

From: [Alan Butler](#)
To: [Public Safety Subcommittee Comment](#)
Cc: [Margaret Butler](#); [Abel, Adam](#); [Fleming, Victoria](#); [James Gore](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] City Code Regulating Potentially Dangerous & Vicious Animals
Date: Monday, June 13, 2022 2:09:26 PM
Attachments: [220613 City Code Regulating Potentially Dangerous.pdf](#)

The attached is a summary of our comments on current Animal Control Regulations in light of the death of our pet on February 18, 2022.

This is for the meeting of the Public Safety Subcommittee at 9:00 AM on June 15, 2022 & subsequent meetings and hearings.

As noted regulations need to be more strict and better enforced regarding killing and injury of domestic animals by uncontrolled dogs.

A more uniform code across jurisdictions would be preferable and make enforcement easier for the Animal Control Officers.

In our neighborhood the same two dogs ran loose at least two to three times in a short interval of time, were returned to their owners, and killed two domestic pets and intimidated a whole neighborhood.

thank you

Alan & Margaret Butler



Santa Rosa, CA 95404

(707)529-7474

ambutler@sonic.net

From: [Matthew Malik](#)
To: ["Alan Butler"; Public Safety Subcommittee Comment](#)
Cc: ["Margaret Butler"; Abel, Adam; Fleming, Victoria; "James Gore"](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: City Code Regulating Potentially Dangerous & Vicious Animals
Date: Tuesday, June 14, 2022 6:56:30 AM

This is terrific Alan! I plan on reading a statement at the hearing for J and I. Kind of a challenge to keep it under 3 minutes, but I think I have it down.

See you tomorrow?

Matt

From: Alan Butler <ambutler@sonic.net>
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2022 2:09 PM
To: pss-comment@srcity.org
Cc: Margaret Butler <mbutler@sonic.net>; Abel, Adam <aabel@srcity.org>; Victoria Fleming <vfleming@srcity.org>; James Gore <district4@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: City Code Regulating Potentially Dangerous & Vicious Animals

The attached is a summary of our comments on current Animal Control Regulations in light of the death of our pet on February 18, 2022.

This is for the meeting of the Public Safety Subcommittee at 9:00 AM on June 15, 2022 & subsequent meetings and hearings.

As noted regulations need to be more strict and better enforced regarding killing and injury of domestic animals by uncontrolled dogs.

A more uniform code across jurisdictions would be preferable and make enforcement easier for the Animal Control Officers.

In our neighborhood the same two dogs ran loose at least two to three times in a short interval of time, were returned to their owners, and killed two domestic pets and intimidated a whole neighborhood.

thank you

Alan & Margaret Butler

[REDACTED]

Santa Rosa, CA 95404

[REDACTED]

ambutler@sonic.net

City Code Regulating Potentially Dangerous & Vicious Animals
From Alan & Margaret Butler

ambutler@sonic.net

June 13, 2022

These sections of the city code regulating potentially dangerous and vicious animals are flawed and inadequate to protect the public and domestic animals.

DEFINITION OF VICIOUS IS TOO LIMITED:

The main fault of the ordinance is the limited definition of vicious animals, section 7.04.010(S)(2). This section states that an animal will be deemed vicious if it inflicts severe injury or kills a human being. In the February 18th incident this year, where two cats were killed in one afternoon by the roaming dogs, the label vicious would not apply. Instead, the Potentially Dangerous label applied pursuant to 7-04.010(O)(2). On the afternoon our cat was killed, the dogs went on to kill a second dog and chase one of our neighbors into a carport. The dogs were returned to their owner and escaped again a week or two later.

The section defining vicious should be amended to include the language of the preceding section 7.04.010(O)(2): *Any animal which, when it is off the property of its owner or keeper, and unprovoked, has killed, seriously bitten, inflicted injury, or otherwise caused injury by attacking a domestic animal.*

CONSEQUENCES TO OWNERS IN VIOLATION ARE UNCLEAR

Disposition of Potentially dangerous animals: Section 7-30.050: I do not see any governing provisions if the owner of potentially dangerous animals is not in compliance with the regulations of this sections. Noncompliance would include the situation which occurred with the two dogs which killed Bel and Dale on February 18th. The sign posted at the dog owner's home was not legible and did not comply with ordinance. Additionally, and importantly, the two dogs escaped their premises after they were returned to the owner on February 18th.

Section 7-30.030 purports to levy fines for violation of the ordinance. However, the language of the section is nonspecific. Is the failure to adequately post the required sign on the owner's property, as occurred here, a violation? Is it a violation that the dogs escaped after they were required to be fenced? This section needs clarification.

The same section imposes strict liability for the conduct of a dog which has been deemed potentially dangerous. This provision is not a remedy for injury, or death of a person or a beloved pet. It should be amended to impose fines or forfeiture of the animal(s) if persons or domestic animals are harmed or killed.

DANGER TO MINOR CHILDREN RESIDING WITH DOGS INADEQUATELY ADDRESSED

Since we have been told that there are minor children living in the household with these two dogs, if the animals are designated as potentially dangerous and returned to the owners, it is very likely that they will escape the house again and pose a danger to the neighborhood.

Additionally, these dogs, if deemed potentially dangerous, pose a danger to the minor children of the household. Since the ordinance only prohibits vicious dogs from residing in a home with minor children, this is one more instance of a flawed regulation. Section 7-30.060(B).

