



CITY COUNCIL

Nominations & Appointments Committee

**Monday, November 3, 2014
Meeting Report**

Attendance: S. Marmarou, D. Sterner

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer, F. Denbowski

The meeting was called to order at 4:06 pm by Mr. Marmarou.

There was discussion regarding the upcoming election.

Mr. Marmarou reminded the public in attendance that committee meetings are open to the public but that there is no comment taken.

I. Interviews

Alison Rudy (appointment – Animal Control Board)

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Ms. Rudy was interested in serving. Ms. Rudy explained that she is a Humane Officer for the Animal Rescue League. She stated that she is not a City resident. Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that the Animal Control Board requires two members representing the City's animal control agency to serve. She stated that in this case residency can be waived.

Mr. Marmarou questioned how Ms. Rudy learned about this board. Ms. Rudy stated that she worked closely with Ms. Katzenmoyer and the Board of Health on the recent update to the City's animal regulations including the addition of the cat and dog limitation. She noted that she wished to stay involved as the City's regulations affect her work as a Humane Officer.

Mr. Marmarou questioned when the Board meets. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that they should meet two times per year but that they have not met for several years due to decreased membership. She stated that if the three applicants interviewed this evening are appointed they will reach a quorum.

Mr. Sterner questioned why it was only two times per year. Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that it was to review applications for residents to keep exotic animals and also to review the City's animal regulations to ensure that they are updated and are consistent with State law.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the appointment of Alison Rudy to the Animal Control Board.

Harry Brown (appointment – Animal Control Board)

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Brown was interested in serving on this Board. Mr. Brown explained that he has been with the Animal Rescue League for 26 years and worked with the City to remove wild animals for many years. He stated that he is a Humane Officer and Animal Control Officer. He stated that he is a former executive director of the Animal Rescue League.

Mr. Sterner questioned the difference between a Humane Officer and Animal Control Officer. Mr. Brown explained that an Animal Control Officer enforces the City's regulations and a Humane Officer works with the Animal Rescue League and performs duties necessary for the SPCA.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if there were many stray pick-ups in the northeast section of the City. Mr. Brown stated that there are. Mr. Marmarou expressed the belief that this is due to animals being abandoned by Albright students.

Mr. Brown stated that he also has experience drafting regulations as he assisted Exeter Township when they were drafting their regulations.

Mr. Marmarou stated that he has seen many deer around the former Lucent building. Mr. Brown agreed and stated that there is also a high population in Charles Evans Cemetery. He stated that wild animals often come into the City.

Mr. Marmarou stated that he has witnessed squirrels eating pumpkins to get to the seeds. Mr. Brown agreed that they eat the pumpkin seeds.

Mr. Sterner stated that he is glad that Mr. Brown is willing to serve.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the appointment of Harry Brown to the Animal Control Board.

There was discussion regarding the recycling lawsuit and user fees.

Dennis Straub (reappointment – Animal Control Board)

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Straub wished to continue to serve this Board. Mr. Straub noted that the Board has not met in quite some time and expressed hope that they would restart.

Mr. Marmarou stated that the Committee interviewed other potential members this evening. He stated that if they are appointed there will be a quorum. Mr. Straub stated that there is currently no accountability of the Animal Rescue League (ARL). He stated that the ARL kills many animals and that they are always fundraising. He stated that the ARL controls the Board and therefore controls the vote. He stated that there is little enforcement. He stated that residents are not applying for exotic animal permits or registering their dogs and cats if they have six or more.

Mr. Sterner stated that there can only be enforcement if the City or ARL learns about those with exotic animals or who have more than six dogs and cats. He stated that there is follow up once it learns of the issues. Mr. Straub noted the ARL's focus on fundraising.

Mr. Marmarou stated that these issues should be discussed at Animal Control Board meetings. He suggested that the Animal Control Board make a presentation to Council after it reorganizes. Mr. Straub suggested that after he was named a full board member and not an alternate that no meetings were held.

Mr. Marmarou noted the need for Mr. Straub to inform Council if meetings are not held. He noted the need for Council to stay informed and that there is no need to have a Board if they are not active.

Mr. Marmarou requested that Ms. Katzenmoyer follow up. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that she volunteered to assist the ARL get this Board reorganized and active. She stated that she will continue to follow up.

Mr. Straub noted the need for the Board to meet and report to Council. He stated that he had issue with the veterinarian who served in the past as well. He noted the need for additional support of trap, neuter, release programs and to reduce the number of kills.

Mr. Straub stated that there are increasing issues with pit bulls. He expressed the belief that there should be patrols to find those violating animal regulations and quick enforcement. He stated that the ARL and the City should not wait until there is a complaint.

Mr. Marmarou noted the problems at the home on Mineral Spring Road and animal hoarding.

Mr. Straub stated that he is interested in serving on more than one board if the ballot question passes. He stated that he was a union electrician before retirement and has experience with property maintenance. Mr. Denbowski stated that the Mayor is willing to review Mr. Straub for an additional board if the question passes.

Mr. Straub stated that he is disturbed that there is no enforcement overall with City regulations. He expressed the belief that police officers ignore traffic and parking violations. He stated that in the past officers got out of their cars but that is no longer the case.

Mr. Straub expressed the belief that the increased number of rental properties is very detrimental to the City.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the reappointment of Dennis Straub to the Animal Control Board.

Nicholas Eyrich (appointment – Blighted Property Review Committee)

Mr. Marmarou stated that the Blighted Property Review Committee (BPRC) does important work for the City. Mr. Eyrich agreed and stated that he sat in on their last hearing. He stated that they address serious issues. He expressed frustration that on a docket of 24 properties only two property owners appeared.

Mr. Sterner questioned why Mr. Eyrich was interested in serving on the BPRC. Mr. Eyrich stated that he currently works in the City and grew up in Reading. He stated that he recently relocated back into Reading. He stated that his first job was working part time in the City's Parks Department.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if Mr. Eyrich was familiar with the goals of the BPRC. Mr. Eyrich stated that after attending the hearing he was left with many questions and is hungry for additional information. Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that if he is appointed to the BPRC that he will receive much information about the BPRC and the blight regulations. She stated that the City Clerk is active with the BPRC and will give him all the information he needs.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if Ms. Katzenmoyer could make this information available. Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that Mr. Eyrich will receive the information quickly if he is appointed to the BPRC. She expressed the belief that Ms. Kelleher would give Mr. Eyrich additional information when he is sworn into office.

Mr. Eyrich expressed thanks for making the information available. He specifically requested information on the blight regulations and the factors that make a property eligible to be labeled as blighted.

Mr. Marmarou expressed the belief that Mr. Eyrich will be a tremendous addition to the BPRC.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the appointment of Nicholas Eyrich to the Blighted Property Review Committee.

Mr. Marmarou encouraged Mr. Eyrich to become active in the College Heights Community Council and gave Mr. Eyrich meeting details. There was a discussion about the Fire Tree/Orange Stones – Caum Home situation.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee adjourned at 4:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Shelly Katzenmoyer, CMC
Deputy City Clerk