

Brandon McGuire

From: Brandon McGuire
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2015 1:49 PM
To: Accent Pet Grooming; Animal Hospital of Lawrence; Bradley Animal Hospital; Chistal K-9 - L. Devin; Christal K-9 - C. Devin; Clinton Parkway Animal Hospital - Dr. Olson; Clinton Parkway Animal Hospital - George; Home Sweet Home; Jarrett Small Animal Clinic; Lawrence Pet Care Services; Pet Minders; Total Pet Care; Wagmore Canine Enrichment (1); Wagmore Canine Enrichment (2); Wakarusa Veterinary Hospital - Mentzer; Wakarusa Veterinary Hospital - office
Cc: James King; Sherri Riedemann
Subject: Update: City of Lawrence Recommendations for Animal Boarding Facilities
Attachments: Recommended Boarding Kennel City Code Changes, Report and Attachments.pdf

On Friday, March 6th, city staff met with owners and operators from several animal service businesses to discuss the city's efforts to address concerns about animal safety in animal boarding facilities. We discussed the report that was previously provided and is attached to this message. The report provides background information about the issue and city staff's recommended changes to the city code. A number of questions were asked by the business owners and operators who attended the meeting. We also heard from a number of other businesses and stakeholders over the past couple weeks regarding the issue and staff recommendations. Several interested stakeholders were unable to attend the March 6th meeting. I am sending this message as a way to follow up on questions and answers that were discussed at that meeting and through phone calls and emails received by city staff over the past couple weeks. We attempted to find contact information for as many animal service businesses as possible, but I imagine we missed a few interested individuals. Please feel free to pass this message and my contact information along to your colleagues.

1. What is the city trying to accomplish, and why?

Following the boarding kennel fire that occurred over the holidays in 2014 the City Commission directed city staff to evaluate the city's role in regulating boarding kennels and ensuring animal safety in animal housing facilities. The Commission directed city staff to make sure the city is doing what it can and should do to prevent another fire related emergency and minimize the damage should another emergency occur. As adopted, the city fire code does not specifically address fire and life safety requirements for animal housing facilities. The fire code requirements for most business occupancies are applied to animal housing facilities. Business occupancies are one of the safest building types, so fire and life safety requirements are least stringent for business occupancies. The city's Fire Marshal researched national fire safety codes and identified fire safety standards that are specifically designed to improve animal safety in animal housing facilities. The recommendations regarding the city fire code requirements were developed with the goal of preventing fire emergencies and keeping animals safe when emergencies do occur. We appreciate that those of you who are in the business of serving animals and their owners have the best interests of animals in mind and share the same objectives to prevent emergencies and minimize harm when they do occur.

Questions were also raised about the city code requirement that boarding kennel operators obtain a commercial boarding kennel license through the city. We learned that the boarding kennel license requirement has not been enforced in recent history. The state of Kansas administers a comprehensive regulatory program for animal service businesses, including boarding kennel operators. Based on our understanding of the situation, a move toward city regulation of boarding kennel businesses would be a duplication of the State's regulatory program. In order to avoid future confusion about the city's role in regulating boarding kennel businesses, city staff developed a recommendation that, if adopted, would eliminate the city business licensing requirement. It is important to determine if regulatory gaps exist in the local boarding kennel market, determine if existing gaps

threaten the safety of animals, and determine the appropriate role of the city in addressing existing gaps. Your expertise in the animal services market is an important part of this evaluation.

2. What was the purpose of the March 6th meeting?

You have a vested interest in the issues of fire prevention and safety in animal facilities and the city's role in regulating boarding kennels. While we may desire the same outcomes we may have different ideas about how to accomplish those outcomes. We held the meeting to begin the conversation about the city's role in addressing the concerns of the City Commissioners and the public. We think a good conversation has been initiated and we look forward to continuing the conversation and working in partnership with you.

3. Will city staff's recommendations become formal requirements?

The staff recommendations were developed with animal safety in mind, and they were based on city staff's research and areas of expertise. The recommendations have not yet been presented to the City Commission for formal consideration and adoption. We want to continue working through the process with the stakeholder group in order to develop the best possible recommendations. Once we feel like we have the best possible recommendations and buy-in from the stakeholders who are impacted by those recommendations, the recommendations will be presented to the City Commission for formal adoption. I don't anticipate that happening until late spring or the first half of the summer.

4. If adopted, how would the recommended fire safety code requirements be applied to my business?

The fire safety recommendations incorporate National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) code standards for animal housing facilities. If the recommendations were to be adopted, animal housing facilities would be defined as: The area of a building or structure, including interior and adjacent exterior spaces, where animals are fed, rested, worked, exercised, treated, exhibited, or used for production. This includes but is not limited to barns, kennels, coops, stables, sheds, pens, corrals, runs, vivaria, terraria, laboratories, and zoos. Adjacent exterior spaces include areas near or adjacent to a structure where confined animals would be endangered by smoke, heat, fire spread, or structural failure. The recommended fire safety equipment requirements would be based on the total footprint of the whole building as measured in square feet. To clarify, if any portion of a building is used to house animals, the entire building would be subject to the standards of an animal housing facility and the requirements would be based on the entire square footage of the building. The current recommendations are detailed below.

- A. Retroactive requirement that all animal housing facilities provide smoke detection with integration into a monitored fire alarm system.
- B. All new facilities or facilities subject to renovation:
 - i. Less than 3,000 sq. ft. smoke detection and monitored fire alarm;
 - ii. Greater than 3,000 sq. ft. smoke detection, monitored fire alarm, automatic fire sprinklers installed to NFPA 13.
- C. All facilities provide:
 - i. Fire extinguishers and extinguisher training for staff;
 - ii. Provide CO detection where fuel fired appliances are in use;
 - iii. Develop and provide disaster/emergency management plans and provide drills for staff.

5. What resources are currently offered by local government to help businesses address animal safety?

The Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical Department offers fire safety resources and services through the Prevention Division. The Division conducts scheduled fire safety inspections of all business occupancies. The Department also offers fire extinguisher training and can provide the appropriate equipment for individuals to use in a training session. Please call (785) 830-7000 to contact the Prevention Division and Fire Marshall Jim King.

Douglas County Emergency Management offers resources and templates for businesses interested in developing emergency response plans. Please call (785) 832-5259 to contact Douglas County Emergency Management, or visit the department's webpage here: <http://www.douglascountyks.org/depts/emergency-management>.

The City of Lawrence Animal Control Division enforces the city code pertaining to the regulation of animals. Animal Control responds to and investigates reported concerns about animal safety and welfare. Please call (785) 832-7509 to report a complaint or request the assistance of an Animal Control officer.

6. What is the City's next step?

We want to continue the conversation with the business owners and operators who would be affected by any change to the City's requirements. We also want to work in partnership with the animal services community to develop the capacity to prevent emergencies and meet the needs of animals when emergencies and disasters occur. We hope to communicate with all businesses, professional groups, and others interested in these issues before finalizing the recommended changes to the city code. By early summer we hope to finalize any needed changes to the business licensing and fire safety sections of the city code and present those recommendations to the City Commission for formal consideration. It is our goal to continue updating this group throughout the process and notify this group before formal recommendations are presented to the City Commission.

7. Who can I contact if I have questions or feedback regarding these issues?

Questions and feedback regarding fire prevention, safety and code requirements can be directed to Fire Marshall Jim King, (785) 830-7003 or jking@lawrenceks.org. Questions and feedback regarding business licensing issues or any other relevant issues can be directed to Brandon McGuire, (785) 832-3466 or bmcguire@lawrenceks.org.

Thank you,



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