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**Office of the City Administrator**

**PUBLIC WELFARE COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
December 16, 2014**

**PRESENT:** Aldermen Gierl, Mayr

**NOT PRESENT:** Alderman Pukaite

**ALSO PRESENT:** Alderman Adams, Acting City Administrator Thyes, Executive Assistant Prosser,  
Interested Parties

The meeting was called to order by Alderman Mayr at 6:04 PM.

**Information gathering session: Coyotes**

Alderman Mayr provided an overview of what the city has done in the past and what the city is currently doing about coyotes in Mequon. Alderman Mayr stated the Public Safety Committee discussed the issue of coyotes about a year ago and as a result held an informational meeting about coyotes at the Mequon Nature Preserve. Alderman Mayr went on to say, since the informational meeting there have been more incidents that have occurred and resident concerns voiced through public input at a recent Common Council meeting, prompting the need for a special Public Welfare Committee meeting. Acting City Administrator Thyes provided information on the upcoming meeting in January. Mr. Thyes stated he is working to coordinate and finalize with the Mequon Nature Preserve a meeting on January 27, 2015, the time is still being determined. Mr. Thyes went on to say he is working on obtaining speakers from Ozaukee County and/or Milwaukee County DNR biologist(s), representatives from the Mequon Nature Preserve, and potentially the Humane Society of the United States. Mr. Thyes noted the intent is to bring in a variety of speakers in order to provide as much information as possible for not only elected officials and staff to consider, but also for residents. Mr. Thyes stated as soon as he is able to finalize the speakers, he will distribute via the city's website and social media, final details about the January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Alderman Mayr stated another Public Welfare meeting will be held in February to discuss recommendations on how to move forward based on the input from the speakers at the January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting and input from residents.

Alderman Mark Gierl introduced himself as the Alderman representing the fifth district and shared an encounter he and his family had with coyotes six years ago.

Alderman Pam Adams introduced herself as the Alderman representing the 8th district and noted she is not on the committee as a voting member, but does serve on the Public Safety Committee. Ms. Adams stated the Public Safety Committee did discuss coyotes at a spring 2014 meeting. Ms. Adams noted she is happy to see residents are coming forward to voice their concerns in order to better understand where the problem areas of coyotes lie within the city.

Alderman Mayr opened the meeting to individuals wishing to speak before the Public Welfare Committee at 6:12 PM.

Aimee Linneman, 3465 W. Colette Court

Ms. Linneman shared her encounter with a coyote that involved her four year old daughter. Ms. Linneman stated her daughter at the time was four. Ms. Linneman went on to say she talked with the United States Humane Society and the solution they gave her was to strap a bell around her daughter. Ms. Linneman stated her daughter does not go out after dark, and she is deathly afraid to leave the yard. Ms. Linneman stated her daughter's instinct was to run inside and the minute she ran inside the coyote charged to attack. The deck is not in an expansive yard, it is literally ten feet off the patio door and she was flabbergasted that nobody did anything. Ms. Linneman concluded by stating the DNR, and the Humane Society of the United States told her the same thing, just strap a bell around her daughter

Jenny Herro, 2508 W. Chestnut Road

Ms. Herro stated her dog was killed during the morning of Sunday, October 26, 2014, by a coyote. Ms. Herro stated after several attempts to report the incident with no response, she contacted WTMJ4. Ms. Herro noted there have been more incidents reported and stories like Aimee Linneman's daughter being surrounded by coyotes is frightening. Ms. Herro recommended that hunters and trappers be part of the conversation at the January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting. Ms. Herro requested up-to-date information about coyotes be provided via the city's website and E-News.

Alderman Mayr noted that he has been in contact with a local hunting club to have a representative available. Mr. Thyes noted that the information on the website would be reviewed and updated as needed.

Alderman Mayr asked residents to provide the Committee with their ideas on how to resolve the issue of coyotes in Mequon.

Wendy Greeney, 711 W. Haddonstone Place

Wendy Greeney stated coyotes have been living in her neighborhood even before they moved to Haddonstone in 1997. Ms. Greeney noted there were a pack of five coyotes that called to each other under her window. Ms. Greeney stated the coyotes are normal animals, we are the invasive species. Ms. Greeney went on to say her family lost an elderly outdoor cat the first year they moved in and noted the family was sad, but they knew they had moved to a suburb where deer, chipmunks, squirrels, coyotes, eagles and other animals live. Ms. Greeney stated there are balance issues on both sides, and they do not support any action.

Susie Raymond, 11521 Parkview Drive

Susie Raymond stated she has not had a personal interaction with coyotes, and is present to support the educational meeting scheduled to take place in January. Ms. Raymond stated we need to learn to coexist with coyotes, and she does not want to see angry residents out with fire arms. Ms. Raymond stated she has two dogs and a cat and understands how devastating it would be to loose a pet, and noted to have a child surrounded by coyotes is even more disturbing. Ms. Raymond concluded by stating she understands that there are many emotions going on as a result of the coyote encounters and she is curious to find out what kind of solutions will come from the meetings.

