

MINUTES COUNCIL MEETING
REYNOLDSBURG CITY COUNCIL
March 10, 2014

President Pro Tempore Chris Long called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Members of Council present: Barth R. Cotner, Chris Long, Daniel J. Skinner, Esq., Scott A. Barrett, Cornelius McGrady, III.

Approval of minutes of regular Council meeting held February 24, 2014.

Approval of Agenda- 2 changes. Holding item 13 and adding 13a, an Executive Session for the purposes of discussing negotiations with other political subdivisions respecting request for economic development assistance.

All voted "Aye" in favor of changes to the agenda.

Community Comments and Requests:

Mr. Long: I do have a few speaker slips here and they all seem to be centered around Chapter 505. Unfortunately, President Joseph was unable to be here this evening so nothing is going to be voted on as far as the final appointment for the Ad Hoc Committee, but we will honor the people who have taken the time to come here and speak this evening. One reminder, it is a 3 minute rule, it is not meant to be an engagement between and audience and Council members, you're more than welcome to come up and make your statement.

Lori Schwartzkopf 6450 Red Coach Lane, Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068, Tonight I want to talk about support for changing Chapter 505 in Reynoldsburg. It has been said that there are very few of us interested in changing this Chapter 505 legislation and that the majority are not from Reynoldsburg. This is far from the truth. I have been requesting information from the city since the beginning. I have 37 legitimate letters from residents for repealing this ban. I have counted only those letters with verifiable addresses. I did not include doubles nor those that wrote in from outside of the city. There are 7 letters asking that the ban remain in place. There is one from the police chief stating "I'm not a huge advocate for over regulation, but in this case I am. Your Police Chief seems to realize that this is over regulation. I understand that being a police officer is a very dangerous job. I wouldn't want to be one, I wouldn't want any of my family members to be a police officer but it's a necessary task. The people addressed by your police department represent a very small portion of your overall population, the people you are targeting for this ban is even smaller, so I'd like you to keep things in perspective, that we're dealing with a very very small part of the population that you are targeting or profiling with this ban and not the vast majority that are responsible dog owners. The Pit Bulls for Reynoldsburg Facebook page had 411 "likes" in July when we first respectfully asked you to consider changing this law. When I typed this out, the page had 1835 (1852 at speech time) "likes" with Columbus and Reynoldsburg numbers very close now. We have 430 people listed as Reynoldsburg residents and 468 from Columbus. Keep in mind that these are not exact. I firmly believed I lived in Reynoldsburg in 2007 when I joined Facebook and I list Columbus as my city because it is more recognizable. These numbers are getting big--fast! We gain 20-60 "likes" every week. The Reynoldsburg numbers are growing quickly and you have your police department that thank for that. Your Police department

has gone hog wild writing citations at an alarming rate are having a positive effect on our campaign. There have been 5 or 6 people already targeted, 2 in one night last week and people are starting to realize that there is a ban. A lot of people aren't even aware that this legislation exists and they're just now finding out when they get the police officer coming to their door. The most recent report about the dog shot in the face has over 6000 views and 100 shares which is off the charts. So the word is getting out, people are finding out about the ban and don't like it, so hopefully we'll see a lot more participation here in the future.

Mr. Long: Ms. Schwartzkopf could you please wrap it up.

Ms. Schwartzkopf: Yes. Thank you. I want to close by saying that we were very disheartened to hear Councilman Clemens say that the Ad Hoc Committee being put together to evaluate Reynoldsburg's current Chapter 505 was a "waste of time" and that it was "leading people on" and "giving them hope." We assume you mean that the answer is "no" and will continue to be "no" regardless of the Ad Hoc recommendations. You know, we thank Council for moving this issue forward but if our concerns are not adequately addressed by the ad hoc committee, we will do as you suggested and take you to court—one citizen at a time, if we have to. We have also been investigating our options for recall referendum for hostile members of Council and elected members of the city administration." We know that we can influence 2015 elections but we also know that many incumbents will run uncontested and we just don't want to take that chance. We want someone that will listen to us today. I have more important city information that I need to share with you. I will see you in two weeks. Thank you.

