

**MINUTES  
CITY OF LAUREL  
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 01, 2023**

A Council Workshop was held in Council Chambers and called to order by Mayor Dave Waggoner at 6:29 p.m. on August 1, 2023.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emelie Eaton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heidi Sparks
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michelle Mize	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Richard Herr
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Casey Wheeler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Irv Wilke
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Richard Klose	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jodi Mackay

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Michele Braukmann, Civil City Attorney  
Kelly Strecker, Clerk/Treasurer  
Stan Langve, Police Chief

**Public Input:**

There were none.

**General Items**

**Executive Review**

1. Resolution - Resolution Approving Agreement Regarding School Resource Officer Program By And Between The City Of Laurel And Laurel Public Schools, District 7 & 7-70

Police Chief Langve briefly reviewed the SRO program.

Council noted that one of the goals listed in the contract was to build relationships with students. It was questioned what kind of relationships are they aiming to build. It was clarified that the SROs have been able to address issues more proactively due to their relationship and open communications with students.

**Council Issues**

2. Brush Truck Intercap Loan Discussion

The brush truck the City ordered two years ago is ready to be picked up. The City is still waiting on the loan documents from the State but will have a resolution before Council at next week's City Council meeting.

It was questioned if the brush truck had been budgeted for. It was clarified that it had been budgeted.

### 3. Savage Cat Rescue Discussion

Council noted that in May, Savage Cat Rescue requested assistance. At that time, there were budget constraints. Some Council Members felt they need to consider funding this program.

It was questioned if cats would be added to Animal Control.

Police Chief Langve noted that the City does not have a cat ordinance, nor have they discussed adding one. It is not a benefit for the City to have one. The City has had issues with people feeding and housing feral cats with unsanitary conditions. Dogs are by far a more significant issue.

Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter (YVAS) can assist with cats within the City limits; see the attached information about what they do. When formalizing the City's agreement with YVAS for services for dogs, they had mentioned that they do assist with cats as well, should the City want to pursue that.

Council noted that they had received community feedback that YVAS was not assisting Laurel residents with cat issues. It was clarified that the City would have to establish that program first.

It was questioned how many residents registered their chickens. It was clarified that there had been no registrations for chickens.

It was clarified that the Police Department spends a lot of time determining if the animal caught is someone's pet. The annual contract with YVAS is \$6,000. That includes not only the animals that are brought there but also services for injured animals brought in by the City and the seizure of animals in cruelty cases.

It was questioned if Council would like to add something that has not been budgeted before and when they would want to add that. It was clarified that we are currently in the budgeting process now.

It was clarified that Animal Control is budgeted out of the General Fund. It would need to be budgeted out of the Police Department's budget. The Police Chief would likely have to give up \$3,500 in another area of his budget to fund this. The Clerk/Treasurer has not received the City's mill value yet but should have them by Monday. Because we are in the budgeting process, expected expenses can be added. The YVAS contract is paid for out of the Police Department's budget.

It was questioned when that contract went into effect. It was clarified that the contract was signed in February.

Lorie Howard, Director of Savage Cat Rescue, stated that the copy of the YVAS contract she reviewed explicitly excludes cats. She always gets calls because YVAS does not deal with the cat issue in Laurel. So far this year, she has taken in 87 out of 308 cats from Laurel.

It was questioned if those 87 cats were within City limits or if it was the Laurel area in general. It was clarified that those are cats trapped within the Laurel area in general. It was further questioned if the list included the location where the cats were trapped. It was clarified that the locations were included. City Staff asked for a copy of that list.

Recently, Savage Cat Rescue received a \$1,500 grant from Laurel Walmart, allowing them to spay/neuter 12 female and 12 male cats.

The Police Chief spoke with Trinita at YVAS. They do have a program, at the expense of the homeowner, to come out and assist with nuisance cats.

Council asked if the \$6000 was for both dogs and cats or just dogs. It was clarified that the contract is primarily for dogs but can grow as needed. They will also assist the City if there is an animal emergency.

It was questioned if someone lives outside of City limits who would they call for assistance. It was clarified that they would need to call the County.

Barb Emineth, 501 Alder Avenue, clarified that she does not feel they are asking for a cat ordinance but for funds to allow the work to continue. She encouraged Council to be forward-thinking in dealing with this issue. Just because it may not be a problem in your area does not mean it is not a problem in another. Some neighbors feed the stray cats while others leave out antifreeze to kill them. In her area, there were approximately a dozen cats. She suspected that there were three generations of cats based on their size. Because of Savage Cat Rescue, she sees far fewer cats in her neighborhood. First, people need to get their cats fixed; second, cats are homing animals, so it is not easy to relocate them; third, cats are nocturnal and generally lay low during the day. Stray cats spread disease to domesticated cats and, in some cases, to people. Savage Cat Rescue uses a proven humane method to reduce the population of cats.

