

Council considers pet limit

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Friday, 13 November 2009 14:58 -

Gothenburg codes for animals, fireworks under review.

Limitations on the number of household pets, fireworks in city parks and a multitude of other laws are under review by the Gothenburg City Council.

At their meeting Nov. 3, members discussed some of the city rules at length.

Some changes and additions were suggested by American Legal Publishing which has already reviewed Gothenburg's codes.

Members plan to vote on the changes at their Nov. 17 council meeting.

A list of all of the suggested proposals can be viewed at city hall.

The council is considering two new animal ordinances—one that limits the number of dogs and cats in each household and another that prohibits dangerous animals in residential areas.

Limitations on pets were discussed after which members increased the number of dogs and cats a household can have from four to six.

Council member Jim Aden wondered if such a law infringed on people's rights while other members said there's a problem with large numbers of cats that roam the city.

Police sergeant Matt Langley said his department receives many calls from residents wanting to borrow cat traps.

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“We’re trying to get it under control,” Langley said

Under the proposal, residents wanting to keep more than six pets can apply for a permit at the police department.

The permit has several regulations including an inspection by the police chief of where the animals are kept.

Council members are also considering a ban on individuals shooting fireworks at Lake Helen on July 4.

Police chief Randy Olson proposed the ban in all city parks but council members thought that was too restrictive.

City administrator Bruce Clymer described the situation as dangerous at Lake Helen on the Fourth of July as people gather for the annual fireworks show but shoot off their own fireworks before and after the event.

Aden said he wasn’t against the measure but said he thought they were trying to control people too much.

The council also talked about the number of members on city commissions, committees and boards, peddlers and solicitors in the city, enforcement of curfew, sign regulations, speed limits, school children loading zones, animal shelter impoundment fees, burn permits, abandoned vehicles, restrictions on grass height, smoking penalties, electrical codes, sales tax and expiration of building permits and more.

In other business, the council:

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- approved a draw down of \$8,535 for the downtown revitalization project.
- agreed to draw down and pay \$2,234 and \$3,208 to West Central Nebraska Development District for owner-occupied housing.
- decided to open an alley east of Avenue L from 23rd Street to 26th Street including the opening of 23rd Street for half a block east of Avenue L.
- gave the go ahead to change an order that will extend sewer on 11th Street east of Avenue I at a cost of \$31,455. Federal stimulus funds will help pay for the extension. Van Kirk Bros. Contracting, Inc.—the company that replaced sewer on Avenue I—will do the work.
- learned that the city will change from mailing customer bills on postcards to bills enclosed in envelopes to protect against identity theft.
- thanked the city crew for snow and tree branch removal after the last three snowstorms. City services director Shane Gruber said leaf pickup will continue through Thanksgiving.

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