

**Animal Control Board
Tuesday, December 13, 2022
Virtually**

Members Attending: R. Rosato, S. Baller, A. Miller, H. Carroll

Others Attending: S. Smith, I. Litvinov, E. Manwiller

Call to Order

Mr. Rosato called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

Mr. Rosato noted that a quorum was present.

Public Comment

None.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Ms. Miller, seconded by Mr. Rosato, to approve the December 30, 2021 meeting summary as written. Motion carried unanimously.

Animal Control Agency Report

Ms. Manwiller provided the animal count for Reading year to date for 2022 and calendar year 2021. She expressed the belief that the total count would be similar for 2022. The report was reviewed and showed a total of 2,290 animal control issues so far in 2022.

Ms. Manwiller stated that she also provided a report showing the cost of services for these animals and for resident-owned animals that cannot afford to pay out-of-pocket for some services.

Mr. Carroll reported that there have been a total of 622 animal investigation cases in Reading so far in 2022.

Permit Updates

- **732 Thorn St** – keeping of roosters and chickens

Mr. Carroll stated that the roosters have been removed and the chickens seem well cared for.

Ms. Smith noted the need for Zoning follow up to keep the chickens. She stated that she will work with Zoning staff.

- **2329 High St**
- **2416 High St**

Ms. Smith stated that these properties have gone through the Zoning process and have been approved to keep their chickens.

- **318 Pine St** – more than 6 dogs / cats

Mr. Carroll stated that citations have been issued for problems at this property. He stated that those citations are currently in the court system. He stated that there are ten dogs at this property. He stated that he will introduce himself to the new Animal Inspector in Property Maintenance to move this situation forward.

Old Business

- **936 N 5th St** – more than 6 dogs / cats

Ms. Baller stated that citations have been issued. She stated that the vaccines are now up to date and she believes that the application to keep 6 more or dogs / cats has been submitted. Ms. Smith stated that there is no record of this application.

- **236 S 18th St** – keeping of chickens

Ms. Smith stated that the chickens have been removed but the coop remains. She expressed the belief that there will be new chickens in the spring. She stated that she will follow up with Zoning staff.

- **1043 Chestnut St** – keeping of chickens

Ms. Baller stated that the chickens have been removed and there have been no additional complaint calls to this property.

- **528 S 14th St** – breeding / kennel

Mr. Carroll stated that he was called to this location to assist the Sheriff's office but that when he arrived the situation was handled and he has no information about why he was called. He stated that citations have been issued. Ms. Smith stated that she will follow up with Zoning staff.

- **438 N 9th St** – keeping of chickens

Ms. Smith stated that these chickens have been removed.

- **Regulation of cats**

Mr. Carroll requested that this topic be discussed under New Business as part of the rabbit loophole topic.

- **Zoning Ordinance amendment**

Ms. Smith stated that the City has a new Zoning Administrator. She stated that she will meet with him to review the amendments needed.

New Business

- **1029 Spring St** – rabbits

Mr. Carroll stated that there are approximately 30 outdoor rabbits that continually escape and are nuisances to this neighborhood. He stated that there is no violation that he can issue because rabbits do not need permits for 6 or more and have different confinement requirements. He stated that the rabbit owner has a removal plan with ARL but that this is a great case study on ways that the

regulations need to be amended. He stated that rabbits are a grey area, along with the situation where the water buffalo roaming the City streets.

Mr. Carroll suggested that rather than 6 dogs / cats, the language be 6 animals. He stated that dogs at large can be addressed and suggested that this language also change from dog to animal in general. He noted the need to hold animal owners accountable and to understand their responsibilities. He also noted the need to prevent residents from claiming to be a private rescue operation.

Mr. Litvinov stated that he will review the draft language and provide comments.

Ms. Miller stated that these rabbits are at large and that rabbits in general reproduce quickly. She agreed with the need to limit rabbits and suggested that language be added to the ordinance to address animals that are kept outdoors.

Mr. Carroll stated that he likes the idea of addressing animals that are kept outdoors. He stated that there are also issues with cats who are left outside. He noted the need for the owners of these cats to be responsible for damage the cats cause. He expressed the belief that some types of animals are more difficult to control.

Ms. Miller agreed with Mr. Carroll and suggested that more definitions be included.

Ms. Smith noted the need to consider how fish and small mammals are addressed in the new 6 or more language. She stated that residents often object to the limits and cite aquariums and small animals such as hamsters.

Ms. Miller agreed and stated that there are traditionally indoor animals that are confined in small spaces and not roaming. She suggested basing some regulations on basic care guidelines.

Mr. Litvinov also suggested basing regulations on the animal's weight. He noted the need to stay focused on public nuisance and public safety issues.

Mr. Carroll suggested drafting a point scale system. He noted the need for the amendments to be fair and enforceable. He noted the need for well-rounded regulations that are unbiased.

Other Matters

None.

Next Meeting

Based on pending business, the Board will meet in April 2023.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Shelly Smith, CMC
Deputy City Clerk