



Updated Animal Control Ordinance Moves Forward for Final Approval

Posted on November 11, 2025 by Carey Fauscett-Anderson

TRENTON, Ga. (Nov. 6, 2025) — The Dade County Board of Commissioners reviewed and approved the first reading of the county’s rewritten animal ordinance during its November workshop, marking the near completion of a process that began earlier this year.

The updated ordinance, which replaces Chapter 14 of the Dade County Code, was prepared by the county attorney following months of discussion and review by commissioners. The new version consolidates previous amendments and clarifies several key areas, including rabies vaccination requirements, animal restraint definitions, and nuisance provisions.

Chairman Don Townsend explained that the decision to rewrite the ordinance came after extensive discussion earlier in the year. “Sometimes it’s more efficient to rewrite a chapter completely rather than continue amending sections that overlap,” Townsend said.

County Attorney Robin Rogers noted that the final version presented to the board closely resembles the draft from the previous month, with only minor wording changes for clarity. Commissioner Melissa Bradford added that the revision was intended to make the ordinance more understandable and enforceable for both residents and county staff.

Commissioner Phillip Hartline raised a question regarding the definition of animal restraint, asking for clarification on how it applies when pets are off their owner’s property. Rogers explained that Section 2.1 requires animals to be restrained when off property, while Section 2.2 addresses cases in which unrestrained animals cause a nuisance or hazard.



Commissioner Bob Woods offered his interpretation of the provision. “If it becomes a nuisance or a danger then it’s a problem,” Woods said. “If they’re not a problem, then we’re good.”

Bradford noted that the commission worked to make the ordinance fair and realistic for all residents. “We’ve tried to make this doable for everyone,” she said.

The updated ordinance will return for a second reading and final approval at the December commission meeting. Once adopted, it will serve as the comprehensive standard for animal care and control within Dade County.