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Office of the City Administrator

**PUBLIC WELFARE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
January 27, 2015**

PRESENT: Aldermen Gierl, Mayr, Pukaite

ALSO PRESENT: Assistant City Administrator Thyges, Alderman Adams, Alderman Strzelczyk, City Administrator Jones, Police Chief Graff, Jason Nickels, Education and Restoration Director-Mequon Nature Preserve, Tom Isaac, Biologist-Department of Natural Resources, Dan Nehls, Conservation Warden-Department of Natural Resources, Press

The meeting was called to order by Alderman Mayr at 7:04 PM.

Introductory Comments

Alderman Mayr welcomed everyone for attending the meeting and noted the purpose of the meeting is to gather information on coyotes. Alderman Mayr stated a number of speakers have been invited to attend the Public Welfare Committee to provide information on coyotes and after they have had the opportunity speak the meeting will be opened up to the public for a question and answer session. Alderman Mayr turned the meeting over to Assistant City Administrator, Jesse Thyges. Mr. Thyges welcomed everyone to the meeting and pointed out the meeting is a continuing effort on behalf of the city not only to provide information to residents regarding coyotes, but also to receive feedback from residents to help guide the city's policy makers in making a policy decision regarding coyotes. Mr. Thyges stated local experts from the Mequon Nature Preserve and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources are present to speak about coyotes in Mequon. Mr. Thyges asked participants to sign in on the sign up card located at the back of the room if they wish to speak, as the meeting is an official city meeting of the Public Welfare Committee. Mr. Thyges introduced Jason Nickels from the Mequon Nature Preserve as the first speaker.

Informational Presentations About Coyotes

Jason Nickels, Education and Restoration Director of Mequon Nature Preserve presented general biological information about coyotes; how to identify a coyote, the adaptation of a coyote, the possible affect of removing an animal from the food chain, the life cycle of coyotes, managing coyote conflict with hazing, and offered suggestions on how to keep coyotes from entering a yard.

Tom Isaac, Department of Natural Resources Biologist, provided a history of what has happened to coyotes in the past fifty years, information about coyote removal services in the Mequon area, rules regarding trapping and hunting coyotes and provided a referral list of Ozaukee County DNR nuisance wildlife websites from the Wisconsin Trapper's Association. Mr. Isaac pointed out most states have seen an increase in coyotes through the years and noted coyotes tend to follow the increase in food sources, use the same den from one year to the next, and will typically have more than one den to move their pups if they feel threatened. Mr. Isaac noted the State of Wisconsin does not provide financial assistance for the removal of coyotes and pointed out it is legal to trap a coyote and relocate them to other land with the permission of the land owner. Dan Nehls, Warden, added there is no acreage requirement to trap on private property, but a weapons discharge permit from the city is required to shoot a coyote.

Alderman Mayr stated the city does not have a policy on coyotes and for that reason has started the process of gathering information to determine whether there is anything the city can do about coyotes in Mequon. Alderman Mayr opened the meeting to the public for a question and answer session.

Police Chief Graff spoke to the city's local regulations stating, within the City of Mequon ten acres of land is required to fire a weapon, no rifles are allowed, and a weapons discharge permit is required. To use a bow and arrow or a crossbow requires a distance of 100 yards from a house.

Mr. Winkelman from Advance Wildlife was in the audience and shared his experience with coyotes. Several individuals in the audience shared their encounters and concerns with coyotes in Mequon. One individual stated ten years ago coyotes could be heard in a distance, and now coyotes can be seen running through their yard. The resident went on to say their dog was attacked by a coyote, fortunately the dog survived. The resident pointed out similar incidents have happened in their neighborhood and questioned at what point a coyote incident becomes a nuisance. A suggestion was made to provide a separate informational piece on the city's website to discourage the feeding of coyotes.

Assistant City Administrator Thyes stated a coyote interaction survey has been posted to the city's website as an information gathering tool to report a sighting, or harm done to a pet. Mr. Thyes reported as of noon on Thursday, January 27, seventy-five responses were cataloged and staff is currently in the process of analyzing the responses and will provide the results at the committee's next meeting. Mr. Thyes mentioned a map of sightings will be prepared from the survey responses to illustrate the concentration of coyotes in Mequon. Alderman Strzelczyk shared his encounter with a coyote in his yard and urged residents to use the hazing method if they encounter a coyote. Alderman Strzelczyk went on to say, the city is holding this meeting to hear the concerns of residents in order to come up with a formal city policy. Alderman Gierl shared his encounter with a coyote that attacked his dog about six years ago.

Alderman Pukaite reiterated, the purpose of the meeting is to obtain feedback from residents of what their experiences have been with coyotes. Alderman Pukaite encouraged residents to use the survey tool on the city's website to log in their encounters with coyotes which will help to identify where the majority of incidents are taking place.

Assistant City Administrator, Jesse Thyes, stated residents that do not have internet access should contact the City Clerk's Office to give an account of where their coyote encounter took place. Alderman Mayr stated the next step for the Public Welfare Committee will be to discuss a nuisance policy at their next meeting related to coyotes.

Adjourn

Action: Motion to adjourn the meeting (Gierl/Pukaite)

Result: Motion passed by voice acclamation. Meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lina Prosser, Executive Assistant

CITY OF MEQUON PUBLIC WELFARE COMMITTEE