Administrator Ward provided a summary of the memorandum he prepared regarding the proposed ordinance, which can be found at the end of these minutes, highlighting that, in order to obtain a license, the cat or dog would have to have a rabies vaccination valid through the 10th month of the last year licensed. He proposed that a rabies vaccination be required for all cats and dogs.

President Gabel asked about the provision in the draft ordinance relating to volunteers under the age of eighteen, specifically, if the underage volunteer would be responsible for initiating the process to undergo a background check upon their eighteenth birthday or if there is a way for the Fire and First Aid Department to monitor this. Mr. Ward stated he will work with the Fire Chief on adding it to the checklist for those members turning eighteen.

Councilwoman Lyden asked who would pay for the background checks, to which Administrator Ward answered that the individual would initially pay for their background check and then be reimbursed by the Township.

Councilman Buie asked if there were any plans to implement drug testing for Township employees. Administrator Ward stated that he believes the Police Department utilizes drug testing for employment and that employees with CDL licenses are subject to drug screening, but he would need to confer with the Joint Insurance Fund (JIF) about other Township employees.

Councilwoman Lyden asked who would pay for the background checks, to which Administrator Ward answered that the individual would initially pay for their background check and then be reimbursed by the Township.

President Gabel asked about the provision in the draft ordinance relating to volunteers under the age of eighteen, specifically, if the underage volunteer would be responsible for initiating the process to undergo a background check upon their eighteenth birthday or if there is a way for the Fire and First Aid Department to monitor this. Mr. Ward stated he will work with the Fire Chief on adding it to the checklist for those members turning eighteen.

Proposed Ordinance - Township Animal Licensing Services - Potential Three-Year Animal Licenses

Administrator Ward provided a summary of the memorandum he prepared regarding the proposed ordinance, which can be found at the end of these minutes, highlighting that, in order to obtain a license, the cat or dog would have to have a rabies vaccination valid through the 10th month of the last year licensed. He
explained that multi-colored licenses would be used so that Animal Control would be able to verify if an animal is licensed or not. He reviewed the fees listed in the memorandum and confirmed that the license fees are non-refundable after January 1st of the licensed year.

Councilman Buie asked if a pass to the Happy Hound Playground could be incorporated into the licensing process.

Councilwoman Witte asked if the three-year cat licensing would be available in June 2019, to which Mr. Ward responded that that was the intention. Ms. Witte stated that she was in favor of the 3-year license being less expensive per year.

Councilwoman Lyden recommended that the late fee remain at $25.00 as it is an incentive for residents to renew their animal licenses in a timely manner.

President Gabel recommended that the current licensing fees remain for 2019, as not everyone will be eligible for three-year licensing the first year, then make the proposed fee increases effective as of 2020. Mr. Gabel also pointed out that residents can obtain a rabies waiver from a veterinarian if there are legitimate circumstances and asked if this would impact whether a three-year license could be obtained. Administrator Ward stated that he will need to consult with Health Officer Carlos Perez about this inquiry. Mayor Andes suggested that those requesting a waiver may not be eligible for the three-year licensing.

Administrator Ward stated he will ask Township Attorney Jansen to draft an ordinance for three-year animal licensing to be introduced in March.

The Council went into Executive Session at 8:00 P.M. upon approval of the following Resolution.

R-18-41: Resolution Authorizing Executive Session to Discuss Collective Bargaining Negotiations

MOTION TO APPROVE R-18-41:
MOVED BY MEMBER BUIE, SECONDED BY MEMBER WITTE
AYES: BUIE, WITTE, BERGEN, LYDEN, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: MURPHY

The Council came out of Executive Session at 8:19 P.M.

MOTION TO ADJOURN
MOVED BY MEMBER WITTE, SECONDED BY MEMBER LYDEN
AYES: UNANIMOUS
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: MURPHY

The Meeting adjourned at 8:19 P.M.

Danielle Lewis
Deputy Municipal Clerk
New Jersey requires the licensing of all dogs (cats are a local option). The primary impetus for the State to require such licensing is to ensure all dogs are properly inoculated against rabies. The State law specifically states, “the owner must present proof that a licensed veterinarian has vaccinated the dog against rabies and that the duration of immunity from the vaccination extends through at least ten months of the [final] licensing [year].” Even now, some animal owners get frustrated when we do not issue licenses due to the fact their animal’s rabies vaccination expires prior to October 1st for dogs and April 1st for cats. As this is a State requirement, we do not have the legal authority to grant exemptions to this requirement.

During the last year, Administration has been examining the possibility of providing an option for both 1-year and 3-year animal licensing. We believe this will be a popular program from local animal owners. However, due to some intricacies in the State law associated with animal licensing, the implementation of a 3-year licensing program will require a considerable amount of explanation and public education as not all animal owners will be automatically eligible for the 3-year licensing option.

