

From: Christina Flores
Sent: Friday, December 11, 2020 8:03 AM
To: Karen Phillips; Bryan Pankhurst
Cc: Daisy Ruiz
Subject: FW: Agenda Item 10a /Dogs,Cats,Rabbits
Attachments: [P.S.L. Pet Ban Doc.pdf](#)

Good morning,

Can you please add this email to the agenda item?

Christina Flores

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From: cburley@cfl.rr.com <cburley@cfl.rr.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 10, 2020 8:56 PM
To: Daisy Ruiz <DRuiz@cityofpsl.com>; Greg Oravec <Mayor@cityofpsl.com>
Cc: Shannon Martin <Shannon.Martin@cityofpsl.com>; Christina Flores <CFlores@cityofpsl.com>;
Stephanie Morgan <Stephanie.Morgan@cityofpsl.com>; David Pickett <David.Pickett@cityofpsl.com>;
Jolien Caraballo <Jolien.Caraballo@cityofpsl.com>
Subject: Agenda Item 10a /Dogs,Cats,Rabbits

Greetings Council Members,

I am not a rescuer, or an animal activist, or a politically motivated individual. I am a homeowner, taxpayer, working individual, who happened to adopt a rabbit from a shelter. Three years later I was maxxed out at three rabbits. One adopted from my own area, one adopted from the Treasure Coast Humane Society, and one I brought home from a vacation in the Florida Keys. (She originated from their Pet Supermarket before ending up at the shelter).

I am now a 5 year Rabbit Mom veteran and I have followed the FB Pages of the rescues and shelters that assisted me and provided education. It is from the pages of these animal angels that I have learned *why* it is so important to prevent animals from being sold as "pets" while being treated as "merchandise" up to the point of sale.

It was the adoption of my third rabbit in the Florida Keys that brought to me the understanding that people.....regular people....COULD do something that would have a positive impact for the animals, for the community, for the rescues, for Animal Control, and for the wallets of the nameless multitudes who donate on behalf of the unprotected animals. I discovered that the City of Key West had enacted an ordinance which stopped their local Pet Supermarket from selling any small animals (which

subsequently were turned in to the shelter and completely out-paced the adopter pool). When I discovered that their Pet Supermarket then hosted adoption events, I had the answer for my local City Council and our own Pet Supermarket. (There was no fight, no outcry, and now fewer people trying to "re-home" their unwanted rabbit).

It is disheartening that the rabbit community has not done more to get rabbits included on the Pet Sale Bans already in place, let alone new ones. The problem is that the people devoted to rescue are completely immersed. They barely have time to keep a social media page. The people who volunteer generally have jobs, families,and rabbits. They do not have the considerable time allowance to piece together the education that would get their local legislators to act. And.....most people aren't fond of public speaking. It is why I am contacting you. It is THAT important for **someone** to speak up.

What you are considering is **needed** (desperately). You are shining a light on a dirty secret from which the general public is just about completely ignorant. Until I became a multiple rabbit mom, I had NO idea how the pet trade functioned or that people raised their animals in such inhumane conditions. You are in a position to be leaders in a movement that **will** gain momentum once the few have the courage to take the first steps.

I am attaching a PDF of clippings from various FB Posts from the Rescues I loosely monitor. These are just a highlight of the last month or so. They represent the currently endless cycle I have observed for the last 5 years. I hope it helps you all to unanimously vote for change.

Thank you,

Gwen Burley
155 Diane Circle
Indialantic, Fl. 32903
321-288-6228



Gainesville Rabbit Rescue

November 16 at 3:38 PM ·

Our smallest rescue and her mom. Thanks to Franny Buffa of **Jacksonville Animal Care and Control** for all the grooming and care till we got them.



<~ Urine soaked rabbit. Generally from breeding or hoarding situations where rabbits are in stacked small cages. It is not recommended to bathe rabbits so this one had to be shaved.

Gainesville Rabbit Rescue

November 16 at 1:32 PM ·

We rescue rabbits sometimes from the most horrendous situations and for that reason we are extra happy when one of those rabbits finds a great home. Yesterday we received in some photos of our former rescue girl Little Bo Peep and her boy and a note that it took a long time but they are finally bonded.