Mr. Long: Thank you. Any questions for Ms. Schwartzkopf? Thank you. Next speaker slip is for Norm Brusk.

Norm Brusk: I understand, I'll keep it shorter than that Mr. Long. Council I just wanted to bring forward that this issue has gone on and on and on. I think it's time, I know you're not going to do it tonight because it's not on the agenda, but it's time to make a decision. How much do we need to know? How much information is enough information. All we're doing is on and on and on. You've spent far much longer on this issue than on our tax revenue or income revenue aspect that we still haven't gotten resolved and this is 6 years that's going on. We need to make decisions, that's what leadership is all about. I don't mean to chastise everybody on the board, but doggone it I am frustrated, I've been in this city some 30 some years, I've attended more meetings than almost everybody on the here including the Mayor, no he may have attended more than I have, but I've been at the meetings and this is the most frustrated I've ever been and that's saying a lot, including the cat leash debacle. That's all I really have to, I guess I'll respond a little bit to the...

Mr. Long: This is not intended to be a debate.

Mr. Brusk: Then I will not speak on the other one.

Mr. Long: Any questions for Mr. Brusk? Thank you Norm. Next speaker slip is Mrs. Stephanie Mather. Thank you maam please come to the podium state your name and once again please keep it to 3 minutes.

Stephanie Mather, 8555 E. Main Street and I am a Reynoldsburg resident. I moved into Reynoldsburg in October based on all of the good things that I heard about Reynoldsburg. Back in

2012, me and my fiancé adopted a pit bull pup because we are not able to have children so she became our child. We moved into Reynoldsburg and we just found out on Friday when we got a citation for owning a pit bull pup. She has never done anything wrong, she is registered, she has a microchip, she is insured, she has everything that the state of Indiana and state of Ohio were requiring at the time. Now, we're being told that we have to get rid of our child because of what other owners are doing to their dogs. Our dog is the most docile, we have 3 cats, she plays with them, she lays in our lap, she is just like our child and now the ban is telling us, we have to get rid of our child or we have to murder her. I don't think it's fair. If we're going to be bias on this, then why not get rid of the men in Reynoldsburg because they have the biggest rate of domestic violence. If we're talking violence, get rid of the ones that are being violent. We treat men and women on domestic violence case by case. I think we should be doing the same thing with animals. Not by just breed, not by their genes but by what they're doing. Because me and my fiancé are proper owners and we do take care of our animals and we especially make sure our dog, our pit bull 2 year old pup is well mannered. That's all I wanted to address tonight.

Mr. Long: Thank you mam. Any Councilmembers have questions for the speaker? Thank you very much. Our final speaker tonight is Sandy Wester-willer.

Sandy Wester-Willer, Tanya Terrace: Thank you for allowing me to speak with you again, this isn't easy for me to be up here with you guys and I just feel like I have a voice and I want to be heard. While I appreciate what I'm hearing from everybody else in this room, I too have my opinions and for some reason I just can't get rid of it. I'm saddened that Mr. Joseph is not here because I feel that I'm directing a lot of this to him. So I'll just carry on. Before this Ad Hoc committee is chosen, which apparently it won't happen tonight, I have one more statement to our Council and the new committee. I want to know which of you on Council, are willing to accept the responsibility of one and I mean only one incident with a pit bull where a resident of a visitor of your community is maimed, mauled or killed. Mr. Joseph, any special interest groups advocating the review and/or removal of this ban keep touting the need of this committee as a means of getting scientific results of this issue. Everyone already knows behavioral science is not exact. It is not on people, certainly not on animals nor is it on behavioral numbers or stats. There are way too many variables. Numbers and averages can be skewed anyway you want for someone or some organization by location population, time of day, the list goes on and on. So your push to get scientific facts means nothing when you have visual, cold hard reality staring at you in the face. Visual proof of damage on children, through the elderly, unsuspecting victims whose lives will be changed forever. Before this ad hoc committee is chosen and its members start, my hope now, with Council's permission, is to not only have the pit bull ban remain in its current form without modifications of insurance, muzzles, and fences that clearly do not work, but to have an addendum to include pit bull mixes, where if there is not verifiable proof that already exists if it is a mix of the pit bull, that the ban trumps and there is immediate removal or euthanizing of the dog period. I would further propose that the experts and residents now committed to being on the committee contact some of the families whom have had incidents with the family dog. The dog raised from a pup, where the continual response I keep reading from the family is we just don't know what happened, we've never had a problem before. The family dog that has killed or maimed a family member. Then tell us all again how scientific numbers disprove mutilation. Gahanna and other towns are starting to revise more restrictions on their own town's ordinances. I ask all of you on this Council to continue to be leaders and not followers on this ban for the safety of your community. You recently had an occurrence with your own officers where a pit bull was shot in the head. No owner came forward, the dog had to be put

