

DOG ADVISORY COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING

THURSDAY, March 26, 2015

Cass Gilbert Room; 1st Floor

City Hall; 235 Grand Street

“SUMMARY MINUTES”

PRESENT: **Rebecca Calabrese**
 Doreen DelBianco
 Lt. Dan Lauer (WPD)
 Terry Caldarone (Chairwoman)

ALSO PRESENT: **Mayor Neil O’Leary**
 Town Clerk, Antoinette (Chick) Spinelli
 Alderman Ernest Brunelli
 Staff Attorney Dawn DeSantis
 Deputy Police Chief Christopher Corbett
 Lobbyist & Esq. Robert (Bobby) Shea, Jr.; Shea Law
 Lobbyist & Esq. Jeffrey (Zeke) Zyjeski; Gaffney,
 Bennett & Assocs.
 Lobbyist Ashley Calabrese; Updike, Kelly & Spellacy
 Law Firm

ABSENT: **NONE**

- CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:00 P.M. BY TERRY CALDARONE
- UNDERSTANDING THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS: Ashley Calabrese, Jeffrey (Zeke) Zyjeski & Robert (Bobby) Shea
 - Find a “champion” legislator from the appropriate district who will be a voice at the Capital for proposed Bill;
 - Develop language and propose a Bill to the appropriate committee at the Legislature;
 - Monitor the proposed Bill through the process;
 - Public hearing will be held for the proposed Bill;
 - Committee will draft statutory language based on the public hearing
 - Talk to committee members to secure the vote to get the Bill out of committee and go through the process
 - House Bills come out of committee and start on the House floor (needs to be voted on by the 151 House of Representative members and then up to the Senate to be voted on by the 36 Senate members;

Proposed Bills that have moved out of committee and onto the Legislative floor are:

Regulation 14-77: Pet Stores: Connecticut has one of the most comprehensive laws in the country relating to regulation of dogs being sold in pet stores. Pet stores in Connecticut cannot purchase dogs from so-called “puppy mills” (unregistered breeders that are not in compliance with USDA laws);

House Bill 5070: “Beagle Freedom Project”: Requiring higher education institutions who use Beagles to test on will now be required to try & adopt these dogs out instead of euthanizing them as they have done in the past;

House Bill 5361: Prohibits insurance companies from underwriting dogs based on breed;

House Bill 361: Proposed by Senator Martin Looney that would provide Class E felony penalties for any person who maliciously or intentionally maims or kills an animal;

House Bill 1128: A perpetrator of serious animal abuse cannot get accelerated rehabilitation; cannot get “off the hook” for the penalties by taking accelerated rehabilitation

OTHER ITEMS BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE FOR NEXT YEAR INCLUDE:

- A proposed Bill by State Rep (Stonington) Diana Urban is the #1 animal advocate in the Legislature; Bill would allow an advocate for the abused animal to speak in court;
- Ongoing task force in Hartford to change the name of Dog "Pounds" to Dog "Shelters;"
- Looking towards city officials to work with residents and rescues to adopt out more dogs to families;
- Task force will be making their recommendation in the next few months for legislature for next year;
- Studies have found that there is interconnection between animal cruelty and violent crimes against persons;
- Department of Children and Families to work closely with the Department of Agriculture to monitor animal and child abuse which are often related or interconnected;
- A Bill that recently passed the Environment Committee bans the sale of ivory in Connecticut; New York and New Jersey passed similar laws last year

SUGGESTIONS FROM ALDERMAN ERNEST BRUNELLI:

- An investigating officer should have the power on sight to make an arrest if property is not zoned for such;
- Proper enclosures for dogs

No votes were taken during this meeting

- ADJOURNED @ 8:00 P.M.

MJD/pmd