

# Lower Township to Change

## Animal Control for 2014

VILLAS- Lower Township Council approved a \$50,000 annual contract with Shore Animal Control Services Jan. 6 that will produce a cost savings and better efficiency for taxpayers.

Lower Township Manager Mike Voll said the township and police department conducted an analysis of the costs of outsourcing animal control.

“We’re not cutting jobs, the three people that do part-time animal control are not losing their jobs,” said Voll. “They have full-time jobs with the public works department.”

“I personally want to thank Don Montgomery for the last 11 years as the full time animal control officer,” continued Voll. “He’s done a great job; he’s a very caring individual. He’ll resume his full time responsibilities at the public works department.”

Voll said animal control vehicles used 2,163 gallons of fuel from January to August 2013.

“We have a couple of vehicles with high mileage that we’ll have to replace soon,” said Voll. “We wouldn’t have to do this with this privatization.”

Vehicle replacement is estimated at \$40,000 per truck with animal control equipment.

Shore Animal Control Services will station a van in the parking lot of Township Hall to provide immediate service, said Voll.

“I think it’s the right move,” he said.

Animal control came under the authority of Lower Township police about 18 months ago. Prior to that time residents were calling animal control officers directly on their township cell phones causing them to respond at all hours without accountability, said Voll.

He said neighboring communities using Shore Animal Control have highly recommended the company. The township has an option to cancel the contract within 90 days if not satisfied with the service.

“We have in this community provided excellent animal control but we have to keep it structured, we have to keep the cost down,” said Voll.

Shore Animal Control Services will:

- Maintain regular patrols in the township, picking up stray animals and capturing nuisance wildlife.
- Maintain availability and quick access 24-hours per day, seven days per week.
- Pick up road kill from roadways.
- Provide a monthly activity report.
- Continue to promote trap, neuter and release of cats.
- Appear in court on behalf of the township when summonses are issued.
- Maintain liability insurance of \$1 million to protect the township.
- Investigate cruelty cases working with the New Jersey Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and NJSPCA Police.
- Assist with annual rabies clinic for residents.

- Assist with emergency sheltering of animals during a major storm.
- Conduct a dog census, a state requirement.