

(The following is not a verbatim transcript of comments or discussion that occurred during the meeting, but rather a summarization intended for general informational purposes. All motions and votes are the official records).

ORDINANCE COMMITTEE

Regular meeting of the Ordinance Committee was held on Monday, July 26, 2021 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, RI and via Zoom webinar.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by the Chair.

Present: Councilman Robert J. Ferri
Councilwoman Lammis J. Vargas
Councilwoman Nicole Renzulli, Vice-Chair
Councilman Matthew R. Reilly, Chair
Council President Christopher G. Paplauskas

Absent: Councilwoman Aniece Germain
Council Vice-President Edward J. Brady

Also Present: Anthony Moretti, Director of Administration
Christopher Millea, City Solicitor
Stephen Angell, City Council Legal Counsel
Kenneth Mason, Director of Public Works
David Dimaio, City Council Budget Analyst
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees
Ron Ronzio, Stenographer

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

On motion by Councilwoman Vargas, seconded by Councilman Ferri, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the last meeting and they stand approved as recorded. Motion passed unanimously.

I. COMMITTEE BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER

3-21-04 *Ordinance in amendment of Title 5 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, Entitled "Business Licenses and Regulations" (Third Party Delivery Services). Sponsored by Councilman Donegan. (Cont. from 4/15/2021, 5/13/2021 & 6/17/2021).*

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance.

Under Discussion:

Solicitor stated that he had a conversation with Councilman Donegan this afternoon and he indicated that there was a State Law that was recently passed on this subject and signed into law by Governor McKee. It might be proper for a motion to withdraw this Ordinance from the calendar at this point.

Councilman Donegan stated that that is correct. The Bill was passed and signed into law by Governor McKee on July 13th. He stated that, at this time, the State Bill accomplishes what this Ordinance attempted to do. Given that, he thanked the City Council Attorney for his work and assistance with working through this with him as well as everyone on the City Council and the Administration for getting it to where it was here on the City level. No further action is necessary and he asked that this Ordinance be removed from the docket.

Motion to approve and second were withdrawn.

Ordinance was withdrawn.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS* and/ or NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

Lisa Marie Ricci Russo, co-owner of the Dragonfly Apothecary on Plainfield St., Cranston, appeared to speak in favor of proposed Ordinance 6-21-02.

Giona Balvega, 15 Calvary St., appeared to speak regarding proposed Ordinance 6-21-03 and stated that this Ordinance at the very least needs to be reassessed. There needs to be a better process that does not punish otherwise responsible pet owners if they have difficulty affording the fee. He also found lacking in this Ordinance any consideration for the well-being of the animals.

Councilman Donegan stated that Councilwoman Germain is out of town and asked if she is able to speak as a member of the public virtually. Attorney Angell stated, no. She cannot speak as a member of the Council on the merit of the Ordinance. That would be in violation of Open Meetings. She can speak as a member of the public, but not as a member of the body.

Councilman Donegan stated that Councilwoman Germain had reached out to him before the meeting indicating that she had some amendments she wanted to make. Since she is not present, perhaps the Committee can continue this Ordinance to next month's meeting.

A. NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

6-21-01 *Ordinance in amendment of Chapter 8.36 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled "Rodent Control" Complaints. Sponsored by Councilman Donegan and Councilwoman Renzulli.*

On motion by Council President Paplauskas, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance.

Under Discussion:

Councilman Donegan stated that this is a small change just to formalize the complaint process if someone were to submit a complaint of an alleged rodent violation whether it is someone feeding their animals or it is property being in a state that could lead to rodent infestation that complaint would be looked into by the appropriate department, in this case it would be the Department of Public Works and the Department of Public Works would keep records of those complaints. This adds one small piece just to ensure that complaints are being followed up on. He thanked the Administration for working on this as well as Inspections and the Rodent Control Officer. He stated that he would like to hear from the Administration of the capacity of doing this.

Director Mason stated that he has a few instances that he is confused about. Some of the phone calls the City has received over the last several weeks are: Brimfield Rd. – a resident complaining that his neighbor is feeding birds and pigeons; Milford St. – resident throws peanuts to rats; Eldridge St. – feeding chickens in their yard; Leslie St. – feeding the birds and squirrels with peanuts. He questioned if those are requested to be investigated and resolved somehow. He does not have staffing for any of this. Councilman Donegan stated that his interpretation would be that, when merited, it would be followed up on. Director Mason stated that the City keeps a very detailed record of what residences or what properties are baited. The City also has a very detailed list of upcoming schedule for baiting new properties. He can provide that report on a monthly basis. He also stated that someone should really look at Chapter 8.3.26. This whole Rodent Control Chapter is a dumpster fire with confusing verbiage, unassigned responsibilities and weak enforcement rules. As far as enforcement, Public Works does not have authority that would be under the Inspections Department.

Councilman Donegan stated that he and Councilwoman Renzulli tried to set a meeting up before this meeting and it did not happen, but they are more than happy to sit down with the Administration, Director Mason, the Council Attorney and the City Solicitor to go through the Code and get it right. He would like to see this Ordinance passed this evening and then go back and take a look at the whole Code as a whole.

Director Moretti stated that his concern is this is pretty stringent, it needs all complaints and any alleged violation must be written verbal, etc. and shall be investigated. This Ordinance would be tying up resources.

Chair stated that he agrees with the intent of this. Based on what the Director stated, he does not think this can go forward in the form that it is in. He thinks it is a good idea for the sponsors to sit down with the department and try to come up with a solution. He would like to see this continued and redrafted.

Council President Paplauskas stated that this Ordinance should be continued and the whole Code should be looked at as a whole and then go from there.

Councilwoman Renzulli agreed that if we have to do this, we do it right and do it once.

Motion to recommend approval and second were withdrawn.

On motion by Councilwoman Renzulli, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to continue this Ordinance for one month. Motion passed unanimously.

6-21-02 *Ordinance in amendment of Ch. 10.32.010 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled “Motor Veh. & Traffic – Stopping, Standing and Parking on Specific Streets – Loading Zones (Plainfield St. and Tweed St.). Sponsored by Councilman Ferri.*

On motion by Council President Paplauskas, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

6-21-03 ***Ordinance in amendment of Chapter 6.08 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled “Animals Generally-Dogs and Other Animals”. Sponsored by Councilman Reilly, Councilwomen Renzulli and Germain.***

On motion by Councilwoman Vargas, seconded by Council President Paplauskas, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance.

Under Discussion:

Chair stated that the current law is contradictory. The fees were extremely low across the board. He is open to amendments and seeking that this be continued to next month or two so that the City Council can think about this and perhaps can come up with a collaboration.

Motion to recommend approval and second were withdrawn.

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to continue this Ordinance to the September meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees