

City of West Branch, IA – Animal Control Commission

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 12th, 2024 – 6:30 PM – West Branch City Council Chambers

Present: Alen Beyer, DVM (Chair), Amy Lynch (Vice-Chair), Nate Bartz (Secretary), Sgt Cathy Steen (WB Police), Officer Brad Longett (WB Police, and Jessica Brown (City of WB)

Absent: N/A

Next meeting: Tuesday, January 14th, 2025 – 6:30 PM – West Branch City Council Chambers

1. Call to Order – Dr. Beyer

2. Roll Call – Dr. Beyer

3. Announcements

- None

4. Discussion

Old Business:

- Minutes from 10/8 meeting – Amy made motion to approve. Nate seconded. Motion carried.
- Discussed License Fees – Is there a need for an increase? If so, we will want to propose this since it will need to go through City Council. Had some discussion around this, but no recommendation to increase was put forth. The committee would recommend leaving both pet licensing and dog park fees at their current rate. It was mentioned that we would like to see two additional trees at the dog park. Additional discussions were had around outreach for increased compliance around pet licensing and dog park permits.

New Business:

- Jessica Brown presented on the topic of the city's desire to discontinue the pet licensing program in the City of West Branch. Dr. Beyer provided a list of surrounding cities and if they have breed restrictions, had number of pets restrictions, require a pet license, license costs, dog and cat licensing, etc. Based on this, West Branch has similar requirements to neighboring cities (aside from requiring licenses for cats in addition to dogs).

Jessica stated that maintaining the licensee list was time consuming, expensive, and difficult to update and monitor. It is also not always accurate. No license reminders were sent out in 2024 due to workload/costs. Jessica provided a list of current licensees, showing about half that were expired. Discussed looking into a software solution to assist, but this would likely have an additional cost associated.

Commission members had mixed feelings about the potential proposal to eliminate the pet license requirement in West Branch. It was brought up that the intent of the licensing program was to have a comprehensive list of pets/owners and addresses to assist with compliance with pet/animal-related regulations. Sgt Steen stated that the licensee list was rarely used in cases where they need to find the home of a pet that had gotten loose.

Nate made a motion to table this topic until the January 2025 meeting to allow time for additional discussion with committee members not present. Amy seconded. Motion carried.

- Police Report:
 - Sgt Steen reported that there had not been any new incidents to report. She did state that she is continuing to work on gaining compliance in a previous bite incident.

5. Call to Adjourn Meeting

- Amy moved to adjourn; Nate seconded. Motion carried.