Little Bo Peep came into rescue from an **extreme hoarding situation** where she lived in a hot garage, received very little food or care and was shut away for we are not sure how long. She was covered in urine and had ear mites so bad that at first it was thought she was a lop. It took lots of people to rescue her and drive her to us here in Gainesville, but as many cruel people there are, there are many more good people who take the time and energy to save rabbit lives. We know that this beautiful girl will never have to live like she previously did and so Sheila and her family thank you for taking her knowing it would be a challenge to bond them, but looking past that and knowing how very special she is. So once again from all of us here at Gainesville Rabbit Rescue but especially Little Bo Peep, thank you for caring and adopting t

[Gainesville Rabbit Rescue](#)

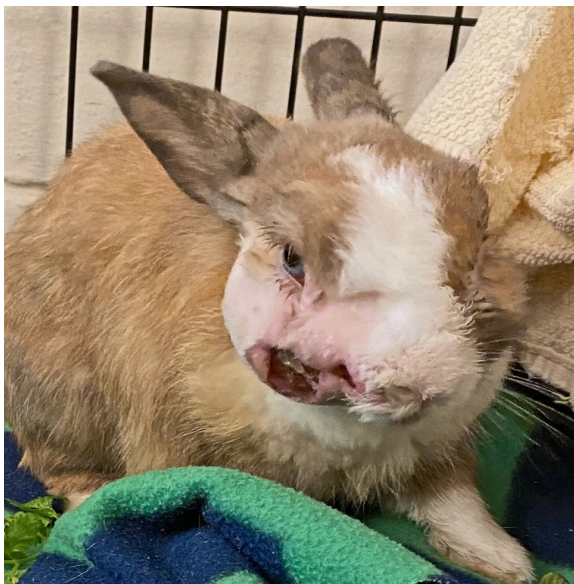
[October 29 at 1:51 PM](#) ·

If you are near the [Humane Society of the Treasure Coast](#), go on over and adopt this adorable piggie pair.

Orlando Rabbit Care and Adoptions

[November 24 at 9:30 AM](#) · [Orlando, FL](#) ·

We wish we had some cuter pictures to start this post off with but [sadly this is the grim reality for quite a few of the rabbits that are surrendered](#) to our care. Mr. Burns came to us with multiple facial abscesses from infected bite wounds that a guinea pig had inflicted on him. His previous owners had tried to house him with a guinea pig and obviously things did not go well.



<~ There is more to the post and another large abscess on this rabbit's opposite hind quarter.

Rabbits need an "Exotic" Veterinarian. The cost for this is "extra". Most people who purchase a rabbit have NO idea that: A) The rabbit will NEED to be spayed or neutered in order to be a good pet and B) will require a specialized Veterinarian costing more money.

[East Coast Rabbit Rescue](#)

[November 15 at 5:19 PM](#) ·

[We rescued 16 dumped bunnies in the last 10 days...](#) yes you did read it right... 16 dumped bunnies 🥺



[This is a result of breeders or pet stores selling not spayed/neutered rabbits.](#) It must end. If bunnies were neutered or spayed before their sale it would greatly increase the cost of the bunny and people would not impulsively buy them. It would also decrease the proliferation of unwanted babies.

[Please write your representatives to demand change.](#) This needs to stop!

Rescues can only do so much 🥺💔

Here are some of them ...



East Coast Rabbit Rescue

October 30 at 10:41 PM ·

It is beyond our comprehension what people are doing to animals nowadays. We received a call from a person saying that he had **found a bunny inside of his condominium dumpster**. This poor bunny had her entire genital area burned from urine scalding. She was so lucky that she was rescued today. Tomorrow would have been too late as the garbage truck normally collects the trash around 6AM.

We shutter to think what would have happened to this poor creature if the truck came before she was pulled from the container. She would have been crushed when the trash was compacted and would have suffered horribly.

We have no sympathy nor compassion for the heartless person(s) who literally trashed this sweet little girl. We can only hope that this evil person never owns another animal again.

We are now caring for this poor creature and will treat her wounds gently. We will give her the comfort and love she deserves as one of God's most helpless little creatures.

