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Re: Immediately Remove Mayor Mike McCombs from Office for the Shooting and Killing of a Cat

Dear Members of the Lincolnnton City Council,

On behalf of our supporters in Georgia, Alley Cat Allies demands the immediate removal of Lincolnnton Mayor Mike McCombs by the City Council for encouraging the senseless shooting and killing of a cat on a Lincolnnton property. Due to his violations of Georgia laws against animal cruelty and illegally discharging a weapon, the mayor should be arrested and criminally charged.

As evidenced in a police report and police body camera footage, the cat was ultimately killed by Mayor McComb's wife, Lizzy Long, in a manner that violates Georgia animal cruelty statutes and the Lincolnnton City Ordinance. The mayor was present during the April 17, 2026, incident, and the footage showed him encouraging—if not explicitly directing—the shooting.

Alley Cat Allies is the leading advocacy organization with a mission to protect and improve the lives of all cats and kittens. Since our founding in 1990, we have worked around the world in communities large and small to develop humane, evidence-based policies for cats and take strong action, including in court, against cruelty to cats.

Based on available information, Mayor McCombs displayed a severe mishandling of the authority entrusted to the mayoral office, a lack of respect for the laws and law enforcement institutions of Lincolnnton, and a callous disregard for the life of a sentient being.

According to a police report, Mayor McCombs personally requested that Lincolnnton Police Officer Jason Shelton go to a Lincolnnton property to shoot a cat who belonged to the residents. In a face-to-face meeting with the mayor, Officer Shelton stated that he “couldn't shoot the cat unless it was actively attacking someone” when he arrived.

Mayor McCombs then instructed Officer Shelton to “go to the house and give the cat owner [his] gun and let him shoot the cat.” Officer Shelton refused, citing “incredible liability” for the city if he handed over his weapon to a civilian. Mayor McCombs' request encouraged a police officer to engage in unlawful conduct.

Officer Shelton subsequently went to the property and reiterated that he could not shoot the cat. However, Mayor McCombs arrived on the scene along with Long, his wife, who proceeded to actively seek out and kill the cat by discharging her shotgun.

Body camera footage shows that the cat did not die immediately and suffered significantly. In his report, Officer Shelton described that the cat “rolled around in pain, screaming and finally died.”

Under GA. CODE ANN. § 16-12-4(b), “a person commits the offense of cruelty to animals when he or she: (1) causes physical pain, suffering, or death to an animal by any unjustifiable act or omission.” Aggravated cruelty to animals applies when a person “maliciously causes the death of an animal.” Additionally, Sec. 30-5 of the Lincolnnton City Ordinance states that “it shall be unlawful for any person to discharge a firearm...within the city, except by law enforcement officers in the line of duty.”

Beyond the illegal violations, the killing of this cat was unnecessary by every measure. Officer Shelton noted that while the owner alleged that the cat “attacked” him the day before the shooting, it was his professional opinion that the owner “fell on the cat and possibly hurt the animal, and the cat attacked him trying to get away.” When Officer Shelton arrived on the scene, the cat was hiding behind the garage, terrified and posing no threat. There was absolutely no need for lethal action, and every humane option was available.

Mayor McCombs is not above the laws of Georgia. He must be held accountable to the standards of his office and to the people and animals of Lincolnnton. We again demand that the City Council take immediate action for malfeasance by initiating a formal removal process.

Sincerely,

Charlene Pedrolie
President and Chief Operating Officer
Alley Cat Allies