



MINUTES

**Animal Commission Meeting
Second Floor Conference Room
Monday, September 28, 2015
6:00 p.m.**

DRAFT

Members Present: Peg Morrisroe & Bill Urquhart

Members Absent:

Staff Present: CSO Manager D. Hayse, Recording Secretary K. Hodge

Others Present: Alderman Nick Milissis

The meeting was called to order at 5:59 p.m.

I. Roll Call - Roll Call was taken. All members were present.

II. Approve Minutes – Commissioner Urquhart made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 14, 2015 meeting. Commissioner Morrisroe stated that on page 2, the owner had not completed installation of the new front door and screen door, and she sought clarification on an owner’s attendance at adjudication. Pending those changes, she approved the minutes. The motion passed.

III. Action Items

1. **Review Case #15-21401**

The following people indicated their presence: reporting party Lisa Vercellin, 1870 Birch; victim/witness Officer Remoh Robert; and witness Sergeant Eric Hilderbrant.

Commissioner Morrisroe asked Ms. Vercellin to summarize the incident. Ms. Vercellin stated that her children were playing outside and they are aware of the offending dog, Rico, and know to go inside when they see him out. The day of the incident her daughter ran into the house screaming that Rico was loose. Ms. Vercellin ran out to see her neighbor, initial victim Ms. Julie Zajdel, holding her dog and standing between Rico and Ms. Vercellin’s young son and their dog. Rico was sizing them up and growling. Ms. Vercellin retrieved her son and then Rico jumped on her dog. Once Rico retreated, she brought her dog inside and stated that her dog was not injured. Once inside, she noticed Rico came back and was in her front yard.

Commissioner Morrisroe asked the age of her kids and if her dog was injured. Ms. Vercellin stated that her kids are 8 and 6 and they were playing with their dog in their side yard, which is not fenced in. Her dog was not injured.

Officer Robert stated that when he responded to the incident, Ms. Vercellin and the witness, Mr. Dave Kronenfeld, told him what happened. After speaking with them, he went to the initial victim’s house, at which point Rico reappeared and attacked him, but did not bite him. He then asked the other responding officers to step it up, and he was

able to get back in his squad. Officers and the police desk made multiple attempts to call into Rico's owner's residence, but there was no answer. Officer Robert stated that the garage door and front door of the residence were open and the dog would charge in and out. While responding officers were formulating a plan, Rico charged out and knocked over another neighbor who was trying to exit his own residence. He did not want medical attention.

Commissioner Morrisroe asked if the offending dog owners had a fence and about the Chicago Police Officer reported to be on scene. Sergeant Hilderbrant stated that there is a backyard fence, but the dog is aggressive when he's back there too. He also stated that Department members made multiple attempts to call into the owner's residence, but there was no answer. He believed the owners/residents heard the commotion outside and when the dog entered the main residence door, suddenly the door shut. Then a male and female exited the residence, and the female stated she was with Chicago Police Department and asked what was going on. Both subjects stated that the dog was not their dog, and that there is another dog in the neighborhood that looks like theirs. They refused to give their information and then they went back inside.

Commissioner Morrisroe asked if the offending dog is registered with the City and if tickets were issued. Sergeant Hilderbrant stated that the dog is registered and the tickets were sent via certified mail, as he made repeated attempts to contact the registered owner and the first time she was rude and the other times there was no answer. Recording Secretary Hodge sent the tickets via certified mail and has not yet received a return receipt.

The commissioners asked if there have been problems with the dog in the past. Sergeant Hilderbrant stated that the police department has had problems with the family. Ms. Vercellin stated that she has not called police regarding the dog before. Sergeant Hilderbrant and Officer Robert stated that the family harasses the neighbors and the neighbors are afraid of the family.

Commissioner Morrisroe asked if any of the dogs were injured. Officer Robert stated the original victim did not find any injuries on her dog, and Ms. Vercellin stated that her dog was not injured.

Commissioner Urquhart made a motion to classify Rico as being "dangerous". Commissioner Morrisroe seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

The commissioners reviewed the requirements of a "dangerous" animal, as well as the consequences if the animal attacks or bites again. They stated that it is the owner's responsibility to comply with the requirements and City staff follows up and checks compliance. Discussion also ensued about Ms. Vercellin trying to install a fence, but being denied by the City.

IV. Old Business

CSO Manager Hayse and the Commissioners discussed compiling a spreadsheet listing every case that has been reviewed by the Animal Commission since it was established.

V. New Business

None.

VI. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:32 p.m.