Melissa Tedrow, Wisconsin State Director, The Humane Society of the United States

Melissa Tedrow introduced herself as the Wisconsin State Director of the Humane Society of the United States and mentioned she resides in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. Ms. Tedrow stated she is not a wild life biologist and noted last spring her colleague Lindsey White Dasher who is a wild life biologist that specializes in coyote management came to Mequon and offered a presentation at an informational meeting. Ms. Tedrow stated Ms. Dasher would be more than happy to come back. Ms. Tedrow went on to say, the Humane Society of the United States takes the coyote problem seriously. Ms. Tedrow mentioned problems with coyotes are not only in Mequon, but all over the country. Ms. Tedrow shared her personal concern for family members living in Downers Grove, Illinois, a Chicago suburb where coyotes can be seen wondering through their yard.

Ms. Tredrow stated the Humane Society of the United States would like to be a part of the solution. Ms. Tredrow noted the Humane Society does know that lethal management of coyotes as a strategic management does not work and in the long run it does not solve the problem the city is seeking to address. Ms. Tredrow went on to say, selective removal of problem coyotes is effective, hazing and redirecting them in multiple ways can also work. Ms. Tredrow offered handouts for residents to take with them. Ms. Tredrow concluded by stating she would be happy to be a part of helping Mequon find a solution, of which she believes, is by way of non-lethal management.

Iris & Joe Fieber, 2928 W. Woodland Ct.

Iris & Joe Fieber stated they support a non-lethal way of managing coyotes in Mequon, one that is based on scientific data.

Michael Festge 717 Haddonstone Place

Michael Festge stated, he realizes we do need to coexist with wildlife and noted the one solution with the deer population is that the city did hire some marks men to cull the deer. Mr. Festge stated something needs to be done and suggested a scarecrow might be an effective way to scare coyotes. Mr. Festge went on to say, we do not want to bring the coyote population down and as a result have a problem with wolves. Mr. Festge shared an article he found on the internet on how Los Angeles, California is dealing with coyotes. Mr. Festge concluded by stating, if we eradicate too many of the coyotes they will become extinct and if we do not do something soon, human beings are going to become endangered.

Mary Jonas, 1704 W. Glen Oaks Lane

Mary Jonas stated she has not had the unfortunate experience of encountering a coyote, noting she does not know what the solutions are, but she wanted to express concern for children and other concerned citizens.

Resident on Madero Drive

A resident residing on Madero Drive stated they decided to attend the meeting to obtain accurate information.

Steve Holter 11390 N. Creekside Court

Steve Holter stated he is attending the meeting to support the group because one of his dogs were attacked by a coyote, fortunate for them their dog is still alive. Mr. Holter went on to say, they have been living in fear, they have woods around them and coyotes are roaming around their yard. Mr. Holter stated he is not suggesting a solution, but as a homeowner he would like to know his rights, coyotes are definitely a problem.

Maxim Gomeniuk 11402 N. Oakview Court

Maxim Gomeniuk stated Steve Holter, his neighbor is correct. Mr. Gomeniuk went on to say he walks his dogs every morning about 5:00 AM and there are always one or two coyotes by the Concord Creek Subdivision. Mr. Gomeniuk stated his dogs no longer walk off leash.

Paul Junius 2603 W. Lake Isle

Paul Junius stated while walking his dog almost every day he encounters a coyote. Mr. Junius noted he lives in the Ville Du Parc area where the coyotes are very active. Mr. Junius concluded by stating we should address the problem before someone is attacked.

Alderman Mayr thanked everyone for providing their input and stated unfortunately there is not an easy solution. Alderman Mayr noted before moving forward the city will hold several meetings to gather information from the public, from other authorities, and other interested parties.

Alderman Mayr stated city staff will look into obtaining information regarding homeowner's rights and information on what a resident should do if they encounter a coyote and post it to the city's website prior to the January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting. Alderman Mayr noted the Committee will be looking to find out where the coyote hot spots are in the city by offering an online reporting mechanism for residents to report coyote sightings.

The Committee asked Acting City Administrator Thyges to look into what action was taken at the Public Safety Committee in regards to responding to a resident concern about a coyote and to find out how other communities are dealing with coyotes.

Alderman Mayr asked residents in attendance to provide their e-mail if they would like to receive notifications on upcoming meetings. Residents were invited to place a mark on the city map (provided at the meeting) to show their coyote sighting or incident. Alderman Mayr asked residents to e-mail any suggestions to him at his city e-mail address.

**Adjourn**

**Action:** Motion to adjourn the meeting (Gierl/Mayr)

**Result:** Motion passed by voice acclamation. Meeting adjourned at 6:56 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lina Prosser, Executive Assistant

CITY OF MEQUON PUBLIC WELFARE COMMITTEE