

**RESOLUTION NO. 225-2021, DESIGNATING APRIL 30th AS
“PET THERAPY DAY” IN SUFFOLK COUNTY**

WHEREAS, pet therapy is a broad term that includes animal-assisted therapy and other animal-assisted activities; and

WHEREAS, animal-assisted therapy is a growing field that uses dogs and other animals to help people recover from or better cope with health problems such as: heart disease, cancer or mental health diagnoses; and

WHEREAS, animal-assisted therapy is used to reduce stress, anxiety and depression, ease loneliness, and encourage exercise and playfulness; and

WHEREAS, studies involving the use of therapy horses and dogs have shown that animal therapy might also help alleviate the symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD); similarly, some people going through rehabilitation for a drug use disorder may also respond well and have a greater sense of well-being when working with a therapy animal; and

WHEREAS, there are thousands of pet therapy teams serving communities across the United States which play an essential role in improving human health and well-being through the human-animal bond; and

WHEREAS, therapy animals and their handlers can be found helping people of all ages in a variety of settings, including hospitals, pediatric care units, nursing homes, assisted living facilities and schools; and

WHEREAS, Pet Partners, the nation’s leading organization registering therapy animals for animal assisted interventions, has declared that April 30th each year as National Therapy Animal Day and invites others to celebrate the important work of therapy animals across the country; and

WHEREAS, Suffolk County wishes to designate April 30th as “Pet Therapy Day” in Suffolk County to recognize all of the exceptional therapy animals who partner with their human companions to bring comfort and healing to those in need; now, therefore be it

1st RESOLVED, that beginning in 2021 and continuing every year thereafter April 30th shall be designated as “Pet Therapy Day” in Suffolk County as a way of acknowledging therapy animals and their handlers who are enhancing the health and well-being of the residents of Suffolk County; and be it further

2nd **RESOLVED**, that this Legislature, being the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) lead agency, hereby finds and determines that this resolution constitutes a Type II action pursuant to Section 617.5(c)(26) and (33) of Title 6 of the NEW YORK CODE OF RULES AND REGULATIONS (6 NYCRR) and within the meaning of Section 8-0109(2) of the NEW YORK ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION LAW insofar as these actions constitute routine or continuing administration and management not including new programs or major reordering of priorities that may affect the environment, and the Suffolk County Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is hereby directed to circulate any appropriate SEQRA notices of determination of non-applicability or non-significance in accordance with this resolution.

DATED: April 20, 2021

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Steven Bellone
County Executive of Suffolk County

Date: April 23, 2021