



**CITY OF PARK RIDGE
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

MINUTES

**Animal Commission Meeting
Mayor's Conference Room
Monday, August 15, 2011
6:00 p.m.**

Members Present: MaryAnn Gobbo, Bill Urquhart & Peg Morrisroe
Staff Present: CSO Coordinator C. Brown, Recording Secretary K. Delk
Others Present: Craig Adams, Park Ridge Journal

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

- I. Roll Call** - Roll Call was taken and all Commissioners were present.
- II. Approve Minutes** – Commissioner M. Gobbo made the motion to approve the minutes from the July 11, 2011 meeting. Commissioner B. Urquhart seconded. The motion carried.
- III. Action Items**

Commissioner M. Gobbo motioned to review Case #11-16099 first. The motion carried.

1. Review Case #11-16099

The Commissioners discussed the background on the case and asked that Ms. Calarco and Mr. Castelli describe what happened. Mr. Castelli was walking Rambo after an hour walk in the heat on a 6' lead. Ms. Calarco was also using a 6' lead. Mr. Castelli continued walking Rambo down the block while Ms. Calarco stood speaking to Ms. Gannon on the sidewalk. Mr. Castelli walked back toward Ms. Gannon and Ms. Calarco. Rambo was at close reach to Mr. Castelli when he lunged at Ms. Gannon.

Ms. Gannon disagreed and stated that Rambo was not at Mr. Castelli's side when he lunged at her; instead, he was on an extended leash. She did not touch the dog. She was going to, but she didn't. She was at least a couple feet away from the dog when it lunged.

Commissioner Morrisroe asked if Rambo was neutered. Ms. Calarco stated that he was not since he is a show dog.

Ms. Calarco stated that Rambo is very approachable, is good with children and that this is the first time he has bit anyone.

Ms. Gannon stated that she has had Rotweillers for 40 years. If Rambo were on a short leash, he would not have lunged. Her first instinct is to block. Chairwoman Gobbo asked if Ms. Gannon asked if she could approach Rambo. Ms. Gannon stated that she had been talking to Ms. Calarco for a while before meeting Rambo. Chairwoman Gobbo stated that no one should ever walk up to anyone's Rotweiler without permission, as they

are very protective of their owners. Ms. Gannon stated that she was standing on the public way not abusing or threatening the dog; therefore she does not feel she should be liable for the dog's behavior.

Commissioner Morrisroe stated that since Rambo is a show dog, he should be used to being around people. She asked if Rambo gave a warning growl before biting. Mr. Castrelli stated that he did not; he just lunged and bit Ms. Gannon.

Ms. Gannon did not receive any stitches for her puncture wounds, but her doctor did state that she suffered a vicious bite. She also expressed concerns related to her difficulty in contacting anyone to receive information related to Rambo being infected with rabies. CSO Coordinator Brown spoke with Cook County Animal Hospital and found out that the animal card was listed under the wrong address. Cook County is in charge of any further follow-up related to the animal once the card has been sent from the City. Once Cook County found out what had happened with the mislabeled card, she immediately contacted Ms. Gannon.

The Commissioners and Ms. Gannon discussed her treatment. Ms. Gannon stated that this experience was very frightening for her.

Commissioner Morrisroe stated that she was "on the fence" regarding her decision on this case. She feels that there are a lot of inconsistencies within the stories on both sides.

Chairwoman Gobbo stated that the dog should not have lunged no matter how long the leash was. The owner is responsible for the dog's actions.

The Commissioner agreed that Rambo should be considered "at-risk." They explained the requirements of this outcome to the owner.

Ms. Gannon asked how this incident was not considered "unprovoked." Chairwoman Gobbo stated that the owner did not have full control of the dog. Ms. Gannon approached the dog – therefore it was not unprovoked. Commissioner Morrisroe stated that the Commission does not label an animal as "dangerous" after one bite. This animal participates in dog shows and is around strangers all the time. If he was dangerous, he would be attacking people more often.

Ms. Calarco stated that she agrees 100% with the Commission's decision. She will take her dog to Topps for training. Commissioner Morrisroe stated that Ms. Calarco should be sure to provide the training facility full disclosure of this incident.

CSO Coordinator Brown stated that the Finance Department and the 911 Center would be notified that Rambo is an "at-risk" animal.

2. Review Case #11-16099

The Commissioners discussed the background on the case and asked the victim, Michael Frawley to describe what happened. Mr. Frawley stated that he was working at the neighbor's home, as he has done for the past several years, and when he was bending down to pick up his bush trimmer Chica was standing in front of him and then bit his arm. This occurred in front of the home and Chica was growling and showing teeth.

Commissioner Morrisroe asked Ms. Gizela-Wolan if her yard was fenced. She stated that it was only fenced in the rear. Commissioner Morrisroe suggested fencing in the property on all four sides. Ms. Gizela-Wolan has Chica tied up on a rope when she is outside. The reason Chica got out of the house unattended was because Ms. Gizela-Wolan asked her daughter to get something from the detached garage and when she opened the door, Chica ran out. Mr. Frawley stated that he had seen Chica outside earlier.

Chairwoman Gobbo asked how the dog went back into the house after the bite. Ms. Gizela-Wolan stated that she called Chica when she heard all of the noises outside. She normally does not bark unless people come on to their property or approach the house. Ms. Gizela-Wolan stated that she has since put a gate at the front of the property and has since considered fencing in all four sides of the property. Chica was enrolled in training for three weeks when she was eight months old. She has not gotten Chica spayed because she is unsure if she will breed her. She walks Chica daily and often takes her to the park with her kids. She uses a leather leash with a chain collar. Commissioner Morrisroe suggested having Chica spayed as it often calms down the dog.

Chairman Gobbo stated that dogs become more aggressive when they are tied up and therefore recommended the owner put a leash on Chica and walk her around the property.

The Commissioners agreed that Chica should be considered “at-risk.” They explained the requirements of this outcome to the owner.

CSO Coordinator Brown stated that the Finance Department and the 911 Center would be notified that Rambo is an “at-risk” animal.

IV. Old Business

None

V. New Business

None

VI. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.