East Coast Rabbit Rescue

November 2 at 3:30 PM ·

We are happy to report that Fluffy found his furever home. ❤️🥰

This cute and **sweet boy was dumped at the park inside of a plastic tent**. On the top of the little tent there was a sign saying:

“ Hi my name is Fluffy ❤️

I need a home, please take me with you. Thank you ❤️“

East Coast Rabbit Rescue

November 7 at 5:35 PM ·

Miss Skyler found her forever home. This tiny and sweet girl was left inside a birdcage on the side of the road when she was only 5-6 weeks old. Her new family fell in love with her. They said that Miss Skyler would come back soon for a friend

East Coast Rabbit Rescue

November 8 at 11:00 AM ·

Do you remember the poor rabbit that was purchased when he was about 2 months old for the family's daughter's 7th birthday?

Also remember that he was kept in the garage inside of a filthy and small cage? And remember that he was being held by his ears and by the scruff of his neck? And incredibly enough, recall that this family was complaining that this abused rabbit was biting them?

East Coast Rabbit Rescue

November 9 at 8:18 PM ·

Today is another day dealing with the abuse that a crappy human being perpetuated on perhaps the most defenseless creatures on the planet. Sorry to be so blunt, but the cruelty exhibited by some low life people seemingly has no bounds.

We got a call today from a sister rescue in Ft. Lauderdale that received a number of bunnies crammed together in a small rusty cage. The filthy cage was thrown in a dumpster just before a tropical storm was projected to arrive in the area.

Inside the cage were 2 adult bunnies and 9 baby bunnies, 6 of which were trampled to death. The other rescue has 70 bunnies on hand and they also rescue other animals. They are maxed out on space and needed help.

They reached out to us and although we are also at capacity, we could not turn them down. We will take the survivors and care for them in the same compassionate way we treat all of our bunnies. How many other bunnys are trashed in similar ways and are not lucky enough to be rescued? The practice of breeders or pet stores selling not spayed/neutered rabbits must end. If bunnies were neutered or spayed before their sale it would greatly increase the cost of the bunny, decreasing the likelihood that the rabbit would be used for snake bait or in primitive religious practices (not an uncommon practice here in south Florida). It would also help stop the proliferation of unwanted babies.

Kat Finelli

November 19 at 4:42 PM ·

Autumn getting her laser treatment for her injured back. Found up in Jacksonville loose and taken by that good samaritan to Riverside Animal Hospital and then transferred to us so we could take her to Hilltop Animal Hospital for her laser treatments.

Not only is she a cutie, but she is sweet, loving and she us not letting her injury stop her.



Gainesville Rabbit Rescue

November 14 at 4:43 PM ·

Bunny of the day is Independence. He is a Californian Mix born around September of 2018.

Independence was a confiscation by Jacksonville Animal Control along with **10 other rabbits**. He is a sweet boy who will do well in almost any situation.



Gainesville Rabibt Rescue

November 8 ·

About two weeks ago this beautiful little girl was rescued by Jacksonville Animal Control from wandering the street. Luckily for her she went to a wonderful temporary foster home where she received some much needed grooming, food, vet care and love. We received word the other day that nesting began and this morning two babies were born with sadly one perishing. The one survivor is doing well and we will be taking mom and baby next week to the rescue.

Please, do not release your rabbits to fend for themselves especially if you know or think they are pregnant. We are very thankful for all the care she has received now and that baby will never know what mom went through.

Orlando Rabbit Care & Adoptions

December 3 at 1:44 PM ·

COURTESY POSTING – this rabbit is not in the care of Orlando Rabbit Care and Adoptions This is a little rabbit who needs a lot of love! Previously, she had been known as Clover – as her fortunes have now improved she has been re-named 4-Leaf Clover. Before coming into rescue 4-Leaf Clover had been passed around to multiple homes. At her last home she was kept in a young child's room and there were aggressive dogs in the house. She has been through a lot in her little life, and will need a family that will be patient with her and give her time to adjust. She is a small bunny, about 3 pounds, and is estimated to be about a year old. She is now fixed and is looking for a quiet, loving forever home.

[Orlando Rabbit Care & Adoptions](#)

[December 2 at 5:12 PM](#) ·

Meet our Bunny of the Day Greywolf!

It's hard to believe that this handsome and agreeable fellow was not wanted by his original family – but, sadly, that was the case. He was dumped in a neighborhood in Kissimmee. A family saw a car drive into their cul-de-sac, place a rabbit and a bowl of food on the ground, and then drive off.

