

★ **Roll Call Number**

Agenda Item Number

47

Date June 11, 2012

Request from Susan Stropes, Granger, and Joshua Morton, Chariton, to speak regarding vicious dog requirements.

Moved by _____ to receive, file and refer to the City Manager for review and recommendation.

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
COLEMAN				
GRIESS				
HENSLEY				
MAHAFFEY				
MEYER				
MOORE				
TOTAL				

CERTIFICATE

I, DIANE RAUH, City Clerk of said City hereby certify that at a meeting of the City Council of said City of Des Moines, held on the above date, among other proceedings the above was adopted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first above written.

MOTION CARRIED APPROVED

_____ Mayor

_____ City Clerk

47



City of Des Moines - 501 319 3000

Request to Speak Before the City Council - form submission

website@dmgov.org <website@dmgov.org>

Sat, May 26, 2012 at 11:21 PM

To: councilSpeak@gtp.dmgov.org

Cc: CityClerk@gtp.dmgov.org

First Name: Susan

Last Name: Stropes *and Joshua Morton, Chariton, IA*

Address: 32357 Homestead Circle

City: Granger

State: IA

Zip: 50109

Phone: 515-205-2239

Email: sulokennels@msn.com

Speaker(s): Susan R. Stropes

Meeting Date: Monday, June 11, 2012

Regarding: Vicious Dog Law.

From: sulokennels@msn.com
To: cityclerk@dsm.gov
CC: joshuamorton007@hotmail.com
Subject: City Council Meeting Presentation
Date: Tue, 29 May 2012 13:15:54 -0500

Diane:

Per our conversation on 5/29/2012 at 11:55 am. I would like to clarify the reason for my request to speak to the Council.

About eight months ago, I became acquainted with a young man, Joshua Morton, that had recently retired as a Navy SEAL dog handler and was living in Virginia with intentions to move back to Des Moines, Iowa to open a dog training facility as a small business. In developing this business, he traveled back and forth in an attempt to locate property, make preparations to move and to enlist the aide of his parents that reside in Des Moines.

Through an unfortunate set of circumstances, during one of his visits, his father's personal dog was involved in a bite to a German Shepherd that was running stray in his neighborhood. As a result of that action, Sgt. Raudabaugh and Animal Control became aware of Josh and his dogs staying at his parents home. He was advised of his dogs being "vicious dog(s)" by definition and impounded.

In looking at the ordinance very carefully, I believe that an allowance should somehow be made for persons like Joshua and his dog(s) that have been honorably discharged from the military and returned to civilian life, and those who can provide proof of being a bona fide vendor of working dogs. Currently, the government is in the midst of reclassifying military working dogs (MWDs) as "canine members of the military" instead of "equipment" and allow for a monetary "retirement" for their veterinary care.

In a situation such as this, Joshua is attempting to create a business and use his training to further the use of dogs in the public and private sector. As you can imagine, Joshua carries very high insurance limits with his training facility and would more than satisfy the insurance requirements of the City of Des Moines, but in order to do demonstrations, ship dogs out through the Des Moines International Airport and simply to travel through Des Moines for a variety of tasks, he would have to purchase a "Vicious Dog " City License for each and every dog he would be traveling with.

In addition, Joshua is a very highly trained and capable dog handler, and I propose that the control he has over his animals is equal to or above that of

any other member of law enforcement or military working dog. It is only due to his ability to train these dogs that will sell his product to his potential clients. His desire and need to be in control of these animals is part of his business and very important to him as an individual. If a classification as a Working Dog Vendor needs to be established, then we would assist in that task. If I read the ordinance correctly, any dog vendor such as Josh could not be invited by law enforcement or business entity to demo thier wares and still be lawful.

As mentioned, Joshua would like to address the Council after me and will give some insight into his business and training. I will suggest he bring his insurance policy and certifications for the council to see.

In conclusion, I would appreciate consideration by the City Council on allowing retired MWDs the right to be canine citizens without the stigma of being a "vicious dog" by definition. Lackland AFB runs an adoption program for deactivated dogs and adopts them out to ordinary citizens. Part of the stated philosophy of the practice of allowing a dog to being adopted or mustered out with his handler is that they do not present a threat to society or they would be destroyed instead. With all the military activity and the return to civilian life of many of those that have served in recent deployments, how can we deny them residence in Des Moines in all good conscience if the military believes it safe?

Thank you for your consideration and we will plan to attend 11 June, 2012 ay 4:30 pm in the City Council Chambers at Des Moines City Hall.

Susan Stropes
515-205-2239