

WORK SESSION—SEPTEMBER 23, 2010

Minutes of the Huntsville Town Council Work Session, at the Huntsville Town Hall at 5:30 p.m. September 23rd, 2010.

Present: Mayor James Truett
Council Member Richard Sorensen
Council Member Alan Clapperton
Clerk/Recorder Gail Ahlstrom
Legal Council Jerald Engstrom

Excused: Council Member Steve Johnson Council Member Max Ferre’

Citizens: Lt. Chad Ferrin (Weber Animal Control)

Mayor Truett called the work session to order. He thanked Lt. Chad Ferrin for coming up tonight. The purpose of the meeting is to help the council get a better understanding of the proposed Inter-Local agreement between the Town and Weber County Animal Control Shelter. The council is trying to figure out if this agreement is really in the best interest of the town.

Mayor Truett asked Chad to explain the contract and the new animal shelter and how it will impact the town. Chad explained that there wouldn’t be any changes made to the animal control contract. Things will stay the same as the past couple of years. The contract is different from the sheltering services. Mayor Truett asked Ramona to pull together town numbers from the past few years in regards to animal control costs. In 2005 the town paid \$52 for every animal. In 2007 that increased to \$55 per animal, plus the \$3,000 per year for services. In 2006 there were a total of 2 animals picked up, in 2007 there were 3 animals picked up, in 2008 there were 2 animals picked up, in 2009 there was 22 (20 were cats), and in 2010 there have been 3 animals pickups. CM Clapperton clarified that these numbers only reflect the unclaimed animals. If the owner is identified, then the owner pays the fee to get their animal out of impound.

Chad read from the numbers the animal control records showed. (See Attachment #1) In 2008 Animal control charged Huntsville for 1 dog and 1 sheep, and there were 15 total animals from Huntsville taken to the shelter. In 2009 the town paid for 6 dogs, 1 goat, and 22 cats, with a total of 30 animals taken to the shelter. So far in 2010 the town has been charged for 2 dogs, with a total of 13 animals taken to the shelter from the town. The town is only charged for the unclaimed animals brought in from the town. Mr. Engstrom stated that putting a dog down costs \$100. Chad went through the shelter’s procedure that they follow before any animal is put down. They hold the animal for three-five business days; they check micro chips, licensing, vet tags, and rabies records. They call the owner if one is identified, if no luck, they go to the house and leave a note.

The shelter picks up livestock as well: horses, sheep, turkeys, pigs, goats, cows, chickens and turkeys. Ramona's records showed what the town paid for. Chad is reporting all animals that were brought in from the town. The most common complaint the town gets is about unleashed dogs running loose in town. The animal control officer will give the owner a warning first. If a second contact is required then they give them a fine. They will not take the animal away unless it is aggressive. If a dog is running around town and there is no license then it will be picked up. The criminal citation goes through the court; typically the fine is around \$50. CM Sorensen clarified that the \$3,000 per year is to have the animal control available 7 days a week from 8-5pm. They will come up after hours, weekends, and holidays. Someone is on call at all times. There have been complaints that there are dogs in the town park during the night. Chad stated that the animal needs to be contained before they will come up after hours. If the call is made during normal hours they will come up, the dog doesn't need to be contained. Mayor Truett wondered if the town should put up a kennel and people could put the dog in it, then the animal control would come get the animal. There is one animal control officer assigned to the entire valley.

CM Sorensen asked about the sheltering agreement. Chad stated that Ogden City Roy City, and W.C. decided to consolidate their animal control services and decided to build a new shelter. They decided that the three entities would share the costs and then invite other communities to join. It would be a shared cost based upon usage. Ogden City provides the biggest share of the shelters business. The Inter-local agreement has now been extended to other entities within the county. Riverdale, South Ogden, and Uintah will continue to share animal control services. Pleasant View will also continue on their own. Every other community has joined the inter-local agreement. They came up with the fees based on employees needed, operating costs, utilities, and took a best guess for the costs. The number they came up with is \$65-118 per animal, regardless if they have the animal 5 days or 5 months. Chad doesn't have any final numbers on what the fees will be. The town's fee for sheltering an animal will go up no matter what. The \$750 a quarter remains the same. If the cities don't enter the agreement then they don't get animal control work. Chad replied that the new shelter would be done within a month.