Doug Powell, 2315 E. Maryland Lane stated the first step to solving a problem is admitting that you have one. Savage Cat Rescue has come out and assisted him with the cat problem in his neighborhood. The City has a \$4 million budget; they cannot find \$3,500 to fund this program. As the City continues to grow, this problem will also grow.

Civil Attorney Braukmann clarified that the contract with YVAS is for \$5,000 and is exclusively for dogs. She cautioned the Council about amending ordinances to create a cat ordinance. This is a very slippery slope to go down outside of nuisance situations, which is already addressed via LMC. If the City states they will manage the cat populations, there will be a much larger discussion on enforcement that needs to take place. At this time, it is not recommended. The question of where to fund this project does not require an ordinance change.

It was questioned if it could be placed just under the General Fund and not under the Police Department. It was clarified that taxpayer dollars fund the General Fund. Residents should not be paying for cats picked up outside of city limits. The Clerk/Treasurer would need to speak with the auditors on where this must go.

A resident of Carbon County stated that Savage Cat Rescue has also helped with cats out in the County. Tom cats like to roam; he asked that the City support this cause.

It was questioned if the City can provide services not via an ordinance. It was clarified that the City could enter into a contract with various entities, such as Savage Cat Rescue.

Brandon Ellis, 2707 Lackawanna Lane, stated he owns Dirty Paws of Montana. He sees a lot of cats in his area. He recently went out of town and forgot to lock his pet door. When he returned, he had 18 cats in his home. He is currently moving out of that neighborhood because of the cat issue.

Mindy Bausch, 1845 Paynes Place, stated when they moved into this home, they had 15 to 20 cats, and now there is one left. They only see him when winter comes. Right now, she is caring for two cats and 11 kittens. She had an unfixed cat show up this morning.

Barb Emineth, 501 Alder Avenue, stated that she rehabbed a kitten from the neighbor's yard. She named him Simba. Once she started going outside, he caught a virus and only lived for two additional years.

Council requested a contract be drafted for the next Council cycle. The contract would identify what services would be provided to City residents.

It was questioned if recently Savage Cat Rescue had a cat owner upset because their cat was trapped and fixed. It was clarified that the owner did not have to pay for the services.

Brandon Ellis, 2707 Lackawanna Lane, questioned if there was a limit on how many cats someone can own. It was further questioned if Savage Cat Rescue could trap near the railroad or if they would need to obtain permission from the railroad to do so.

It was clarified that it would become an enforcement issue if the City did and residents did not follow those limitations. It was also clarified that there are limitations on entering private property.

Park Board has been thinking of ways to make the eastern end of Riverside Park more useable. There are concerns regarding the lead in the area. Park Board is requesting that the City get a quote for lead remediation. They also thought about selling the lead collected to be able to do additional projects within the park.

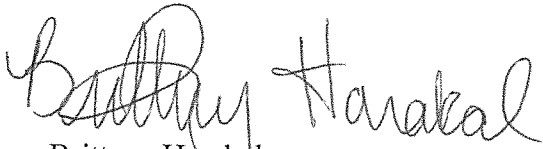
## **Other Items**

### **Attendance at Upcoming Council Meeting**

### **Announcements**

The council workshop adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brittney Harakal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brittney" written in a more compact, stylized manner and the last name "Harakal" written in a more extended, flowing script.

Brittney Harakal  
Administrative Assistant

**NOTE: This meeting is open to the public. This meeting is for information and discussion of the Council for the listed workshop agenda items.**

# A Closer Look at Community Cats

## Common Misconceptions and Ways to Help

While the number of community cats in the United States is estimated to be in the tens of millions, sadly, many communities still opt to control populations using outdated, ineffective methods. Community cats who end up in shelters make up a large percentage of cats euthanized throughout the country every year. The ASPCA supports Trap-Neuter-Return-Monitor (TNRM) as a humane and effective method to manage community cat populations.



## What is a Community Cat?

"Community Cats" is a term used to describe outdoor, unowned, free-roaming cats. These cats can be friendly, feral, adults, kittens, healthy, sick, altered and/or unaltered. They may or may not have a caretaker. A caretaker is a person who conducts TNRM and provides care to a community cat, but who is not the legal owner. By this definition, the only outdoor free-roaming cats who are not community cats are those who have an owner.

