

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CLAIR SHORES ANIMAL ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
July 10, 2023**

Board Members Present:

John D. Caron, City Council Liaison
Jason Allen, Chief of Police
Abrial J. Barrett, City Clerk

Also Present:

Robert Ihrie, City Attorney
Brandon Davis, Animal Control Deputy
Matthew Vican, Petitioner

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Mr. Caron. A quorum was present.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Barrett, seconded by Allen to approve the minutes of the June 20, 2023 meeting as presented.

Ayes: All - 3

3. MATTHEW VICAN - REQUESTING FOUR DOGS AT 21765 DOWNING STREET

Background Brief: Matthew Vican is requesting a variance on Ordinance 6.5 Exception to Limitation on Number of Dogs or Cats.

Previous Action: The letter of request for variance states that Matthew Vican has 4 dogs. He recently added the fourth dog and is in the process of finding a home for one of the dogs.

Economic Impact: N/A

Mr. Vican has four dogs Daisy, a five-year-old American Pit Bull, Blue, an eight-year-old American Pit Bull, Tank, a three-year-old American Pit Bull, and Betty Boop, a four-month-old American Bully.

Mr. Caron asked the petitioner to give a brief description of his situation.

Mr. Vican said that Daisy is the fourth dog he is asking to keep. He explained that she recently bit someone that walked into his backyard unannounced. The animal control is involved and he said that he received a vicious dog ticket. He noted that Daisy has high anxiety but is not a vicious dog. He added that his dogs are his kids and are well taken care of.

Mr. Caron confirmed that Daisy is six years old and Betty is the newest dog.

Mr. Vican said yes, Betty is seven months old and he clarified that all of the dogs have licenses except Daisy.

Mr. Davis said that other than this complaint there have not been any other incidences.

Mr. Allen said that he did not see any other incidences either.

Mr. Vican said that his dogs stay in the yard.

Mr. Allen asked if we received any responses from the neighbors.

Ms. Barrett said no.

Mr. Vican said that the neighbor next to him has a dog and his dogs love running along the fence with her.

Mr. Davis pointed out that Mr. Vican said that the victim came into the yard unannounced but they were there for a birthday party.

Mr. Vican said correct, they came early and he was in the process of bringing them inside when they walked into the backyard.

Item #3 Continued

Mr. Davis said that the injuries to the child were relatively severe. He asked what precautions are being taken to prevent this from happening again.

Mr. Vican said that Daisy is not allowed to be around anyone that she does not know. He said she goes downstairs if anyone is over and there are no kids allowed over.

Mr. Allen asked if he is still searching for a home.

Mr. Vican said he was and he will if he has to rehome her. He noted that he has had her since she was eight weeks old and does not want to rehome her.

Mr. Caron asked when is the court date.

Mr. Vican said August 8.

Mr. Caron said we need to allow the court time to adjudicate the issue and he noted the lot size is small for the number of dogs.

Mr. Vican said he has a big lot.

Mr. Caron indicated that part of the reason we have the three-dog limit is due to lot sizes. He said in other circumstances when they have granted this variance, for example, it was due to having small dogs. He indicated that having four large dogs on a property can be overwhelming. He suggested that we allow three months which gives us time for the court case to go through and time for the petitioner to look into animal rescue homes. He noted that if the court has a different decision, it would override what we have to say.

Mr. Vican said it will be hard for Daisy to adjust and she will probably have to be put down.

Mr. Allen said that the rescue organizations will have contacts for different places that can help find her a good home.

Mr. Vican said that his dogs are his support.

Ms. Barrett asked if we want to table the motion to allow for the three months and then revisit.

Mr. Caron said yes, lets come back in three months and review what the court said.

Mr. Vican clarified that in the meantime he needs to look for a home for Daisy.

Mr. Davis said yes and he noted that the issue is not so much about having four dogs but maintaining a vicious dog.

Mr. Caron said after the court process the city clerk will follow up in three months to schedule a new meeting.

Moved by Barrett, seconded by Allen to TABLE the variance request to Animal Ordinance Chapter 6.5 Exception to Limitation on Number of Dogs or Cats allowing petitioner a fourth dog at 21765 Downing Street for three months or pending the Court's decision.

Ayes: All – 3

5. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION – None

Motion by Allen, supported by Barrett to adjourn at 10:10 a.m.

Ayes: All – 3

Prepared by: Katie Bala
Recording Secretary

Reviewed by: Abrial J. Barrett
City Clerk