If the town doesn't join in the inter-local agreement now, but decides to join later the town will pay an additional 20%. The town would be locked in for the term of the bond, which is 20 years. Most bonds have been paid off early. Currently the county has been supplementing their budget, and the cities and towns have been underpaying for services. The shelter does get donations from private citizens; scout projects, and businesses, of food and kitty litter, this helps keep costs down. The county will give the old building to the Dinosaur Park for a reptile facility. Animal control officers will remain the same, but the animals will be taken to the new facility.

CM Sorensen asked if the town decides to do its own animal control, but enters into the inter-local agreement for the animal shelter, then the town would only be charged per unclaimed animal brought in. Chad replied yes. Licensing fees are going up. The county keeps all money from dog licenses.

The shelter is trying to implement an ordinance that would require you to micro chip your dog if they picked the dog up, then if the dog gets loose again the dog can be identified and returned quicker. This would save everyone money and time. They micro chip at the shelter the cost is \$10. Right now it costs \$50 to get your dog out of impound the first time, whether the dog is licensed or not. The fee for unlicensed animals will go up to \$75. The shelter will no longer release the dog without a license. You can license dogs year round now and on line, they also send out email reminders. CM Sorensen mentioned that most people want to license their dogs but don't like to be inconvenienced. They are willing to come to the valley to do the rabies clinic as long as people show up.

CM Sorensen stated that it looks like there are three options for the town: One option is that the town does its own dog catching services, licensing and kenneling. Option two, the town could do its own animal control and licensing and enter into agreement for sheltering services. Or option three, enter into the agreement. Chad offered to answer any questions the council might have in the future. Mayor Truett thanked Chad for the information and for coming up tonight.

Mayor Truett closed the meeting.

Mayor Truett reopened the work session. He explained that he has been talking with South Ogden City about their animal control. South Ogden charges Uintah \$500 per year. What happens is when an animal is contained they call South Ogden and then South Ogden transports the animal and takes care of the animal? South Ogden has a 95 % adoption rate. If Huntsville contracted with South Ogden the fee could be more because they will have to drive up here. The town would need to get a kennel where animals could be stored, and then picked up by South Ogden. When its owner claims an animal, the town would split the fees with South Ogden. The town could start licensing its dogs again. CM Clapperton commented that essentially the town wouldn't get any animal control service. If the town set up kennels, citizens could catch the roaming dog and put them in the kennels. Then we call South Ogden who comes to pick them up and transported to their facility, when it's picked up then the fees will be split. Mr. Engstrom is leery about someone working for the town that gets bit and the dog has rabies. The liability would fall on the owner of the dog. The town will need to be very careful. The town will need to figure out how the animals will be contained and who is going to do it. Mayor Truett asked CM Clapperton to review the agreement between South Ogden and Uintah.

The big question is how are the animals being contained before they are picked up, and who is doing the containment. Mayor Truett would like to see the town getting the money from the licensing. The town is paying a lot of money for services that the town isn't benefiting from. CM Sorensen asked if there were an additional arrangement for South Ogden to come up if there was a report of a roaming dog, would they come up to catch and transport the dog. Mr. Engstrom recommended finding out from Uintah who is containing the dogs, and how are they being contained. The town could split the adoption fees with South Ogden as well. It appears that the council needs more information before a final decision can be made.

Mayor Truett would like to follow through with South Ogden, the county is charging way too much for such limited services. When the county does the licensing, the town doesn't get any split, when dogs are reclaimed the town doesn't get any split, but when a dog gets dropped off in the town, the town gets hit with a huge fee. With South Ogden the town can split licensing fees, reclaiming fees, and adoption fees. CM Clapperton and Mayor Truett will go to South Ogden to ask more questions and to see their facility.

CM Sorensen made a motion. CM Clapperton seconded. All votes aye.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Gail Ahlstrom, Clerk/Recorder

James A. Truett, Mayor