Community cats—who have a dedicated caretaker who provides them with spay/neuter services and regular feedings—can live contently outdoors.

## **Utilizing Trap-Neuter-Return-Monitor (TNRM) to Manage Community Cat Populations**

TNRM is the method of humanely trapping community cats, having them spayed or neutered and vaccinated against rabies, and then returning them to their managed location to live out their lives. TNRM also involves a cat caretaker who provides food and monitors the cats' wellbeing as well as identifying and quickly trapping new intact cats. TNRM has been shown to be the most humane, efficient way of stabilizing community cat populations. By sterilizing at least 75% of cats in a group within a six-month period (and continuing to sterilize at least 75% of the remaining intact cats), TNRM helps stabilize the population of community cats and, over time, reduce the number of cats.

(<https://www.aspcapro.org/news/2019/07/25/new-study-high-intensity-tnr-could-mean-over-30-times-fewer-cat-deaths>) The goal is to sterilize all cats present and monitor the location for any intact newcomers. Nuisance behaviors such as spraying, excessive noisemaking and fighting are also largely eliminated and no additional kittens are born.

By stabilizing the population, cats will naturally have more space, shelter and food and fewer risks of disease. After being spayed or neutered, cats living in a managed group tend to gain weight and live healthier lives. Spayed cats are less likely to develop breast cancer and will not be at risk for ovarian or uterine cancer, while neutered males will not get testicular cancer. Neutering male cats also reduces the risk of injury and infection, since intact males have a natural instinct to fight with other cats. Spaying also means female cats do not go into heat. That means they attract fewer tom cats to the area, which reduces fighting and mating.

### **How to Help Community Cats and Kittens in Your Area**

- Become a cat caretaker and TNRM community cats in your neighborhood. A community cat caretaker is an individual (or group of individuals) who manages one or more groups of cats in a community. The caretaker keeps an eye on the cats—providing food, water and shelter, spaying/neutering and oversees their general wellbeing. Since caretakers keep an eye out for these cats, the caretaker is most frequently someone who lives nearby.

- Offer your assistance to established community cat caretakers who are doing TNRM. Ongoing needs include feeding, trapping, transportation to and from the veterinarian, temporary housing for cats after surgery, and fostering and socializing kittens for the purpose of finding them good homes.
- Contact local shelters (<https://www.aspca.org/adopt-pet/find-shelter>) or welfare groups to see if a TNRM program is available in your area.
- If you find kittens outside, check out our guide to decide the best next steps for them: [aspca.org/foundkittens](https://www.aspca.org/helping-people-pets/i-found-kittens-what-do-i-do) (<https://www.aspca.org/helping-people-pets/i-found-kittens-what-do-i-do>).

## **What is Ear-Tipping and Why Is It Important?**

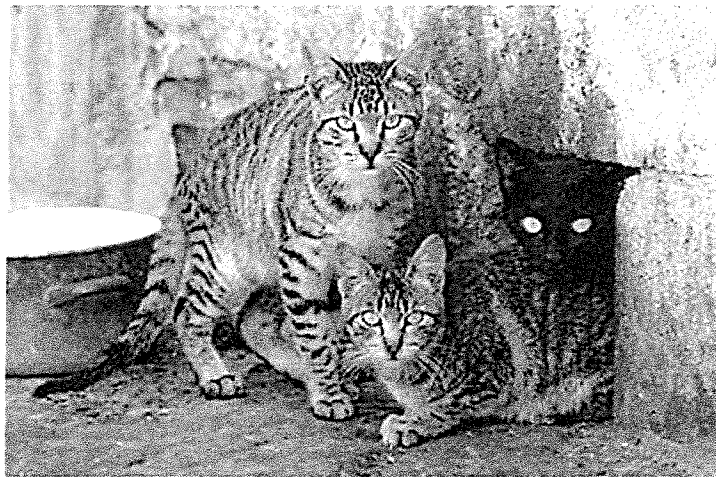
Ear-tipping is a widely accepted means of marking a community cat who has been spayed or neutered. Ear-tipping is the humane, safe surgical removal of the top quarter-inch of the left or right ear. The procedure is performed by a licensed veterinarian, typically during the spay/neuter surgery and rarely requires aftercare. Ear-tipping prevents an already-spayed or neutered cat the stress of re-trapping and an unnecessary surgery.

