

DANGEROUS AND VICIOUS DOG TASK FORCE
McHenry County Government Center
Administration Building
667 Ware Road
Woodstock, IL 60098

MINUTES OF MONDAY, APRIL 10, 2006

Chairman Koehler called the Dangerous and Vicious Dog Task Force meeting to order at 3:40p.m. The following members were present: Ken Koehler; Jamie Rein (as representatives for States Attorney Lou Bianchi); Pat McNulty, Health Department; Dr. Edin Mehanovic; Jerry Rivard; UnderSheriff Lowery; and Ann Gilman. Dr. Brian Sager; Nick Provenzano; Dr. Richard Gorski; John Jung, Jr.; Anna May Miller; and Sandra Salgado were absent. Also in attendance: the press.

Kenneth D. Koehler, Chairman	
Lou Bianchi	Ann Gilman
Dr. Richard Gorski	John Jung, Jr.
Pat McNulty	Dr. Edin Mehanovic
Anna May Miller	Sheriff Keith Nygren
Tracey Odishoo	Nick Provenzano
Jerry Rivard	Dr. Brian Sager
Sandra Salgado	

MINUTES

With the lack of a quorum, no minutes were considered.

Chairman Koehler stated that Mr. Provenzano had started a new job and would not be available for afternoon meetings. In addition, Tracey Odishoo will be removed from the membership since she has resigned from the Board of Health.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

NEW BUSINESS/OLD BUSINESS

Update on Legislation: Ms. Rein reported that House Bill 4238 recently was passed by the State Senate and State House of Representatives and only needs the Governor's signature to the sign bill into law. HB 4238 eliminated the wording that following: "No fine or penalty may exceed \$50 for any one offense and changed from a Class 4 felony to a Class 3 felony if an owner of a vicious dog fails to keep the dog in an enclosure or fails to spay or neuter the dog and the dog inflicts serious physical injury and the attack is unprovoked." The following language was added; "When a defendant commits any felony and the defendant used, possessed, exercised control over, or otherwise directed an animal to assault a law enforcement officer engaged in the execution of his or her official duties or in furtherance of the criminal activities of an organized gang in which the defendant is engaged." Ms. Rein noted that the wording used was unchanged from what was provided by our State's Attorney Department.

Ms. Rein went on to report that House Bill 2946 was also passed by both Houses on April 7, 2006.

Also of note, House Joint Resolution 010 is being considered. This Resolution, if passed, will implement an Animal Control Task Force to examine the Animal Control Act. Membership, as noted in this proposed Resolution would include a representative from the McHenry County Stat's Attorney. A similar House Resolution is also being considered but does not specify a McHenry County Representative in the membership.

Chairman Koehler asked if any consideration had been given to enable a representative to declare a dog vicious instead of a Judge. Ms. Rein responded that this had been included in a proposed "breed specific" bill that did not "go anywhere."

Chairman Koehler stated that he would contact Senator Althoff and State Representatives Frank and Tryon to ask their support for the above noted issues.

Dog Bite Classifications: Ms. Rein reported that she had been able to locate only one State (Indiana) that has any kind of animal bite classification system. She noted that in talking with the Indians State Board of Health, they stated that although they do have this classification system most people do not use it and it is not very effective. Chairman Koehler pointed out that such a report could be used in both the criminal and civil liability aspect. He also stated that a photograph of the injury may provide additional evidence. Mr. McNulty pointed out that a picture does not always

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tell the complete story and there could be times when requiring such details would decrease the reporting of animal bites. He stated that 600 to 800 animal bites were reported to the Health Department last year, noting that by State Statute all animal bites must be reported. Mr. Lowery stated that the Sheriff's Department usually takes photographs of all domestic violence victims and such evidence can be very powerful. He stated that the department could provide training to animal control officers. Chairman Koehler stated perhaps this would be an issue to bring up with the State Task Force.

Breeder Permits: Ms. Rein provided a review of two possible categories for breeding permits (major breeders and minor breeders). A major breeder would be the breeding of more than one cat or one dog in a 12 month period. Members discussed the draft and felt that dog breeding should only be considered at this time. Mr. McNulty noted that this issue is also being discussed by the Animal Control Advisory Board. Chairman Koehler stated that this issue will be discussed in more detail once legislation is passed.

Chairman Koehler stated that he has become aware of pet sitting and dog day care services being offered in the County. He noted that no license is required for these businesses. He raised concern that this presents another eliminate since many dogs act different in unfamiliar surroundings. He noted he has only heard about these services and wanted the members to be aware of their existence in the County.

Mr. McNulty reported that the Animal Control Advisory Board is also interested in cat registration and will be discussing these issues at their meetings.

Executive Session

None

Adjournment

Noting no further business, Ms. Gilman made a motion, seconded by Mr. McNulty to adjourn the meeting at 4:10 p.m. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

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MOTIONS APPROVED: