

Safety Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
January 15, 2015

The Safety Committee met in Council Chambers on Monday, January 12, 2015 following the Personnel Committee with these members present:

Alex Rolletta, Chair

Dee Hall for Marc Guthrie

Jeff Rath

Carol Floyd

We wish to report:

1. A meeting to listen to residents' concerns regarding dog ordinances was conducted.

Opening Comments by Mr. Rolletta: I would like to thank everyone for coming out tonight; there is no legislation on the agenda this evening so no official decisions will be made tonight. I called this meeting because a number of individuals expressed concern at a recent City Council meeting about these ordinances. This is not a question answer session with the Committee or any official in particular it is more of an opportunity for the Committee to listen to concerns from residents this evening. I know some of you may have concerns regarding our Animal Control Officer. These concerns need to be addressed in a process that is properly documented and fair to all sides. I want to make sure your concerns are addressed promptly and properly so I would like to remind everyone that City Council is not the venue about a city employee. If you are having an issue with the Animal Control Officer Safety Director Spurgeon has brought some complaint forms this evening, so please fill those out and return them to the Police Department. I see no reason for this meeting to last longer than about an hour. That should give everyone amply time to come up and state their concerns for the public record. I do want to make sure everyone that wishes to speak has the opportunity to do so. Please be considerate of others when you are giving your comments so that everyone has time to speak if they want. If we find that it is getting late and not everyone gets a chance to speak I would encourage you to attend next week's full Council meeting and bring up those concerns during citizens comments.

The following citizens commented at the Safety Committee meeting:

Rhonda Loomis, 870 W Church St; Charles Moore 120 N 24th St; Tammy Norton Dayton, OH; Dwight Hardler 3700 Hadleys Mill Rd; Terry Lyle 294 Stare Rd; Steven Smith 314 N 10th St; Tammy Mitchell 26 E Channel; Debbie Anthony 1660 King Rd Apt A; John Kirk 58 N Lake Dr; Samantha Bowlee 214 Rugg Ave; Georgiana Accord 10504

Pleasant Valley Rd, Frazeyburg; Lori Swartzcoff Columbus; Amanda whom would not give her name and address, Ron Accord 476 Allston Ave; Shane Hickman 135 Van Vorris; Darla 1290 Marne Rd, Nicki Arter Jobes Rd.

In summary of this meeting the citizens who spoke were upset about their pets being labeled exotic, the manner in which the Animal Control Officer performs his duties and how he enforces the Codified Ordinance with respect to Section 618. The citizens expressed that they felt discriminated against because of their choice of pet and feel the Animal Control Officer has discretionary power. The citizens are asking that City Council draft legislation to remove the Breed Specific Legislation (BSL) from the City's Codified Ordinances.

The Law Director addressed the citizens in the audience and advised them of the process in which to change the City ordinance. They first must have a Council Member who agrees with their position and that Council Member can meet with the Law Director to draft up a piece of legislation to be present to the Safety Committee and then the debate can begin between the members of Council until a vote is taken.

Councilman Jeff Rath has agreed to work on legislation with the Law Director to change the BSL in the City of Newark.

Alex Rolletta, Chair