



Legislative & Rules Committee – Board of Representatives

Eileen Heaphy, Chair

Elise Coleman, Vice Chair

Committee Report

Date: Tuesday, January 19, 2016

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Legislative Chambers, 4th Floor Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, CT

The Legislative & Rules Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Heaphy; Vice Chair Coleman and Committee Member Reps Day, Nabel, Okun, Silver and Zelinsky. Absent or excused was Rep. Mitchell. Also present were Reps. McMullen and Quinones, Tilford Cobb, Animal Control Officer; John Franzetti; Animal Control; Michael Toma, Law Department; and approximately 25 members of the public (See the attached [public hearing sign-in sheet](#)).

Chair Heaphy called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. LR29.052	ORDINANCE, <u>for public hearing and final adoption</u> ; Amending Chapter 111. Public Safety and Animal Welfare. 06/02/15 – Submitted by Mayor Martin and Rep. Heaphy 06/15/15 – Held in Committee 07/21/15 – Held in Committee 08/31/15 – Held in Committee 09/21/15 – Held in Committee 10/29/15 – Held in Committee 11/16/15 – Approved by Committee for publication 12/14/15 – Held at Steering	Held in Committee 6-0-1

Secondary Committee: Public Safety & Health

Chair Heaphy opened the public hearing for this Ordinance.

Nicole Brook asked that the definition of “dangerous dog” be replaced with language that “each dog is to be evaluated based solely on his/her temperament” as the current definition is inconsistent with the state of the law.

Neil Hawkins stated that he would like more information about the proposed ordinance.

Jennifer Cannizzaro spoke about Section 111-11 and the need to address problems caused by the keeping of livestock. Her neighbor keeps sheep which interfere with her ability to enjoy her property because of the smell and the noise.

Georgiana White stated that the proposed changes will make it more difficult for people to help creatures and asked that the Committee reconsider the stringency of the ordinance as to feral cats. She echoed the earlier statement concerning vicious dogs.

Andrew Kalmansh spoke in opposition to the proposed section on breeding permits as burdening the City with additional costs and unenforceable; he would like the ordinance to include a section describing the training of the Animal Control Officer and Animal Control Manager. He supports the objections contained in the letter from the AKC and the CT Dog Federation. He distributed the attached [statement](#).

John McNagney asked the Committee to consider the recommendations of the AKC. He questioned the enforceability of Section 111-12.

Cora Martina and Amy Hoyt questioned the recourse against someone who feeds feral cats without complying with the proposed language.

Valerie DeVito asked about the status of the Animal Shelter.

There being no further speakers, Chair Heaphy closed the public hearing.

Chair Heaphy placed the attached letters from the [American Kennel Club](#) and from the [CT Federation from Dog Clubs and Responsible Dog Owners, Inc.](#) into the record.

Chair Heaphy stated, in response to the public comments, that the City has put together the Animal Rescue Foundation (“ARF”) the goal of which is to raise funds for the shelter and other animal needs.

Mr. Cobb agreed with the recommendation that language be added regarding evaluating vicious or dangerous dogs individually. Committee members discussed the proposed dangerous/vicious dog language. Several members expressed concern about the subjectivity by the Animal Control Officer contained in this section and other parts of the ordinance, whether it is appropriate and whether it gives sufficient guidance to the public.

Chair Heaphy noted that this ordinance is a supplement to the State statutes regarding animal control and that animal control officers are trained under State law.

Committee members discussed the section on feral cats. Chair Heaphy noted that this section is a work in progress that may need to be modified once it is in place. Committee members discussed the definitions and the requirement that a person assume responsibility to provide veterinary care and remove a sick animal from the colony.

Chair Heaphy stated that the inclusion of a breeding section was in response to the request of the Animal Control Manager. The trend in Connecticut is in the direction of breeding permits. Committee members discussed the enforceability of this provision, particularly the applicability to a 2nd litter; whether it would be better to describe an abuse of breeding is; whether it would be less expensive to get a kennel license.

Rep. McMullen stated that a larger public health issue is the lack of compliance with licensing requirements. The AKC has recommended against this provision.

Mr. Cobb stated that this permit would be a tool for the Animal Control Officer to help enforcement; he believes this should apply to all litters. He noted that the Animal Control officers see unlicensed dogs which are bred and then abandoned. Mr. Kalmansh entered the floor of the Legislative Chambers, conferred with Rep. McMullen, and when asked to leave the floor by Chair Heaphy, stated that Animal Control Manager Cobb was making fraudulent and libelous statements.

Rep. Okun moved to remove §111-12, which motion was seconded by Rep. Ryan. Rep. Day stated that he would like to time to determine whether or not he believes this section should be removed. Rep. Okun withdrew this motion and Rep. Ryan withdrew his second.

A motion to hold this item was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 6-0-1 (Reps. Coleman, Day, Nabel, Okun and Silver in favor; Rep. Heaphy abstained).

2. [LR29.063](#) ORDINANCE, for publication; Repealing Chapter 6, **Held in Committee**
Article XI of the Code of Ordinances, Concerning
the Smith House Board of Directors.
1/06/16 – Submitted by President Skigen

3. [LR29.064](#) ORDINANCE, for publication; Repealing Chapter **Held in Committee**
40, Article XXXIV of the Code of Ordinances,
Concerning the Executive Director - Smith House.
01/06/16 – Submitted by President Skigen

Chair Heaphy adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Heaphy, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#).