Legislation Text

File #: 19-558, **Version:** 1

Presenter/Contact
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SUBJECT:

Discuss and consider approval of the second and final reading of an ordinance to amend Chapter 6 of the City's Code of Ordinances prohibiting the use and display of bull hooks, and addressing the care of animals in performing exhibitions.

BACKGROUND / RATIONALE:

City Council discussed this topic at their May 13, 2019 meeting at the request of Councilmember Hoyt. City Council directed staff to review definitions of animal cruelty, including a specific prohibition on the use of bull hooks, which is defined in the proposed ordinance as a tool or device, also known as an elephant goad or an ankus, used in handling and training elephants. It consists of a spike, hook or combination thereof, attached to a shaft or handle. Here is an image of a bull hook:

ADDRESSES A NEED/ISSUE IN A CITY PLAN OR COUNCIL PRIORITY:

Envision New Braunfels Comprehensive Plan	**Strategy 8: Cultivate Local and Regional Partnerships** The proposed ordinance promotes partnerships with traveling animal shows to prevent animal cruelty.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There would be negligible fiscal impact to taxpayers since these types of events are presently permitted and inspected by the Animal Services Division of the Planning and Community Development Department. The present permitting and inspection services would continue, with the added review and inspection of the recommended additional items.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

At their meeting on July 23, 2019, the Animal Services Advisory Board discussed conditions circus animals live in while traveling, reviewing agencies for the animals, veterinary medical care the animals receive, as well as the types of animal exhibitions that pass through town. Information was also brought forward regarding mistreatment of elephants. The Board noted that the overall care and well-being of all animals is paramount regardless of the type of animal.

The Board recommended (6-0) that City Council amend the existing code by adding a prohibition on the use of bull hooks on elephants, a prohibition on displaying bull hooks around elephants, a provision on care of the animals, and a new penalty for the violation of this section.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval as presented. The proposed ordinance will provide additional animal protections for which city staff can review and enforce.

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