

Animal Control Commission

November 9, 2020 at 5:30pm

Bloomington Animal Shelter – Zoom Meeting
3410 South Walnut Street, Bloomington, IN 47401

<u>MEMBERS</u>	<u>STAFF</u>	<u>PUBLIC</u>
Sita Cohen – present	Virgil Sauder	Briana Bontz
Chris Hazel - present	Lisa Ritchel	Leslie Hudson
Valerie Pena – not present	Jacquelyn Moore	Sue Allmon
Nancy Riggert - not present		
Laura Soto - present		
Rebecca Warren – present		

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chris moved to approve the October 12, 2020 minutes as written.
Sita seconded. Motion passes 4-0-0.

NEW BUSINESS

i. Request to remove Potentially Dangerous, Level II declaration - Bontz

Officer Pritchard was not in attendance, so Virgil summarized the information on the Bontz case from March, 2018. A call was received on February 1, 2018, that on January 25, 2018, a small poodle was in the small dog yard at Ferguson Park and Chief, a large husky mix owned by Briana Bontz, came up to it, grabbed it and shook it. The dogs were pulled a part with no injuries to the humans. There were however severe injuries to the poodle and it later had to be euthanized. On March 20, 2018 the Commission declared Chief Potentially Dangerous Level II due to the last line of the definition which reads, “*a Level 2 potentially dangerous animal is also an animal which causes severe injury or death to a domestic pet.*” Virgil concluded by stating that since March 20, 2018, there have been no further complaints or violations. On October 2, 2020, Virgil received a request from Ms. Bontz to have the declaration removed.

Briana Bontz began by clarifying that the dogs were not in the small dog area of the park. She added that the other dog owner was in agreement with this statement. Ms. Bontz explained that since the incident, she has limited Chief’s access to people and animals. She has worked with a few dog trainers and is currently working with Leslie Hudson a CPDT-KA certified professional dog trainer to better understand dog behavior. Ms. Bontz affirmed that she will continue to limit Chief’s access to people and animals, will continue to train him, will continue to use a six foot lead when on walks or a training leash in her yard, and not go to any dog parks. She added that the incident happened just one month after adopting him from the animal shelter. The members then asked Ms. Bontz a few questions about Chief. Ms. Bontz explained that since their yard is not fenced and since she can’t go to dog parks, Chief has not been able to run. She hopes to provide him run time in a fenced in area with no other dogs to help him expend his energy. She added that Chief’s reactivity is not fear based, but excitement based. Dr. Soto asked if there was a chance another dog could cross their path. Ms. Bontz answered that they would turn around and avoid the dog. She has also started desensitizing him to a basket muzzle. Rebecca thanked her for being so careful, taking the declaration very seriously and not taking any risks.

Leslie Hudson was present and explained that she has had four sessions with Chief. She stated that he is extremely excitable and driven so they are working on impulse control. If he sees another dog, he gets very excited, but can be redirected with food, treats, or a toy. He needs exercise and an outlet for his high energy. Leslie stated that Chief would really benefit from running in a large dog yard to release some of that energy. There are a couple of options for this such as Applied Canine Behaviors and Mad4MyDog.

Ms. Bontz continued and explained that she takes Chief on one short walk and one long walk a day with occasional hikes. Hikes work great for him especially if there is an incline. She also plays with him in their basement. Ms. Bontz added that she adopted Chief because he was active and she herself is active and loves to exercise. She has also started jogging with him on the way back home from their walks.

The Commission discussed. Sita stated that Briana has done everything that could be expected and believes that she will continue to do so. Chris commended her on adopting a high energy dog with issues and not giving up.

Sita moved to remove the declaration.
Chris seconded. Motion passes 4-0-0.

REPORTS

i. Animal Care and Control Report

Virgil explained that the statistics for October show less intake than in the previous year and that adoption rates have increased. Virgil stated that two weeks ago Dogs Play for Life came to the shelter to train the staff to do dog play groups. Play groups reduce stress, the dogs become more adoptable, and the staff can better see their personalities. The staff had a very good experience and have since been doing daily play groups. On Sunday there will be an outdoor adoption event using the adoption trailer due to the high number of cats in the shelter. It has been challenging facilitating adoptions at the shelter under the current COVID requirements, but the staff has been very creative and has done a great job!

ii. MCHA Update

Rebecca explained that they have been in their new building for seven months and have seen 2400 animals so far! Due to high demand for services, they are currently booking wellness visits out to January and February and sick appointments out two weeks. Unfortunately, they have been seeing an increase in no shows. The food pantry has also been very busy and is now working with Rural Transit and other food pantries to help better serve those in need. They have just received a \$20,000 grant that will be used for their emergency housing program. Rebecca concluded by sharing that she has greatly enjoyed the past five years on the Commission as the Major's appointee for the MCHA. She will, however, be stepping down as of January as she will be starting graduate school at Michigan State! Sue Allmon, who is on the MCHA board, will be taking her place. The Commission members all expressed their thanks to Rebecca for her service.

iii. AMC Update

Virgil explained that the AMC meeting for October was cancelled due to some connection issues. This month's meeting had three cases, and the December meeting will have five plus

cases including potentially dangerous and habitual offender cases that were originally set for October. The AMC is also using Zoom for their meetings.

ANIMAL CONTROL COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Virgil explained that there is no update on the pet retail issue. He does believe that the groups involved are in beginning discussions with the Major.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sue Allmon was present and thanked everyone for an interesting meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:15pm.