

Animal Control Commission

October 14, 2024, at 5:30pm

MEMORANDUM

**Bloomington Animal Shelter – Hybrid Zoom and In Person Meeting
3410 South Walnut Street, Bloomington, IN 47401**

MEMBERS

Sue Allmon – present in person
Sita Cohen – present in person
Chris Hazel – present in person
Brandt Ludlow – partial presence in person
Valerie Pena – present in person
Laura Soto – present in person

GUESTS

Ryan Lady
Tylea Kern

STAFF

Michael Clarke – present in person
Kat Ennis – present via zoom
Robyn Peffinger – present in person in place of Virgil Sauder
Aleksandrina Pratt – present via zoom

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Valerie moved to approve the **September 16, 2024**, minutes as written.
Laura seconded.
Motion passes, 4-0-1 with Sue abstaining.

II. NEW BUSINESS

i. Potentially Dangerous/ Dangerous – “Beatrice” Prince

Virgil had asked to move this case to the next meeting if not present.

Sue moved to move this case to the next meeting.
Laura seconded.
Motion passes 5-0-0.

----Brandt now in attendance at meeting-----

ii. Habitual Offender - Lady

Officer Ennis stated that Animal Control is requesting that Mr. Lady be deemed a Habitual Offender and reviewed three incidents that occurred in a ten day period since his last hearing:

1. On 9/18/24 ACOs were called out to an abuse complaint. Ash was witnessed pushing Sneak into a creek behind the Shalom Center. This was an eight foot drop. Sneak was not wearing a muzzle and was wearing a leash in the creek. Ash explained that they did not have his muzzle so they put

him in the creek instead. Ryan Lady later showed up and officers went over the leash and muzzle requirements. Officers gave him a warning.

2. On 9/24/24 Officers Steury and Ennis were looking for someone else at Seminary Park. They found Sneak dragging a leash, running around a crowd of people, not wearing a muzzle. Officers issued citations to Mr. Lady for failure to restrain, failure to restrain Potentially Dangerous and failure to follow ACC requirements to muzzle in public. Mr. Lady expressed that he understood the ACC wording as a recommendation rather than a requirement.
3. On 9/27/24 Officer Ennis was called to the Shalom Center for recorded abuse by Mr. Lady to Sneak. Officer Ennis and Virgil Sauder reviewed the footage and saw it as a swat on the hindquarters. The video did show Sneak in a group of five to six people with no muzzle. Sneak was removed by Officers for not following the ACC order for a muzzle and for public safety concerns until this hearing. Officer Ennis later added that BPD charged him with a misdemeanor for animal cruelty and is pursuing that.

Ryan Lady was very upset, used a loud voice, used expletives and stated that the requirements were not court-ordered. He thought they were suggestions and not requirements. He did not understand why he was being singled out when other people do not follow the rules. He mentioned Abby several times. He stated there was no abuse and that the creek is his home. Valerie asked why he did not follow the rules. He loudly stated that Sneak was with him and did not need to be muzzled. Mr. Lady was very upset and the conversation was difficult.

The Commission moved into discussion. Sita shared that she hates to take the dog away, but there is a long history and he doesn't understand that he has to follow the rules. Laura worries that Mr. Lady does not seem to understand the requirements in relation to whether he is holding the dog or someone else is. Brandt noted that this is the first time seeing someone for a second time. He felt it was fair giving him a second chance, but he feels there has been no respect for the decision or appreciation for the second chance and does not see the behavior changing. Valerie noted environmental conditions make it challenging especially for a dog to play on a four foot leash. Sue recommended that he work with the Animal Control Officers to learn how to use a muzzle and maybe in a year's time he would not need it.

The conversation between the Commission and Mr. Lady continued. Valerie tried to emphasize that any time Sneak is in a group of people he has to wear a muzzle. Mr. Lady understood her but stated that he wants to challenge this decision. Officer Clarke added details from the last hearing and emphasized that Sneak was involved in the last bite incident and the muzzle was a requirement. Mr. Lady repeated that he wants to fight this decision. He was told that the time to appeal that decision was over.

Sita reviewed the Habitual Offender definition and stated that this is clear Habitual Offender status. Sue agreed that he meets the criteria.

Sue moved to declare Mr. Lady a Habitual Offender.

Brandt seconded.

Motion passes 6-0-0.

The Commission next discussed the potential actions. Mr. Lady repeatedly stated he wanted to challenge the decision. He was told again that the time to appeal that decision was over and going forward he

would need to take it up in the courts. When asked if he would follow the rules at this time, he quietly answered in the affirmative.

Valerie moved that Sneak is returned to Ryan Lady with the understanding that one incident that violates the Potentially Dangerous ordinance will result in Sneak being brought to the animal shelter and for Mr. Lady's ownership to be revoked.

Sue seconded.

Motion passes, 4-2-0 with Brandt and Sita opposed.

Robyn offered to show Mr. Lady how to use the muzzle so that it will not be so hard on Sneak. He agreed to come on Tuesday between 12:00-4:30pm to meet with Robyn.

iii. Joint AMC – ACC subcommittees:

1. Ordinance updates

2. Spay/neuter ordinance and/or licensing exploration

Valerie explained the idea is to have a couple of members from both City and County to go over the updates. Valerie hopes to be on the spay/neuter committee as it is a passion for her. Brandt offered to help with this. Sita offered to help with ordinance updates. Sue offered to help with the ordinance updates as well. Chris not available due to working on a grant. Laura stated that she could offer her advice, but was unavailable to be on a subcommittee.

III. Reports

a. Animal Care and Control Report

Robyn stated the shelter is in the process to offer a position to a new animal care technician. There are many puppies from many litters at the shelter. There is also a panleukopenia exposure in the shelter in two rooms.

b. MCHA Update

Sue stated that the Run for the Animals went very well. Data shows they made a small profit. Clinic on Sunday was well received and they saw a number of people not able to get into their primary vet.

c. AMC Update

Valerie shared that she was not at the meeting so did not have a report.

IV. Animal Control Discussion

No discussion.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Valerie moved to adjourn.

Chris seconded.

Motion passes 6-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:48pm.