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PRESS RELEASE
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COUNTY ENACTS COUNTY WIDE ANIMAL RESTRAINT

Effective April 23, 2012, Spalding County will require the restraint of all companion animals (dogs and cats). Restraint being defined as remaining within the owners property lines.

The Commissioners along with Staff and ACCAB (Animal Care & Control Advisory Board) have been diligently working on this proposal for several months and the Board adopted a County Wide Restraint Ordinance at their January 23, 2012 meeting. The new ordinance reads as follows: "It shall be unlawful for any owner or possessor of and dog or cat to fail to keep the animal under restraint or control as provided for in this section. An animal is considered not under restraint when it is running at large, whether wearing a collar and tag or not. Reasonable care and precautions shall be taken to prevent the animal from leaving the real property limits of its owner, possessor, or custodian."

The Board also clarified proper methods of restraint including the use of a trolley/runner system. A trolley system is a horizontal vinyl covered cable (trolley), with a vertical vinyl covered cable (tether) that slides along it. The Board agreed that trolleys are an improvement over fixed-point chaining because they allow greater freedom of movement and eliminate the use of heavy chains that can injure dogs. Tethers must be made of substance which cannot be chewed by the animal and shall not weigh more than five percent of the body weight of the animal; they also must have a swivel installed at each end and be attached to a stationary object that cannot be moved by the animal. The tether must be at least ten feet in length and mounted no more than seven feet above the ground level.

Another change implemented by the Board references specific requirements for dog enclosures. The ordinance defines Proper Enclosure as, "an enclosure for keeping any animal, including dangerous animals or potentially dangerous animals, as required by this chapter, while on the owner's property in a securely enclosed locked pen, fence, or structure suitable to prevent the animal from escaping. Any such enclosure shall also provide protection from the elements for the animal. The term proper enclosure shall not mean nor shall it include keeping a dangerous or potentially dangerous animal inside a house that is inhabited by human beings." Other ordinances were also approved at the January 23, 2012 meeting that addresses more changes.

Additional information and copies of ordinances are available for review at www.spaldingcounty.com or contact Animal Control at (770)467-4772.