



Office of Ellis County Judge Todd Little
For Immediate Release

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Corey Rogan - Public Information Officer

“County Appoints Susan Heath as Rabies Control Authority”

Ellis County, TX – Ellis County commissioners have appointed veterinarian Susan M. Heath as the Local Rabies Control Authority in accordance with the Texas Rabies Control Act of 1981. The appointment follows the SPCA of North Texas terminating its contract for animal sheltering services to the county, which necessitated a change in Ellis County animal control policy.

“Susan Heath is a highly-experienced veterinarian who has served Ellis County well through her work with Health Mobile Veterinary Services,” said County Judge Todd Little. “Much like our Local Health Authority, who advises the county during widespread health emergencies, the Local Rabies Control Authority advises the county on best practices to help control Rabies and other communicable animal diseases.”

Due to the loss of sheltering capabilities, the Ellis County Commissioners’ Court rescinded its animal control ordinance on January 21st. The ordinance, which had been in effect since 1996, provided for sheltering and other services beyond statutory animal control policy established by state law. By rescinding its own animal control ordinance, Ellis County now defaults to the general State of Texas animal control requirements. One of these requirements, as established by the Rabies Control Act of 1981, is for the Commissioners’ Court to designate a Local Rabies Control Authority.

Under Ellis County’s previous animal control ordinance, the Sheriff had served as the Rabies Control Authority, since animal control officers had direct access to veterinary services from the SPCA. Moving forward, Heath will serve as the new Rabies Control Authority in an advisory capacity to the Ellis County Commissioners’ Court.

“I’ve worked with the Ellis County Sheriff’s Office since May 2015 providing veterinary assistance with stray livestock and animal cruelty cases,” said Heath. “I’m pleased to continue the working relationship by assisting the Sheriff’s Office animal control officers in my role as the Local Rabies Control Authority.”

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