down. That is heartbreaking to me for any animal to be put down for any reason. But why? Because of a dogs behavior, a known behavior of the breed and so many people do nothing to correct the problem. So I only ask that with everybody behind me that wants you to change your mind on the removal of this ban, I personally see no reason why it should. We don't have a huge problem and we should not start having a problem. That's all, thank you for letting me speak again.

Mr. Long: thank you. Any questions?

Mr. Barrett: Quick response. Thanks for talking everybody. I just want to reiterate, if you've been following this very closely, the Ad hoc committee that we're trying to form is to get more information. It's not to change anything. It's to get more information and bring it to the Council. Clearly, this is a serious issue for the community. We realize that. So instead of *** **** we're going to do some research. To your point, on both sides, there's probably needing to be revisions and modernization of it. It doesn't cover all of the breeds and it is kind of specific to one. That's the whole, and I think that kind of gets lost here. I just want to take a minute and make sure everybody was really was aware of that. This is not a decision on this Council's part to skirt a decision making effort or to otherwise change something that's already there, it's taking the community's response, putting some action to it, get more information so we can make an informed decision. Ok? Thank you.

Mr. Long: thank you Councilman Barrett. Any further comments from Council? Hearing none, that will take us to:

Communications:

Reports:

Motion (s)

10a. That the Council of the City of Reynoldsburg does hereby approve the Mayor's appointment of Dan F. Havener to the Licking County T.I.R.C. - - -Cotner. Finance.

Motion for adoption by Mr. Cotner. Second by Mr. McGrady.

Clerk called the roll, votes as follows: Barth Cotner, "Aye", Chris Long "Aye" Dan Skinner "Aye", Scott Barrett "Aye", Cornelius McGrady, III. "Aye", Motion carries.

LEGISLATION FOR FIRST READING

ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING MAYOR TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH KUSTOM SIGNAL, INC., FOR THE PURCHASE OF NEW CAMERAS FOR MARKED VEHICLES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. (to pass after second reading)--- Long. Safety.

Mr. Long: this item comes from the Safety Committee, I'd like for it to stand for its first reading and be referred back to Council.

ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING DONATED FUNDS TO ACCOUNT 110.111.5362 FROM THE UNAPPROPRIATED GENERAL FUND.--- Cotner. Finance.

Mr. Cotner: This comes from Finance, I would also like it to stand for first reading and return to committee.

Mr. Long: thank you, this will be returned back to Committee. This brings us to item 13a. I'll entertain a motion for us to adjourn to Executive Session. So moved by Councilman Skinner, seconded by Councilman Barrett.

Clerk called the roll, votes as follows: Barth Cotner, "Aye", Chris Long "Aye" Dan Skinner "Aye", Scott Barrett "Aye", Cornelius McGrady, III. "Aye", Return for adjournment only.

Executive Session Called.

Re-convene:

Members of Council present: Barth R. Cotner, Chris Long, Daniel J. Skinner, Esq., Scott A. Barrett, Cornelius McGrady, III.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Doug Joseph, President of Council

April L. Beggerow, Clerk of Council