## **Will Animal Shelters Adopt Out Community Cats?**



Most community cats are not adoptable and shelters are not a hospitable location for a community cat to be held. The fact is, most community cats exhibit wild, shy or frightened behavior, and it's impossible to predict how or if they will ever acclimate to indoor life and the consistent presence of humans. While a community cat might look exactly the same as a pet cat, community cats survive by avoiding close human interaction. When properly cared for, community cats are happier outdoors in their own territory.

Some community cats are actually stray cats who don't exhibit feral behaviors but rather are friendly and enjoy interaction with humans. These cats were likely once owned or have a caretaker who frequently cares for and interacts with them. It is very important to take caution, especially with cats who seem to straddle the fence between a community cat and a stray cat. Even though they might encourage petting or follow you around, they could likely be inadequately prepared for adoption and an indoor life. These cats don't need intervention, other than TNRM, unless they're ill or injured. Talking to local community members about the history of a specific cat or group of cats in the neighborhood may help you discern if the cat is being cared for and how you can best help.



### **Take Action**

Join the ASPCA in the fight against animal cruelty today.

**DONATE**  
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**COMMUNITYCATS&INITIALMS=WB\_RIG\_QUO(**  
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**Other Ways to Help:**

Become a Monthly Member

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[ms=wb\\_rig\\_otherways&initialms=wb\\_rig\\_otherways&PCODE=](https://secure.asPCA.org/donate/join?ms=wb_rig_otherways&initialms=wb_rig_otherways&PCODE=)

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Join the Advocacy Brigade

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[involved/advocacy-center\)](https://www.asPCA.org/get-involved/advocacy-center)

Volunteer or Foster

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[cats&t=Adopt%20Close%20Cat%20Art&\\_nc\\_cat=101">cats&t=Adopt%20Close%20Cat%20Art&\\_nc\\_cat=101](https://www.gallopang.com/helping-people-people-pets/shelter-intake-and-surrender/closer-look-community-cats&t=Adopt%20Close%20Cat%20Art&_nc_cat=101)

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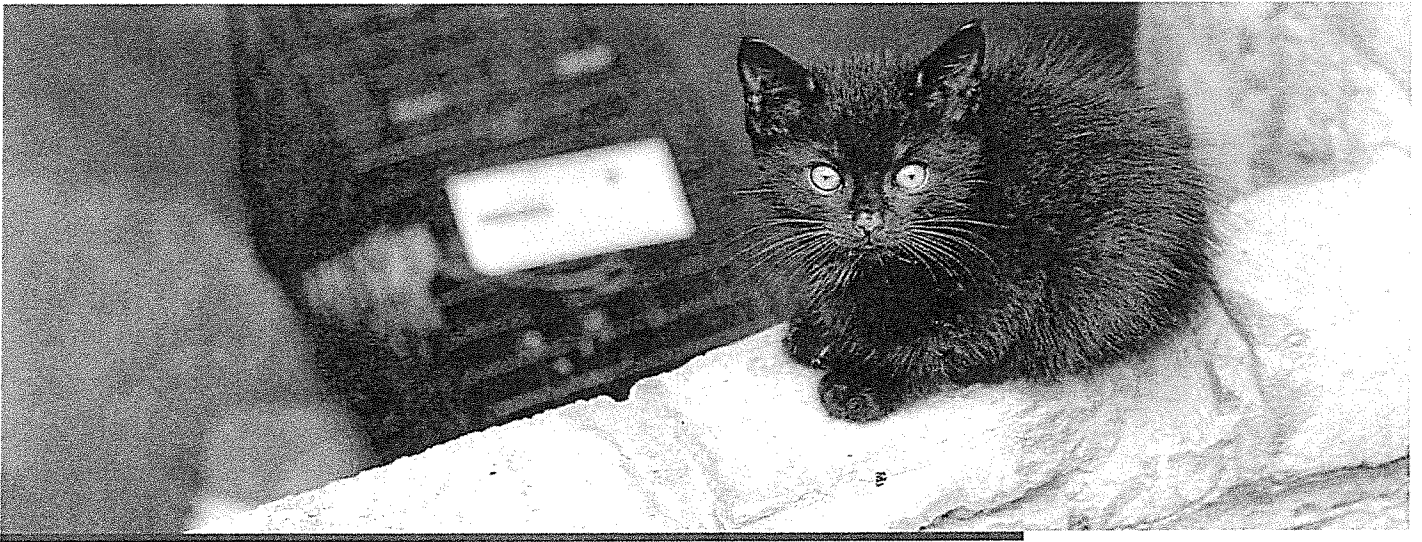


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## Just the Facts: The Vacuum Effect

| [Trap-Neuter-Return](#)

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NEW! This publication is now available in [Spanish](#) and [French](#).

