

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSIONS
July 18, 2006

City Commission Work Session

Mayor Stebbins presiding

CALL TO ORDER: 5:15 P.M.

ROLL CALL: City Commissioners present: Dona Stebbins, Bill Beecher, Sandy Hinz, Diane Jovick-Kuntz and John Rosenbaum. Also present were the Assistant City Manager, City Attorney, Directors of Community Development, Planning, Public Works, Fiscal Services, Police Chief, Fire Chief, Park and Recreation and the City Clerk.

1. EMPLOYEE INTRODUCTIONS.

Employees participating in the employee orientation program were introduced.

2. MSU-GREAT FALLS EXPANSION PRESENTATION.

Dr. Mary Sheehy-Moe reported to the City Commission on the expansion project at the MSU-COT campus. The expansion was necessary to accommodate the 60 percent growth in student population since 1997. The construction is slated to begin October 2007.

3. ANIMAL CONTROL ORDINANCE.

Chief Prosecuting Attorney Kory Larsen reviewed the latest draft of the animal control ordinance which incorporated staff recommended changes to it. Some of the changes included:

- Reworking the penalty section of the ordinance. Instead of one chapter, the penalty pertaining to a specific section was incorporated within it.
- The maximum number of cats/dogs was reduced to four with a maximum of two dogs. Mr. Larsen added that those people who wanted more animals could apply for a multiple animal permit.
- The provision for the removal of excrement was returned to the language found in the current code.
- The provision for animals running at large, Mr. Larsen explained, could require either voice command or a require that animals be on a leash. The object of this section was to prevent animals from running at large. He asked the Commission to provide direction on their preference.
- The nuisance/dangerous animal sections were rewritten in order to make them more understandable and enforceable.
- The wild animal section was rewritten to eliminate the duplication in inspections.

Mr. Larsen also explained that once the ordinance was finally adopted, he would offer training sessions to the Humane Society staff in order for them to better understand the ordinance as well as

(07/18/06)

to better prepare cases for court.

Commissioner Rosenbaum asked if the neighbors had to take part in the prosecution of barking dog complaints. Mr. Larsen explained that oftentimes he needs to call the neighbors in as witnesses in order to introduce evidence. Commissioner Rosenbaum explained that some way the victim needed to get out of the picture and have the Humane Society officer or the police officers be called to introduce evidence.

Mayor Stebbins asked when the fines and fees would be set. Mr. Larsen explained that the fines were incorporated into the ordinance and those fees to be set by the Commission would be set by separate resolution. Mayor Stebbins suggested that the fines be different for altered and unaltered animals. Mr. Larsen concurred and stated he would change the sections where it made sense to have different fines.

Mr. Dennis Olson, citizen member, expressed concern about the option for voice control. Mr. Rosenbaum stated that it would be easier to enforce if a leash was required.

Bob James, citizen member, suggested that fines could be reduced for an unaltered animal if they had the animal altered within 30 days. He also requested that the Commission consider forwarding a percentage of the fines to the Animal Foundation to help pay for the new animal shelter.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, Mayor Stebbins adjourned the work session of July 18, 2006, at 6:40 p.m.

(07/18/06)