Fortunately, they were able to catch the rabbit shortly thereafter and contacted ORCA. Because of his striking good looks the bun received the name Greywolf! Greywolf has now been fixed, is perfecting his litter box habits, and is in foster care awaiting his forever home. He is a medium-sized bunny and we are estimating him to be about a year old.

[Orlando Rabbit Care & Adoptions](#)

[November 17 at 11:52 AM](#) ·

Meet our Bunny of the Day Rocky!

To look at Rocky today, you would never know what a difficult ordeal he had to go through. Rocky first came into rescue in September, when a kind person who had seen him running loose in her neighborhood for a couple of months was finally able to capture him. He seemed to have lost the use of his hind legs, and could only drag himself along on his front legs, making it easy to catch up with him and pick him up. The poor bun had a puncture wound that was oozing pus, was unable to stand up, and his hind area was soaked with urine. His rescuer made several phone calls to locate a vet who could see him immediately. Rocky was found to have bot fly (a parasite that can burrow into a wound or under the skin), severe urine scald and fleas, and required surgery to remove the larva and dead skin resulting from the bot fly.

After the surgery Rocky's rescuer took him home and nursed him back to health, with meds and some gentle bunny PT to help him feel better and build up his strength. Rocky required several more medical followups and at first was fed Critical Care and water by syringe, but even in his weakened state he loved his veggies and would eat those on his own. Rocky made great strides, and eventually regained full use of his hind legs! His great determination to overcome all obstacles and fight through this unfortunate situation earned him the name of Rocky. He now has no remaining side effects from any of his injuries, is fixed, and is completing his litter box training.

[Florida Keys SPCA](#)

[Yesterday at 4:04 PM](#) ·

Meet our Twenty-Three Syrian Hamsters available for adoption at our Marathon Campus!

NOTE: These hamsters will need TWENTY THREE homes or at least 23 separate cages as they fight when adults.

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=407971766992834&ref=watch_permalink

East Coast Rabbit Rescue

December 2 at 10:25 PM ·

Update on the bunny rescued from a busy avenue in Pompano Beach, FL:

This baby (between 3-4 months old) went to see the eye specialist today. While it is really hard to discern exactly what happened to him, the vet strongly believes that is a fairly new and major trauma.

We are not surprised at that conclusion as he was rescued from a busy avenue. A person who works at a nearby said that he was seen running between cars. So it seems logical to assume that a vehicle did indeed hit him.

Fortunately he has no fractures, but he is far from being OK. He is currently on pain meds, antibiotics and prescriptions for his visibly damaged eye.

We were told by a local businessman that it is normal that bunnies are dumped in this area and that most of them are found dead on the street. He said that this one was the lucky one.

It is truly heartbreaking what people are doing to bunnies. Officially rabbits are considered the third most neglected, abandoned and abused animal in the US. We disagree, and feel that rabbits take the number one spot.

While dogs and cats (mostly dogs) are covered by laws, rabbits have no such protection and records are not kept.

In addition, when we need help from law enforcement, most of the time they will not help us. Their excuse is "...

we don't deal with rabbits...please contact wildlife". And then wildlife officers will not help us as we are dealing with domestic rabbits, not wild ones. Everyone looks the other way.

As such we only have you to help us to educate people about proper rabbit care. If you know someone who wants to obtain a rabbit for their child, please let them know that rabbits are not starter pets. They can be time consuming, require regular feeding and care, and can be expensive to maintain. Vet care may occasionally be needed, and not all veterinarians treat rabbits. Those that do often charge high fees.

Also rabbits are not pets that should be housed outdoors, exposed to the elements, in a hutch, especially hutches with wire bottoms. They are social animals and enjoy indoor comforts just like dogs and cats.

When you go to pet stores please EDUCATE the sales people. We have witnessed several interactions between new rabbit owners and pet store sales people wherein much misinformation was relayed. On a few occasions we were able to educate people concerning the realities of rabbit ownership. But that is rare, as we don't frequent pet stores.

The norm is that people continue to impulsively buy baby rabbits and then trash them like pieces of garbage a few days later. It is a vicious and sadly repetitive cycle.

Please help us educate others so that we can save at least a few of these gentle creatures.

Thank you.

ECRR