### **Removing cats from an area creates a vacuum.**

The **Vacuum Effect** has been documented worldwide in many places. How can we help you with cats? The traditional approach has been to catch and kill community cats. While this may temporarily reduce the number of community cats in a given area, it is ultimately counterproductive.



the population of cats rebounds. Due to the Vacuum Effect, untrapped cats continue to breed, and other cats move into the newly available territory.



## THE VACUUM EFFECT



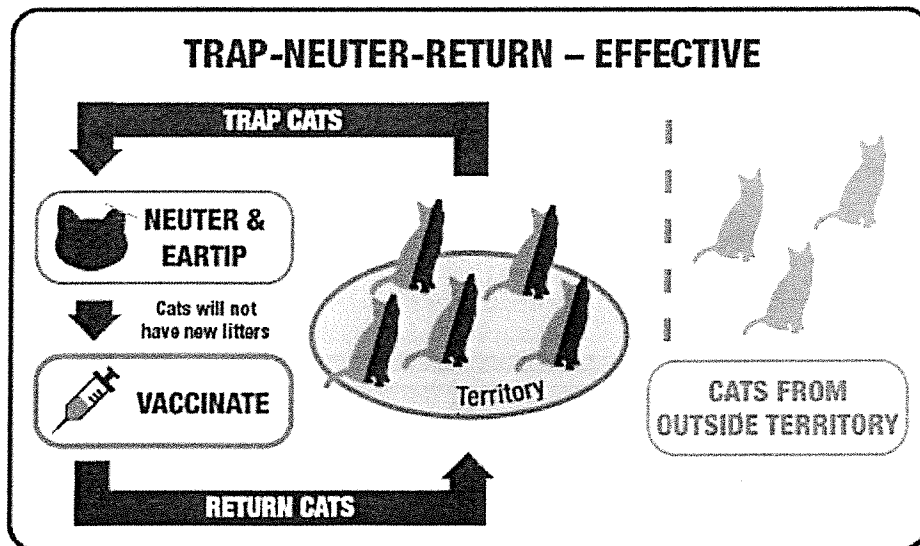
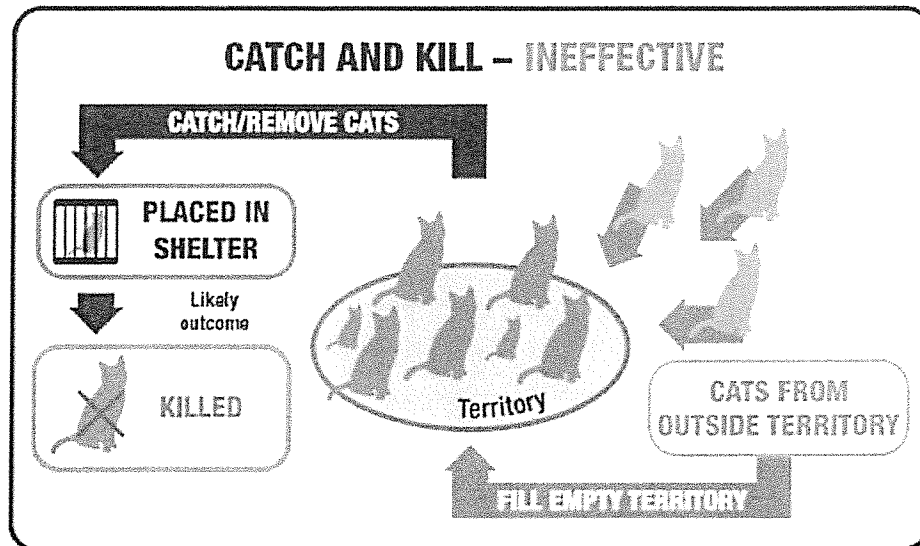
Intact cat  
living inside  
the territory



Intact cat  
from outside  
the territory



Neutered  
cat living in  
the territory



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Community cats are unowned cats who live outdoors.

Community cats, also called feral or outdoor cats, are not a new phenomenon. They reside in an outdoor location where they have access to food and shelter. Even though community cats are the same species as house cats (*Felis catus*), they have not been socialized to people and are therefore unadoptable. Community cats can lead full, healthy lives in their outdoor homes.

