

PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MINUTES

September 28, 2015

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Groat at 6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Deborah Groat, Henk Berbee, Nevin Taylor

OTHERS PRESENT: John Gore, Mike Andrako, Amanda Morris, Mark Reams, Tim Aslaner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes for the meeting on August 24, 2015 were approved as presented.

AGENDA:

Comments from Citizens:

Discuss a Resolution Opposing the Legalization of Marijuana: Mrs. Groat asked Mr. Aslaner to explain why he is suggesting the passage of Issue 2 and the failure of Issue 3. Mr. Aslaner said this draft of the resolution was mailed to you on Friday, but he made a couple of changes to the draft today after talking for a while with Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Zwiezig, those changes are in red.

Mr. Aslaner said after the council meeting, it was his understanding that Council would like some language about Issue 2 and details about zoning limitations. Issue 3 is the legislation that legalizes marijuana for both medicinal and recreational use. Issue 2 is the anti-monopoly amendment. He said it is clear that Issue 3 will create a monopoly for the growth and distribution of marijuana. Issue 2 was created to preclude all monopolies that would be created. He explained that Issue 2 would trump Issue 3. Mrs. Groat said Issue 3 grants the monopoly to legalize marijuana. Mayor Gore added that if Issue 2 passes and Issue 3 passes there could be a legal battle over which one received the most votes.

He said he tried to create a resolution that included both Issue 2 and Issue 3. His main focus was on public health, public safety and the rights that are being taken away from municipalities in being able to regulate and zone. Mrs. Groat said she is not concerned about the effects it will have on individuals but the lack of control local government entities will have. She thinks the resolution is very good.

Mrs. Groat said she received an email from Mrs. Richardson, but since Mr. Aslaner spoke with her feels he has included her suggestions. Mrs. Groat likes the changes that were added to the resolution.

Mrs. Groat asked Mr. Berbee and Mr. Taylor if they would like to bring this resolution before Council, it is her understanding it can be done in one reading. Mr. Taylor stated that was correct. Mr. Taylor said before he moves to send the resolution to Council, he asked if we will have one of the growing farms in Union County. Mayor Gore replied not that he is aware of.

Mr. Taylor moved to send the resolution to Council, Mr. Berbee seconded the motion. All committee members were in favor of sending the resolution to Council.

Discuss the prohibiting of dogs in Partners Park: Mrs. Groat explained that the reason this was brought back to committee was because Mr. Reams made some very good arguments. She said after everyone has a chance to speak, we will decide if we want to make any amendments to the legislation.

Mr. Reams explained his point is we already have existing legislation that can be used to prohibit dogs in certain areas as needed. He said if we have an event going on we can post signs, but if something changes in the future and we want to exclude them from a certain area we can use the existing legislation. If we redevelop the park, then we can go back and change it. We also need to add a penalty clause that was missing from the currently legislation that is in front of Council.

Mrs. Groat said we do have an amendment to add, which is the penalty clause that states “A violation of this provision will result in a minor misdemeanor.” Mr. Taylor said he feels that \$150.00 fine is a little steep and would like to see the penalties be the same as they are for smoking on City-owned property. Mr. Aslaner explained that what the penalties were for the smoking on City-owned property. Mayor Gore suggested that they add the amendment after everyone has had a chance to speak.

Mr. Reams said we have areas at the pool where it makes sense not to have dogs. Mr. Reams does not understand how we elevate one group of people at one park and another at another park. Mr. Taylor said we look at Partners Park as a people park, and this is why he does not have a problem agreeing to prohibit pets at Partners Park. We have a dog park for the dogs and other parks that fulfill other needs. He said it is a sensitive subject but he feels that we have other parks that people can walk their pets in. Mr. Andrako explained the one difference with the park across the street from all the others is you were mentioning areas in the parks like the pool, which is a part of Legion Park just like the splash pad is a part of Partners Park. After talking with the Administration, this is the only park we own that we want to prohibit pets throughout the entire park. With the pavilion, if a dog relieves themselves we have to power wash it off, and with the splash pad that causes health concerns. The green space has been used for yoga, movie nights where kids are laying on the grass. We are trying to keep that area as pristine as possible.

Mayor Gore said we still do not know what we have across the street, we have something that has far exceeded our expectations and has already become a community staple. He feels that the concern is if we put the signs up on the day of events, that citizens will question it because the pets were allowed the day before but not during the event. This is why Mayor Gore asked to have Public Affairs look into making this a no pets, except service animals. Mr. Andrako said we want to keep the sidewalks open to your animals but the idea of taking your pet into the park but walking around the park is ok.

Mrs. Morris said if you are in another park like Eljer and having a picnic under a shelter house, and a pet owner comes up you can go to another shelter. If you are at Partners Park, the pavilion takes up over half of the park. If a family is having dinner at the pavilion there is nowhere for them to go if a dog is in the pavilion. She said over half of the park is not safe to use with dogs,

and we would like to use the grass for events. This park is unique and not like any of our other parks.

Mr. Aslaner said after talking with Mr. Reams about this, what he mistakenly replaced the amended section with the existing legislation. He can add the new provision instead of replace the current provision. He said he will rewrite the legislation and leave the existing and add the amended section in as well.

Mrs. Groat stated that the suggestion is to bring this forward with a penalty clause (same as the no smoking on City-owned property) and pass it or fail it at Council, and then ask Mr. Aslaner to go back and clean up the whole section of 951.02.

The meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.