AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE IV
OF THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ARTICLE IV OF THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE AND TO REPEAL ALL OTHER ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH.

BE IT ORDAINED by the Effingham County Board of Commissioners in regular meeting assembled and pursuant to lawful authority thereof:

A new section 10-117. – Trap-Neuter Return is inserted as follows:

(1) **Intent and purpose.** The intent of the Effingham County Board of Commissioners in enacting this article is to regulate a process for trapping, sterilizing, vaccinating for rabies, ear tipping, and returning cats to their original location as an effective and humane way to manage the population of cats with Effingham County. A process known as Trap-Neuter-Return is the preferred approach for managing the cat population. This procedure shall be the prioritized disposition for any impounded community cats while funding is abundant.

(2) **Definitions.** For the purposes of this Section, the following terms shall be defined as such:

(a) “Community Cat” shall mean a free-roaming cat that may be cared for by one or more residents of the immediate area who is/are known or unknown; a community cat may or may not be feral.

(b) “Community Cat Caregiver” shall mean a person who, in accordance with and pursuant to a policy of Trap-Neuter-Return, provides care, including food, shelter or
medical care to a community cat, while not being considered the owner, harbored, controller or keeper of a community cat.

(c) "Ear tipping" shall mean the removal of the distal one-quarter of a community cat's left ear, which is approximately 3/8 inch, or 1 cm, in an adult and proportionally smaller in kitten. This procedure is performed under sterile conditions while the cat is under anesthesia, in compliance with any applicable federal or state law, and under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian. Ear tips are designed to identify a community cat as being sterilized and lawfully vaccinated for rabies.

(d) "Trap-Neuter-Return" shall mean the process of humanely trapping, sterilizing, vaccinating for rabies, ear tipping, and returning community cats to their original location.

(3) Permitted Acts. The following actions shall be permitted in Effingham County as part of Trap-Neuter-Return:

(a) Trapping for the sole purpose of sterilizing, vaccinating for rabies and ear tipping community cats, in compliance with any applicable federal or state law, and under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian, where applicable.

(b) An ear tipped cat received by local shelters will be returned to the location where trapped unless veterinary care is required. A trapped ear tipped cat will be released off site unless veterinary care is required.

(c) Community cat caregivers are empowered to reclaim impounded community cats without proof of ownership solely for the purpose of carrying out Trap-Neuter-Return and/or returning ear tipped community cats to their original locations.
(d) A person who returns a community cat to its original location while conducting Trap-Neuter-Return is not deemed to have abandoned the cat.

(e) Trap-Neuter-Return shall be the preferred disposition for impounded community cats. Animal Control and the Local Shelter are authorized and encouraged to conduct Trap-Neuter-Return or to direct impounded community cats to a Trap-Neuter-Return program.

This ordinance shall be in force and effect from and after the date of its passage.

All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

This 21st day of May, 2019.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS,

EFFINGHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA

BY: ________________________________

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST: ________________________________

STEPHANIE JOHNSON
EFFINGHAM COUNTY CLERK

FIRST READING 05/07/2019
SECOND READING 05/21/2019