## **Time and again, communities find catch and kill doesn't work it needs to stop.**

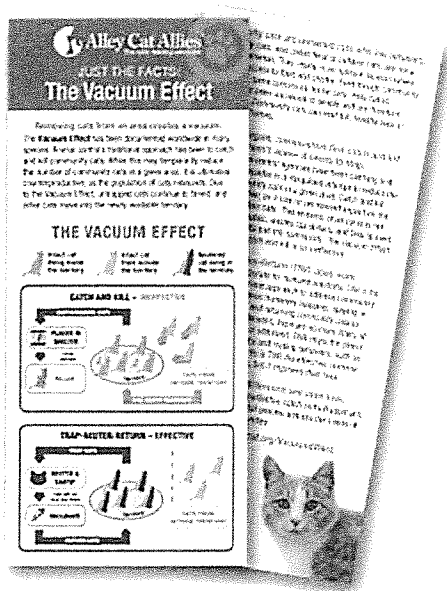
Municipal animal control agencies have been catching and killing cats for decades in a misguided attempt to reduce the number of community cats in a given area. Catch and kill is counterproductive, as it has no permanent impact on the population of outdoor cats. This endless, cruel cycle is not supported by the public, wastes tax dollars, and fails to meet the needs of the cats and the community. The Vacuum Effect is just one reason catch and kill is so ineffective.

## **Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) *does* work.**

Communities are desperate for humane solutions. TNR is the only effective and humane approach to address community cat populations. It involves humanely trapping, spaying or neutering, vaccinating, and returning community cats to their outdoor homes. Afterward, there are no more litters of kittens the population is stabilized. TNR stops the stress associated with pregnancy and mating behaviors, such as yowling or fighting. Not only is TNR the effective, humane approach for outdoor cats, but it improves their lives.

## **You can make a difference and save lives.**

Together, we can fight the ineffective catch and kill approach, support TNR, and ensure local policies address the needs of outdoor cats and our communities.



## JUST THE FACTS: The Vacuum Effect

\$5.00

1

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Kelly Strecker



Subject:

City Mayor  
Tuesday, August 1, 2023 2:31 PM  
Kelly Strecker  
FW: Stray cats

Dave Waggoner  
Mayor  
City of Laurel, Montana  
(406) 628-8456 extension 5501

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**From:** BOB <johnstonbj4c@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 1, 2023 9:28 AM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Stray cats

Please help out Savage cat, to trap and fix strays. I live on Mullberry ave.in Laurel. There are a lot of strays down here.  
Thanks

Bob Johnston 708 Mullberry

Kelly Strecker



City Mayor  
Tuesday, August 1, 2023 3:50 PM  
Kelly Strecker  
FW: Savage cat rescue

Dave Waggoner

Mayor  
City of Laurel, Montana  
(406) 628-8456 extension 5501

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**From:** Nikki Dell <nikkidell66@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 1, 2023 3:49 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Savage cat rescue

516 3rd Ave. Laurel Mt 59044  
Thank you

On Tue, Aug 1, 2023 at 3:45 PM City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov> wrote:

I need your address for the record please



Dave Waggoner

Mayor

City of Laurel, Montana

(406) 628-8456 extension 5501

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**From:** Nikki Dell <nikkidell66@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2023 11:57 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Savage cat rescue

Good evening City council,

My Name is Nicole Dell and I've been a resident of Laurel from the day I was born! I'm writing this in hopes you will hear out Savage Cats request for financial help. I've been blessed to have met Lori before and she's truly been an inspiration to me.

Her tiny rescue has already taken on so very many of laurels finest cats.... Some she's been fortunate enough to reunite with their owners (yay!), many kittens, and some cats in absolutely horrible condition.

We as residents of Laurel are very limited as to options when it comes to stray cats as I'm sure you are well aware of. And Laurel really needs the help of such a rescue as Lori's. I don't believe these cats should be left to suffer and without Lori I'm sad to think of what their fates might be.

As a fellow resident I say once more PLEASE support Savage Cat Rescue Laurel needs this!

**From:** [City Mayor](#)  
**To:** [Brittney Moorman](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Feral cats  
**Date:** Thursday, July 13, 2023 10:31:44 AM

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Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone  
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**From:** Douglas Powell <powelldouglasj@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 13, 2023 10:23:06 AM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Feral cats

Hello Mr Wagner

My name is Douglas Powell. I am a resident of Laurel MT. I live in the trailer park off of Yard Office Rd. My address is 2315 E. Maryland Ln.

