

February 04, 2019

Great Falls City Commissioners,

I am writing to you regarding animal ordinances as I see you are contemplating changes to the Official Code of the City of Great Falls with Ordinance 3199.

The main problem that I see is not the animal codes, per se, but the lack of enforcement of existing codes. In addition, the penalty for dangerous animals needs to be strengthened.

I read the letter from Sara Williams in the packet for the upcoming commission meeting. It was very compelling. I echo her concerns about dangerous animals and I feel that much more needs to be done about them in Great Falls. The incidents of dogs approaching me in an aggressive manner with the owner nowhere in sight is quite frequent while I'm out running or waling in the city. It's more of a problem than you may realize.

In 2017, the commissioners made changes to the animal codes. I spoke before the commissioners and voiced my concerns over the lack of enforcement at that time. A friend's daughter had recently been mauled by a dog. She suffered extensive injuries and required hospitalization and weeks of therapy. My understanding is that the dog had a history of dangerous behavior and nothing was done about it.

I contacted the city and requested information on whether the dog owner had a commercial kennel permit because she was obviously running a commercial kennel, selling dogs and puppies at her residence. I was transferred from department to department, finally ending up with the animal shelter. The shelter refused to tell me whether the dog's owner had a commercial permit. I asked the procedure for getting the information and was told it was not public information.

I would like to hear the city commission's justification of why a city permit is not public information. If it is, why was I denied that information?

I would also like to report that I called animal control last year regarding an issue and never received a phone call back. There needs to be more accountability to the public.

In closing, I asked that the city consider **mandatory euthanasia** of an animal with a history of two attacks resulting in bodily injury or death of persons or domestic animals within a 24 month period. I ask that the city maintain the exceptions to this already in the named in the OCCGF under dangerous animals; namely, the animal is protecting its owner or property, the victim is trespassing, etc.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jeni Dodd