As an item on next Tuesday’s Work Session agenda, Administration wanted to provide you with a summary of the forthcoming requested code modifications.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Township Council
FROM: Steven Ward, Township Administrator
DATE: February 8, 2018
RE: 3-Year Animal Licensing Option

As an item on next Tuesday’s Work Session agenda, Administration wanted to provide you with a summary of the forthcoming requested code modifications.
Therefore, not all animal owners will be eligible to obtain a 3-year license during the first year based upon the expiration date of their current rabies vaccine. In our discussion and visit to another municipality that recently implemented 3-year animal licensing, their experience is that they had approximately 30% of their animal owners purchase 3-year licenses during each of the first three years the program was offered. Even when fully implemented, some pet owners (even though potentially eligible), opted for a variety of reasons to only obtain a 1-year license.

In our meeting with the other municipality, which included members of our Health Department and our Animal Control Officer, we also learned some of the minor problems they encountered. Notably, we have come up with a plan for multi-color animal tags which will assist the Animal Control Officer to identify those animals that have current or expired licenses.

With all of the computer issues worked out in our ability to track 3-year licenses, we are proposing to introduce and adopt the ordinance with an effective date of January 1, 2019. Therefore, the first cycle of animals eligible for 3-year licenses will be dogs for the 2019 licensing year. To be eligible for a 3-year license in 2019, a dog owner would have to provide proof their animal’s rabies vaccination is valid thru at least November 1, 2021. If not, they would only be eligible for a 1-year license.

**FEES**

We’ve also reviewed the fees and propose the following. Keep in mind the maximum annual fee that is permitted to be charged under State Statute for an animal license is $21.00, of which $1.00 - $4.00 is remitted from the Township to the State of New Jersey. The balance of the funds collected help offset the costs of operating our animal control program.

Current Fees in Denville for a 1-year license:

$15.00 – Altered – 1-year License
$18.00 – Unaltered – 1-year License
$25.00 – Late Fee

Recommended Fees in Denville for 1-year and 3-year license option:

$45.00 – Altered – 3-year License
$54.00 – Unaltered – 3-year License

$18.00 – Altered – 1-year License
$21.00 – Unaltered – 1-year License

$10 – Late Fee + $5.00 per month thereafter (maximum $35.00)
In the above rate proposal, we provided an incentive for individuals to seek a 3-year license by maintaining the current rate for the 3-year licensing period. For those that elect to obtain a 1-year license, we are recommended a small increase of $3.00 per license per year.

Finally, in reviewing the fees of neighboring towns, we also recognized we had the highest late fee of any municipality we surveyed. At the current time, the late fee is $25.00 if you come in for your dog license 1-day late on February 1st or if you come in 6 months late on August 1st. The proposed system would reduce the late fee to $10.00 for those who may have been only a few days or weeks late and then tack on an additional $5.00 per month for those who are considerably late. We believe this is a much more reasonable and fair late fee structure.

If you have any questions, please let us know.

cc: Mayor
Carlos Perez, Health Officer
Police Chief Christopher Wagner
Meredith Petrillo, Animal Control Officer
RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act P.L. 1974, Chapter 231 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Municipal Council of the Township of Denville, that the public shall be excluded from discussion of the following matter(s):

- A confidential matter, under Federal Law or State Statute, or rule of court
- A matter in which the release of information would impair a right to receive funds from the Government of the United States
- Material the disclosure of which constitutes an unwarranted invasion of privacy
- Collective bargaining negotiations.
- A matter involving the purchase, lease or acquisition of real property with public funds,
- Tactics and techniques utilized in protecting the safety and property of the public, including investigations of violations or possible violations of the law,
- Pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation other than in section (4) herein which the public body is, or may become a party, specifically
- Matters falling within the attorney-client privilege
- A matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance of promotion or disciplining of a specific prospective public officer or employee employed or appointed by the public body
- Deliberations occurring after a public hearing that may result in the imposition of a specific civil penalty or loss of a license or permit

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that minutes will be kept on file in the municipal clerk’s office, and once the matter involving the confidentiality of the above no longer requires that confidentiality, then the minutes shall be made public.

BY ORDER OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
OF THE TOWNSHIP OF DENVILLE

I, Kathryn Bowditch-Leon, Municipal Clerk for the Township of Denville do hereby certify the above to be a true and exact copy of a resolution approved by the Municipal Council at their meeting held on February 13th, 2018.

Certification date: ___________________________  Kathryn Bowditch-Leon, RMC
                                             Municipal Clerk