

**A RESOLUTION BY THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF DEKALB COUNTY,
GEORGIA COMMITTING TO SUPPORT AND IMPLEMENT THE DEKALB
COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD’S FIVE-YEAR PLAN (2023-2028)
*COMMON SENSE SOLUTIONS: PLAN FOR A BETTER TOMORROW***

WHEREAS, the DeKalb County Animal Services Advisory Board (“DCASAB”) has provided invaluable services to DeKalb County related to the humane and healthy treatment of animals in the County; and

WHEREAS, DCASAB plays a critical role in advising the County, the Governing Authority, and DeKalb County Animal Services on best practices for animal care and shelter management; and

WHEREAS, DCASAB has offered practical, creative, and thoughtful short-term and long-term recommendations to improve the lives of animals, manage animal population at the DeKalb County Animal Services Center, and assist the County’s pet-owning members of the community; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Authority of DeKalb County recognizes the current difficulties facing the DeKalb County Animal Services Center since the Covid-19 pandemic, including a consistently high intake of animals, reduced number of adoptions and rescue transfers, understaffing and high rate of staff turnover, stress to people and animals alike from the shelter overcrowding, and a shortage of qualified veterinarians; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Authority of DeKalb County is committed to addressing the overcrowding crisis at the DeKalb County Animal Services Center and has recently announced a \$10 million comprehensive strategy to combat these current struggles; and

WHEREAS, DCASAB, a board with representation from each commission district, has created and supports a detailed and thoughtful report entitled *Common Sense Solutions: Plan for Better Tomorrow* that outlines five goals to address the current challenges of DeKalb Animal Services, which includes the following:

- **Goal 1: Create More Space to Meet DeKalb Needs**
 - Secure temporary space to meet current needs
 - Expand shelter to meet projected needs

- **Goal 2: Staffing for Excellence**
 - Raise compensation and benefits
 - Provide effective training and professional development
 - Increase staffing levels to meet community needs

- **Goal 3: Support for People and Families with Pets**
 - Set-Up Pop-Up clinics for microchipping, vaccinations, spay/neuter, affordable vet care
 - Build fences and shelters to meet adequate care for pets

- Establish community cat resource center
- Establish a pet food and medication bank

- **Goal 4: Prevent More Homeless Pets**
 - Enforce existing ordinances related to pet care and sales/transfers
 - Require licenses/bond for breeding through new ordinance
 - Institute new ordinance to ban unlicensed breeding and sales

- **Goal 5: Address Lengthy Shelter Stays of Court-Held Dogs**
 - Institute policy for animal services staff and prosecutors to urge animal surrender
 - Clarify status of animals and create an animal advocate
 - Establish 15-day impoundment fee bond
 - Utilize motion to dispose after first failure to appear
 - Utilize costs of care **liens** in all cases not resolved within 30 days of impoundment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Governing Authority of DeKalb County, as follows:

1. The Governing Authority of DeKalb County is dedicated to continuing to address the current challenges facing DeKalb County Animal Services and putting its best efforts to implement workable solutions.
2. The Governing Authority of DeKalb County hereby commits to support and implement, the goals outlined in DCASAB's five goal *Common Sense Solutions: Plan for Better Tomorrow*.
3. The Governing Authority of DeKalb County directs the County Attorney to provide written advice and drafts of potential ordinances in the first quarter of 2024 related to defraying costs of caring for animals being held during criminal proceedings, as well as for forfeiture and surrender options.
4. The Governing Authority of DeKalb County also directs the County Attorney to provide written advice before the end of the first quarter 2024 as to the County's potential inability to regulate animal breeding licenses, and to require impoundment bond fees.
5. The Governing Authority of DeKalb County authorizes the Chief Executive Officer of DeKalb County to execute all necessary documents for such purposes.

ADOPTED by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners, this ____ day of December 2023.

ROBERT PATRICK
Presiding Officer
Board of Commissioners
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED by the Chief Executive Officer, this ____ day of December 2023.

MICHAEL L. THURMOND
Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO SUBSTANCE:

BARBARA H. SANDERS-NORWOOD, CCC
County Clerk
Board of Commissioners and
Chief Executive Officer

ZACHARY L. WILLIAMS
Chief Operating Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

VIVIANE H. ERNSTES
County Attorney
DeKalb County, Georgia