the list goes on and on.

While I oppose this proposed law, I also unfortunately recognize this legislature may choose the wellbeing of these menacing cats over protecting the health and property of its constituency.

With this unfortunate reality facing us right now, absent trapping and humane elimination, people will, without a doubt, resort to poisoning and shooting these cats. This will result in slow painful deaths and dead cat carcasses scattering our neighborhoods.

For the better part of 20 years, I have had dogs. Pursuant to law, I am required to license my dogs annually, provide proof of vaccinations and they should be properly contained. While there have been rare occasions where one, or both, of my dogs have escaped the controls we put in place to contain them, we still made a concerted effort to contain them and be sure they were not a detriment to my neighbors or their properties.

For those who would argue that people's pet cats are being trapped and killed because they are mistaken for feral, those pet owners should be taking steps to be more responsible to make sure their pets are not regularly in a situation to be mistaken for feral cats.

Should this law be unfortunately passed, it should include a mandatory licensing, tag and collar requirement for ALL cats deemed to be pets. Then, in addition to the burdens this law would place on people who are only trying to protect the health of their families and prevent the destruction of their properties, cats without a tag and collar would be considered feral and could be disposed of properly.

I vehemently urge you to vote against this proposed law and put the health and property of your constituency over feral cats and/or irresponsible cat owners. If you do not have the ability to do that, at a minimum, include mandatory licensing, tags, collars and containment of pet cats by their owners. If these conditions are added to the law, I promise I won't shoot a collared cat on my property.

My name is Terence Ward, and I live in New Paltz.

I support this bill. I also support trap-neuter-release programs. In fact, all of my cats were rescued from a feral life.

What's being asked for here is for cat owners to be given the same courtesy as car owners. If my car is towed, there are laws to ensure I know who took, and where. That isn't the case for cats.

Down the hill from my house, behind an apartment complex, there's a cat colony. One of mine, Peregrine, likes to visit, and one day he was lured into a trap during a TNR operation. As luck would have it, he'd recently ditched his collar — *again*.

The only reason I found out what had happened to Peregrine is because the wrong person answered the phone at the apartment complex that day, and he knew someone who knew something. By the time I located Peregrine, he was in New Jersey; I have no idea where he might have ultimately been released.

Good work does not need to be paid for with broken hearts. Just as the county animal abuse registry protects those without a voice, so too would a rescuer registry.

29.

# WOODSTOCK

FARM SANCTUARY

May 8, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

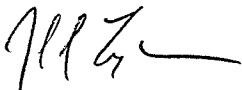
I write on behalf of Woodstock Farm Sanctuary and our thousands of constituents to express our support for Local Law No. 9.

The legislation would accomplish so much and cost so little. It will protect people from the tragic yet currently very real possibility that their companion animals could be lost forever – or even killed. It will protect companion animals. It will maintain a level of decency and humanity in our communities that reflect the values of Ulster County by preventing the indiscriminate, gratuitous killing of healthy, feral animals at the hands of unlicensed amatuers. And it will serve to humanely lower the feral cat population.

The notion that Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) is not an effective means to decrease feral cat populations is a myth; the science is in. While some poorly designed studies are ultimately inconclusive, well-executed TNR projects were proven to lower feral populations by 66 percent according to the the industry-leading, peer-reviewed *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*. It may be cheaper in terms of direct short-term expenses to engage in the wholesale slaughter by syringe of felines (whose presence as domesticated animals is by definition our responsibility), but such cruelty comes with a cost to communities that prize decency and accountability. We trust in Ulster County's elected officials to represent such deeply held values and pass Local Law No. 9.