I am writing to you to ask for your help in resolving a problem. About 2 months ago I called the Laurel animal control about a feral cat problem. There were about 10 cats in my yard. The officer I spoke to told me that there is NO ordinance for cats and referred me to Lorie Howard. She does cat rescue. She came and helped me.

Your Chief of Police, Stan Langve, has stated "Laurel doesn't have a feral cat problem". That simply is not true. There are ALOT of stray cats where I live. We tax payers in Laurel need an ordinance for cats like we have for dogs. It takes funding. Lorie Howard, who lives in Billings has been working on our cat issues and has dealt with about 200 cats in the past 18 months without any financial help from the City of Laurel. She simply can't keep doing it for free. How does one go about getting an ordinance and funding for this issue?

Please call me at 406-281-3717 at your earliest convenience sir. Thank you in advance for your time and help resolve this issue. Douglas Powell.

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

**From:** [City Mayor](#)  
**To:** [Brittney Moorman](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Savage Cat Rescue  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 12, 2023 9:22:38 AM

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Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone  
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**From:** Emineth Barb <basecme@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 9, 2023 1:38:41 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Savage Cat Rescue

Laurel absolutely has a Ferrell cat problem and this organization needs the support of our city as well as individuals. Jodi Mackay should be letting me know when I can come to council and speak on this important issue! Respectfully, Barb Emineth

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

**From:** [City Mayor](#)  
**To:** [Brittney Moorman](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Stray Cats in Laurel  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 12, 2023 9:22:23 AM

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**From:** Kelsie Robbie <kelsie.robby@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 10, 2023 12:03:48 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Stray Cats in Laurel

Dear Mayor Waggoner,

I am writing you to address the stray cat problem in our neighborhood. We live on Durland Ave and take pride in keeping a nice curb appeal to our home. We understand that the South Side is an older neighborhood and not everyone will take pride in their homes but us and several other families on our block work really hard to make it a nice place. With that being said the alley cats are getting out of control. We have lived in our home for 5 years and they have always been a problem but it is getting worse. We have nice patio furniture that is constantly peed/pooped on by these cats. We have invested in patio furniture covers but that will pee/poop on those too. We have been woken up many nights due to cat fights on our patio. We have a privacy fence and have tried many "cat repellent" options but nothing is working. I called the city and they referred me to Savage Cat rescue but she will no longer take them. We were also told to live trap them and dispose of them humanely but we wouldn't be asked to do that if it were a stray dog.

We work so hard to keep our little home nice and a clean, fun backyard for our daughter. We just want a solution for this problem.

Thank you,  
Kelsie Robbie

**From:** [City Mayor](#)  
**To:** [Brittney Moorman](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Stray cats  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 12, 2023 9:22:52 AM

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**From:** Jenna Jacoutot <jennajacoutot20@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 8, 2023 9:16:13 AM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Stray cats

Hello, good morning.

I was just wondering what services are available in regards to stray and abandoned cats in the Laurel area?

We see so many just running around. So many breeding and giving birth to kittens. Do we just let them reproduce to the extent that they get sick? A number of years ago there was a culling of cats because they all had distemper and no owners. For public health cats were rounded up and euthanised I do believe. It would be a shame to have it come back to that because of our lack of support.

Thank you for your time,  
- Laurel resident Jenna



**From:** [City Mayor](#)  
**To:** [Brittney Moorman](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd:  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 12, 2023 9:21:43 AM

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**From:** Jan Patenaude <janjanpat@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 11, 2023 1:01:17 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:**

I sincerely hope you will agree to help Lorie Savage (Savage Cat Rescue). She is a Godsend for stray cats.

We live east of Laurel and discovered that we had a mother cat and two kittens under our mobile home in Oct 21. She is the only person that responded to my request for help. She humanely trapped them and took them home to be vaccinated and adopted. We have 3 totally indoors cats. It breaks my heart to see all of the strays in Laurel. Lorie is doing a wonderful job attacking the problem of wild strays, getting them neutered and vaccinated as well as feeding them til they are adopted.

We need to have her work here continue.

Thank you

**From:** [City Mayor](#)  
**To:** [Brittney Moorman](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: CATS!!!  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 12, 2023 9:23:11 AM

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**From:** snowjmpr@aol.com <snowjmpr@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 6, 2023 8:07:51 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** CATS!!!

Dear Mayor and City Council:

In February 2022 we noticed considerable cat activity in our neighborhood that we have lived in for 23 years. Several kittens in our yard and at one time, 2 cats mating and 3 were "waiting". Didn't want our dog to injure, or, be injured by a protective momma cat so I bought a humane cat trap from Amazon and when it arrived I just stared at it because I had no clue what I was doing. As good fortune would have it, someone told me about a new cat rescue in the Laurel area called Savage Cat Rescue and I wasted no time contacting them! Lorie educated me as we set her traps in a known cat rendezvous area. It was cold, very cold. After about 2 hours I checked the trap and we had a big Tom cat in it! Battle scarred, dehydrated, hungry! Over the course of 3 weeks we captured four more cats! Feral.

Female cats can start breeding at the age of 4 months and can become pregnant just a few days after giving birth to a litter. The population can explode exponentially if not controlled.

Lori took care of the feral cat population in this neighborhood humanely. Each cat was vetted, immunized, chipped, and ear tipped(visually indicating spayed or neutered), and adopted out if it could be a house cat or adopted out as a barn cat so it could work for its shelter, water, and food. She is not only working to control the cat population, but also to decrease the spread of feline disease.

I would greatly encourage the city council to support her request for \$3,500 per year from the city of Laurel to continue to reduce the feral cat population and therefore reduce the risks associated with them. Her successful work in the past year and a half speaks for itself.

Betsy Snow  
Laurel resident

Sent from AOL on Android

**From:** [City Mayor](#)  
**To:** [Brittney Moorman](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: In Support of Savage Cat Rescue Inc.  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 12, 2023 9:22:03 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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**From:** Heather Holley <heather@bmslawmt.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 10, 2023 4:47:57 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** In Support of Savage Cat Rescue Inc.

Good afternoon Mr. Mayor,

My name is Heather Holley. I am a legal assistant for a firm in Billings Montana. I have lived in Laurel since January 2012 with my husband, four kids and our pets. I have lived most of my life in Montana. We love living in Laurel. Love the people, love the small-town feel, the convenience of having schools within walking distance and the great people. I am very much an animal lover of all sorts, as I think you may be too, especially with your most recent post regarding the orphaned fawns. I enjoy the fact that you engage with everyone, seem open and honest with the community. The community of Laurel is of your best interest, and I appreciate that. I will be unable to attend then next city council meeting, but I would like to have my voice heard regarding something I find incredibly important.

When I moved to Laurel, up until roughly 8 months ago, we had cats fighting in our alley and yard literally every single day and night. I would be woken up every night and have to go out and break up the giant gangs of unfixed male cats so that I could get some rest. We had cat poop in our yards. There were often deceased cats along the sides of main street leaving town etc. I love kitties and so many of them suffer due to the fact that we as humans have let them down. Since Lorie has come to the rescue it has been a complete 180! I haven't heard a single cat fight in probably 8 months! I have noticed less young cats running the street. Lorie has been a god send! She has finally made a decent enough dent in the stray/feral cat community that we are noticing a difference. Cats like many other animals breed incredibly quick and unfortunately if we lose Lorie we will be right back to where we were in no time.

I ask that you please take into consideration what she is asking, we are asking for. Lorie is asking the city to only contribute one third of the cost of taking in, vetting and adopting or returning to owner. That doesn't even cover any extra costs. She has requested \$3,500 from the city of Laurel to cover an estimated 120 cats for this year. I honestly wouldn't be surprised if she ends up assisting more. It is surprising to me that we do not have resources provided at all from the city regarding this matter. Especially since most towns (even

towns smaller than Laurel) have something in place regarding stray animals. Many others and I in and outside of the community help her as much as we can but she really needs assistance from the city. The Laurel Police Department refer any and all calls regarding cats directly to her without consent or assistance. She has graciously given her time and resources to help us out. She has finally put her foot down and will no longer help Laurel if she is not supported by the city, and rightfully so.

Once she leaves, the cat population will begin to rise again. Large cat colonies can suffer from pretty nasty diseases which can easily spread, including to cats that have loving and caring homes. What Lorie is doing is positive for the community and I would love to see her be supported. We need her!!!! I feel as though \$3,500.00 for a whole year is a drop in the bucket.

Please take my support into consideration. I know there are MANY others who feel the same and I sincerely hope they reach out to you or attend the meeting.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

*Heather Holley*

Legal Assistant

Billstein, Monson & Small PLLC

1555 Campus Way, Suite 201

Billings, MT 59102

(406) 656-6551

[heather@bmslawmt.com](mailto:heather@bmslawmt.com)

