

MINUTES
PUBLIC SERVICES & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
JULY 25, 2022
250 NORTH WALNUT STREET
WINNSBORO, SC 29180
5:00PM

Members Present: Timothy Roseborough (Chair), Neil Robinson,
Douglas Pauley

I. Call To Order

Mr. Roseborough called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

II. Invocation

Invocation was led by Councilman Pauley.

III. Ordinance Change Recommendations

Mr. Bob Innis, Director of Animal Control, approached the podium and referenced the handout given to the Committee regarding his proposed animal control ordinance changes.

As he read thru the document, Mr. Pauley apologized for the interruption and said he did not want Mr. Innis to read every single paragraph (although he could if he wanted to). He asked if he would prefer to highlight some of the main points and then the Committee could go over the recommendations and come back at a later date with their consensus. Mr. Innis said the main goal was to ensure that every dog in Fairfield County had a marker chip and was registered. The amount of dogs they picked up without a chip costs the County in food, cleaning, and medical. If they had a chip, the owners could be found in a matter of days. Mr. Robinson asked the cost of a chip and Mr. Innis said \$5 and the Veterinarians were willing to install for free. He suggested the chips be given to the owners at no cost as an incentive and it would save thousands of dollars in the future. He said the proposed changes were not just for strays and pit bulls but also to save and generate money. Mr. Innis said every dog should have a license and it could be free or a minimal fee decided on by Council.

Mr. Pauley said they had not had the opportunity to read every paragraph of his proposal but they agreed that something needed to be done regarding animal control in Fairfield County. He referred to one of the first paragraphs he read and asked if he meant that every canine in the County should have a license and Mr. Innis said yes. Mr. Pauley asked if the canine would have to be spade or neutered in order to get licensed.

Mr. Innis said if there was no intent to breed the animal, it should be fixed and microchipped. Mr. Pauley said he was not trying to speak against it but he had a house dog that they did not let out of their site and he was not fixed. If he applied for a license for his pet, he would not want to have to get him fixed. Mr. Innis said people had house dogs but they did get out and if it was female she would get out and have unwanted puppies. Mr. Pauley said he wanted to make sure he understood that the pet license would require the owner to have it spayed or neutered. Mr. Innis said unless the intent was to breed and he suggested a breeding license because there were many people breeding pit bulls in Fairfield County and they were not taking proper care of them or the puppies.

Mr. Robinson asked if something similar had been implemented in other counties and Mr. Innis said yes sir. Mr. Robinson asked for any examples and Mr. Innis said Beaufort and Aiken Counties and over a 5-year period they had seen a great reduction of incoming animals.

Mr. Pauley asked how many canines were taken in last year and Mr. Innis said 628 strays and that did not include the ones that were surrendered. They took in over 100 females that were bred to the extreme.

Mr. Robinson said they took a lot of slack for the current ordinance and he asked if it was being enforced and Mr. Innis said yes – they could do more if they had the finances. He said they needed a full-time vet and what they were spending currently would pay for it. Mr. Pauley asked if he had a vet to recommend and he said they needed to advertise for a vet.

Mr. Roseborough asked how long did they keep a dog before it was euthanized and he said they did not – they became a no-kill facility 5 years ago. Mr. Roseborough asked if that was something Council voted on and he said as far as he was aware. Mr. Innis said when he started in his position, one of the goals was to decrease euthanizing.

Mr. Pauley asked if he knew Beaufort's annual license fee and he said zero if the animal was fixed and \$100 per year if it was not fixed.

Mr. Robinson asked if they could get a copy of the comparisons with the other counties and Mr. Innis agreed.

Mr. Pauley thanked Mr. Innis for taking the time to put the information together and said they would take the recommendations and suggestions into consideration.

Mr. Roseborough asked Mr. Innis if he could speak more about the "Declaration of Restricted Dogs" portion of the document. Mr. Innis said a restricted dog was known as a pit bull and breeding them was a big issue in the County. He said out of the 86 dogs they had probably 80 were pit bulls or pit bull mixes.

Mr. Pauley asked how many staff were at the animal shelter and Mr. Innis said including him, there were seven. Mr. Pauley asked if any of them

were licensed through the State to enforce their ordinances and he said no.

Mr. Robinson asked who wrote the tickets and he said the Sheriff's Department.

Mr. Pauley asked if they were to put a lot of the requests in place would he agree that they would need to hire a full time animal control officer to enforce the ordinance (Mr. Innis said or send a staff for the course). Mr. Pauley said he had been out of law enforcement for some time but asked if any of his staff could be commissioned through the State to enforce the ordinance or did it have to be the Sheriff's Department. Mr. Innis said if they took the course, they could do it. Mr. Pauley said it was definitely a full time job. He said it was one thing to adopt an ordinance but if it was not enforced then it was just a piece of paper. They had to do a better job of making sure ordinances were being pursued. Mr. Innis said the last changes regarding chains and getting dogs fixed before they return to their owners had worked fantastically.

Mr. Robinson asked about their relationship with the City. Mr. Innis said they were still taking their animals – as recent as that afternoon. He said they (the City) kept picking them up and they (the County) kept taking them. He said the majority of the animals they picked up came from Ridgeway, Winnsboro, Greenbrier and Blair.

Deputy Administrator Williams said they had a meeting with the Town of Winnsboro to talk about several intergovernmental agreements and the challenges they had with animal control. They would continue to work with them for a resolution.

Mr. Roseborough thanked Mr. Innis for his presentation.

IV. ADJOURN

At 5:23pm, Councilman Robinson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Pauley. ***Motion carried 3-0.***

Kim W. Roberts, Ed. D.
Clerk to Council

Moses W. Bell
Chairman