We appreciate your consideration of this important legislation and urge you to pass Local Law No. 9. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



Jeff Lydon  
Managing Director

Read by Rachel McCrystal



May 2, 2018

Dear Ulster County Executive Michael Hein:

I strongly oppose Local Law No. 9 of 2018 proposed by county legislator Laura Petit. The proposed law seeks to legitimize the systematic abandonment of cats by using an unproven and ineffective program to trap, neuter and return (TNR) cats to their original capture sites. **TNR violates the Agriculture and Markets law section 374, subdivision 5 that prevents the release of animals once in custody of a shelter or animal control officer.**

TNR does not reduce feral cat populations. In fact, the establishment and maintenance of "cat colonies" only attracts other cats. Under Petit's proposed law, once feral, unadoptable and unclaimed cats are trapped, neutered, and vaccinated, they are to be returned to the location in which they were trapped. In most cases, these animals live in locations where they lead harsh and traumatic lives - they are hit by cars, attacked by predators, infested with ticks and fleas, infected with diseases (from fighting with other cats and wildlife), suffer painful urinary blockage, experience complications related to frostbite, and receive *no* medical attention. These animals are not physically equipped to live outdoors in upstate New York and fend for themselves.

Not only would Local Law No. 9 of 2018 violate a state law and consequently increase the feral cat population in Ulster County, but it would infringe upon people's property rights. Private residents and business owners would not be able to permanently remove feral and unadoptable cats from their properties, which would ultimately pose health and safety risks. Instances of human exposure to rabies and toxoplasmosis, as well as the spread of other diseases, such as ringworm, hookworm, feline distemper, bartonella, coccidia and cat scratch fever, would only increase.

Based on what is known about the ineffectiveness of TNR and the related health and safety concerns, I respectfully urge you to oppose Local Law No. 9 of 2018.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Rebecca Diamond

Handed out at the  
Public hearing on Leg.  
depts.

Ulster County Legislators,

Holy Smoke! I am not a smoker and no one wants to encourage 18 year old to use tobacco products but I am getting sick and tired of the Ulster County Legislature trying to micro manage everyone's daily life. You can't make this up.

In New York State the Age of Consent is 17 and any 18 year old young man or woman is deemed responsible enough to vote, is trusted to defend the nation as a member of the military, can enter into contracts, is held responsible for his or her debts, and can marry and have children. But some Democrats don't trust them to make a personal decision regarding tobacco use.

If the local law they proposed is passed, the legal age to purchase tobacco products including e-cigarettes and other "smoking paraphernalia" in Ulster County will go from 18 to 21 but JUST IN ULSTER COUNTY.

In the law they site "the associated serious health consequences and healthcare costs" as the reasoning behind this law. Apparently they are not concerned about the long term health risk of giving birth control pills to 12 year olds without thier parents' permission but that is a discussion for another day.

The law actually states that "raising the minimum legal age will likely immediately improve the health of adolescents and young adults by reducing the number of those with adverse physiological effects." Likely immediately?? Overlooking the poor grammar...They actually believe that passing this law or any law will IMMEDIATELY improve adolescent health? Are they serious!?!

OK. Let's say the Ulster County Legislature passes this and all the retailers in Ulster County dutifully post the "required" new signs and diligently asks for ID from the new "approved" list for "any individual who reasonably appears to be (less than) thirty (30) years of age" (whatever that means) and the new law successfully prevents anyone between 18 and 21 from purchasing tobacco products in Ulster County. What then?

Do they really think this will stop any 18, 19 or 20 year old from smoking? Perhaps some legislators are unaware that 18, 19 and 20 year olds can get drivers licenses and some even own cars and many have been known go as far away as Dutchess County and other neighboring counties where they are treated as adults and can legally purchase tobacco products.

But if this becomes law in Ulster County "Any person who violates any provision of this article shall be subject to the imposition of a civil penalty of a minimum of \$300.00, but not to exceed \$1,000.00 for a first violation, and a minimum of \$500.00, but not to exceed \$1,500.00 for each subsequent violation."

I don't smoke. I am proud that my kids don't smoke. I don't want to encourage anyone to smoke. However, I don't think it is a prudent use of resources for an enforcement officer to hassle a 20 year old for smoking tobacco or vaping an e-cigarette. I oppose this proposed local law.

David Steffens, Kingston, NY

**RECEIVED**

**MAY 09 2018**

**ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE**