

## **RESOLUTION NO.**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin adopted Resolution No. 20141120-088 in 2014 ("2014 Resolution") to address human interactions with coyotes; and

**WHEREAS**, in November 2014, due to serious concerns for the protection of public safety, the City of Austin Parks Department Director, the Chief of Animal Services Officer, the Austin Police Department Chief, the Travis County Commissioners, Texas Agrilife, and citizens of Austin, the City Council decided that trapping and lethal methods could be used to address threats to public safety in the event of documented incidents and attacks as defined in the Response Guide; and

**WHEREAS**, aggressive coyote activity has decreased in the City of Austin and Travis County since 2005 when the Texas Wildlife Services program was started, and conversely in the Denver, Colorado, Metro Area, attacks on humans have increased significantly since that region's no-kill policy (lethal removal only for a provoked human attack) was initiated. Furthermore, in Seal Beach, Huntington Beach, and Laguna Beach, California, with no-kill policies in place, coyote attacks on humans and pets have increased significantly, causing these California municipalities to adopt in 2015 coyote management plans that allow lethal removal when coyotes are aggressive, attack and injure attended pets, or attack humans; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin is currently a party to an Animal Services Interlocal Agreement with Travis County under which the City provides general animal services in the County outside of the City's corporate limits and the City receives wildlife management services, including coyote management, from the

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Texas Cooperative Extension Texas Wildlife Services (TWS) through Travis County's agreement with TWS; and

**WHEREAS**, the TWS coyote management program emphasizes educating residents on hazing and coyote deterrents, and uses humane lethal removal as the last resort when public safety is at stake. This program is cost-effective and has been operating successfully in the City of Austin and Travis County since 2005 without incidents of pets or children getting caught in the traps set by TWS; and

**WHEREAS**, Travis County, a City of Austin partner with the Animal Services Interlocal Agreement, supports the TWS coyote management program; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a need to clarify the process further in order for the City to be compliant with the terms of that Interlocal Agreement; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN;**

The City Manager is directed to initiate code amendments, to be presented to the City Council no later than April 28, 2016, that:

A. Would allow the Texas Wildlife Services wildlife biologist, when performing its duties, including coyote management as per the Travis County's Interlocal agreement to be considered to be a City employee acting within his or her duties of the City of Austin with respect to City Code section 3-2-4.

B. Would create an exception under City Code section 9-6-7 to allow the Texas Wildlife Services wildlife biologist, when performing his or her duties including coyote management as per Travis County's Interlocal Agreement, to discharge a firearm within the City of Austin's City limits.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is further directed to forward all 311 calls reporting coyote and human interactions directly to the Texas Wildlife Services (TWS) wildlife biologist, including all event classifications of the 2014 Resolution (Observation, Sighting, Sighting-Encounter, Encounter, and Incident). Any calls relating to coyotes to the City's 311 shall be classified under "Coyote Complaints" separate from other wildlife calls.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is further directed to allow TWS to investigate and evaluate all 311 coyote calls within the city limits of the City of Austin, and educate and advise citizens and City staff.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is further directed to ensure that the coyote management education provided by the City is compliant with the November 2014 Resolution, and include the definitions of incidents ("Coyote aggressive, lunging, nipping without contact"; "Coyote entering yard and injuring or killing pet"; "Coyote biting or injuring pet on leash") and attacks ("Coyote biting or injuring person without provocation") as adopted by Council. The City's coyote web page, education materials, and verbal advice/instructions to citizens, shall include instruction that citizens shall call 311 to report all coyote event classifications (from sightings to attacks) for tracking purposes.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is further directed to define that a coyote, or group of coyotes, are a public safety threat when a documented incident or attack has

occurred. Evidence that identifies a specific coyote, or group of coyotes, that are a threat to public safety shall not necessitate photographs or videos of the coyote, and may include samples or observations of tracks, hair, tooth marks, and prey remains. If a coyote, or group of coyotes, are determined to be a public safety threat, coyote removal (lethal response) shall not be delayed while hazing or other non-lethal methods are implemented.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is further directed to recognize that TWS can exercise all of its authority on private property, with permission solely from the landowner.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is further directed to obtain approval from the City Council before canceling, or making changes, to the City participation in the Coyote Management Contract, that is part of the Interlocal Agreement with Travis County.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager's periodic six-month progress report on coyote management efforts to the Health and Human Services Committee shall include:

- A. The cost of wildlife management services through Travis County's contract with TWS.
- B. The cost of coyote management by Animal Services, including coyote removal, education, hazing, marketing, personnel, and any other costs.
- C. The number of 311 coyote calls, itemizing the number of observations, sightings, encounters, incidents, and attacks; and the number of pets killed at night and during the day, itemized.

D. A quantifiable method to accurately measure coyote activity and threat levels. This method shall be based on scientific peer-reviewed papers on wildlife management.

**ADOPTED:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2016

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

Jannette S. Goodall  
City Clerk

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