

# Safety, Health, and Service

8-24-2015

The Safety, Health, and Service committee met at 6:45 PM. The following committee members were present. Rob Maurer, Dan Lanzer, and Cheryl Ramos. Also in attendance were Mayor Johnson, Darrin Lautenschleger, John Zucal, Patti McKay, Sam Hitchcock, Marvin Fete, Sandy Cox, Winnie Walker, Tom Gerber, and press.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss Ch. 505 which deals with animals and fowl. It was put into committee by Sam Hitchcock after a request by Dean Holland, citizen. He briefly discussed Saginaw, Michigan's ordinance.

Mr. Holland who resides on Springbrook Dr. SE recommended the following 6 items be considered for adoption to Chapter 505.

- 1) Dogs outside their pen or fenced yard not be leashed (tethering) to inanimate objects such as trees, posts, fencing, buildings, etc. This would make inhumane treatment of dogs by tethering in severe weather conditions or for extended periods without food and water a violation subject to penalty.
- 2) No registered dangerous or vicious dog may be kept on a porch, patio or in any part of a house or structure that would allow the dog to exit such building or area on its own volition.
- 3) Owners of dangerous or vicious dogs must display a sign in their yard that makes it obvious that a dangerous or vicious dog is kept on the property and the sign should be provided by the city. A fee should be required for replacement if the sign is damaged or stolen. The initial sign would be provided through the fee for dog registration.
- 4) In the current provision(s) of Chapter 505 combine the terms vicious and dangerous and/or include a muzzle for both classifications anytime the dog(s) are outside their pen, yard or holding area.
- 5) The penalties for violations should be increased to be more effective as a deterrent to violating the applicable code(s).
- 6) Create the dog category of 'menacing dog' and incorporate the term into Chapter 505. Under Ohio statutes menacing is defined as "a dog which would cause any person being chased or approached to reasonably believe that the dog will cause physical injury to that person." I recognize that other provisions of the sample ordinance might be considered by the committee and in fact could serve to further strengthen Chapter 505, however, the foregoing represents positive steps toward improving community safety.

Mr. Holland said that a previous attach happened 3 days earlier on East High but was not reported. He is hopeful that the safety and law directors can prosecute the case. He recommended the law director weigh in.

Chairmen, Rob Maurer spoke to Police Chief Mike Goodwin earlier in the day. Goodwin felt current ordinances are acceptable. He said the difficult thing for animal owner if cited twice is the fact they have to get \$100,000 liability insurance policy and is difficult to do.

Councilwoman, Cheryl Ramos wanted to know who declares the dog vicious or dangerous. Wondered if it would be the animal control officer?

Law Director, Marvin Fete felt the language between “dangerous animal” and “vicious animal” could be cleaned up. They are both basically the same and it doesn’t matter what kind of animal that kills something.

Council President, Sam Hitchcock felt that registration of dangerous dogs would be helpful for safety forces. Some 911 systems will alert when a call is received from an owner of a registered dangerous animal.

Councilman, John Zucal felt that we should approach it pro-actively versus punitive. Owners muzzling dogs is re-assurance that it will not bite when in public.

Brian Proctor, citizen state that dog breeds are born to do certain things and often go back to their nature. He gave a few examples of pointers in his back yard.

The committee is taking all comments into consideration and will meet in the near future. The meeting adjourned by Dan Lanzer at 7:18.

Sincerely,

Rob Maurer  
Chairman