EUTHANIZATION OF VICIOUS DOGS SHOULD BE MANDATORY NOT DISCRETIONARY

Section 7-30.060 is alarmingly inadequate and poses real danger to the community, in that the euthanization of a vicious animal is discretionary. If an animal is determined to be vicious because it has killed a person or a pet, the humane destruction of that animal should be mandatory.

The section states that if it is found following hearing that the release of an animal deemed vicious would create a significant threat to public safety, then the animal MAY be humanely destroyed. A judicial finding that an animal poses such a threat should require mandatory euthanasia of the animal.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Cities and County need to adequately fund Animal Control Officer Positions

so they are available in all areas of the county and especially in the larger cities.

I believe that there are a number of unfunded positions in the department. On February 18, 2022, it took nearly an hour before an officer arrived in Santa Rosa from Sonoma on the first call about the attack and death of our cat. In that time a second animal was killed and humans chased or intimidated.

2. City and County Animal Control

It must be difficult for Officers to know what regulations are applicable to a situation in different jurisdictions. Definitions and implementation are different in various jurisdictions. Officers need to know what proper actions should be taken in often difficult and emotional situations regarding dog attacks. These are not the same in every area.

For example, the Petaluma Municipal Code defines animals as “Potentially Dangerous” & “Dangerous” and does not have a Vicious category. Hearing procedures and definitions are much more detailed. A uniform code for Cities and the County would make enforcement and procedures much clearer to the officers and administrators who operate Animal Control

From: [Beth Steffy](#)
To: [Public Safety Subcommittee Comment](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6/15 Public safety subcommittee agenda item 5.2 public comment
Date: Sunday, June 12, 2022 7:13:48 PM

Hello,

I've been helping my neighbors after the horrific dog attack on February 18th that resulted in some citizens needing to take evasive action to avoid getting bitten and two cherished family cats being brutally mauled to death in their own backyards. I learned that when the Animal Control officer who found the dogs later that day took them back to their owner they were following the city code. So I read the city code pertaining to dangerous/vicious animals and found that it leans heavily in the favor of the offending animal. That's when I realized the code needs to change.

I feel it's vital that an animal be able to be deemed vicious if they injure or kill another animal, even if just one, so they can be impounded pending the outcome of a hearing. The current code allows the offending animal to be returned to their owner even if they kill 20 other animals in a day. Many of us consider our pets family members and losing one in any way is devastating. But having them brutally mauled by someone else's pet, who is then returned home, is simply unacceptable. I also believe the current code requires an animal to injure more than one human, depending on the extent of the injury, before they can be deemed vicious. I feel that should be changed to just one such injury. I also hope to hear the committee's ideas for additional changes to the code to keep us all safe.

It's time to put the safety of those living in Santa Rosa, both two and four legged, above the wishes of reckless and irresponsible dog owners. Thank you very much for addressing this very important safety issue.

Postscript:

When those two dogs got out again just two months after they killed the two family cats, even though the owner promised to abide by all the rules, the terror experienced by my neighbors was chilling. The only reason no one got injured that day was due to the heroic measures of the victim families who used every means possible to alert neighbors to take immediate shelter.

Thanks and Regards,

Beth Eurotas-Steffy

[REDACTED]

Santa Rosa

707 [REDACTED]

From: [Diane Andreini](#)
To: [Public Safety Subcommittee Comment](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] AGGRESSIVE ANIMALS
Date: Monday, June 13, 2022 11:47:35 AM

UNLEASHED DOGS should not be allowed at any time.

Dogs can be the most precious of friends -- but when they are not treated kindly by their owners they revert back to their disposition of being a wild creature -- that is the way they protect and defend themselves. But they can also be aggressive and kill small animals!

These dogs need to be taken away from their owners, the owners need to be held responsible both financially and legally.

Please strengthen the laws to protect all from aggressive animals. Please have more animal control officers to respond to all calls in regards to these animals that will do harm.

Thank You, Diane

From: [Amy Waterman](#)
To: [Public Safety Subcommittee Comment](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Safety Subcommittee 6/15/22
Date: Monday, June 13, 2022 2:08:06 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in regards to the issue of altering the city code pertaining to potentially dangerous/vicious animals. My family is currently on vacation otherwise we would be attending the meeting this Wednesday.

My family resides in the Grace Tract neighborhood where several months ago two dogs ran loose tormenting the neighborhood, chasing down a neighbor and brutally killing two cats after breaking into their own properties. Our neighborhood has been not only traumatized by this occurrence but, now, many are afraid to walk our beautiful streets as we once enjoyed.

On the day the dogs ran free they found their way to our front porch scaring our cats and our daughter.

My family strongly supports the City of Santa Rosa looking into altering the city code in order to help create a stronger feeling of peace and safety regarding this issue.

Thank you kindly for your consideration.

Amy, Jeff & Cosette Waterman

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Santa Rosa, Ca 95404
[REDACTED]

From: [Sheralynn Freitas](#)
To: [Public Safety Subcommittee Comment](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Safety Subcommittee- Dangerous/Vicious Animals comment for 6/15 hearing
Date: Monday, June 13, 2022 5:29:00 PM

I am writing in support of the Public-Safety Subcommittee making modifications to the city code/ordinances regarding animal ownership and accountability following vicious animal attacks, particularly on private property. My Grace Tract neighborhood was recently traumatized when two dogs slaughtered two cats in from of their owners in their private property backyards. In addition to killing the cats, the dogs chased a person into a carport before leaving. This ordeal lasted 1.5 hours and has been the focus of two articles in the Press Democrat.

Once the dogs were caught, they were immediately returned to the owners with the agreement they would comply with the dangerous dog requirements. Weeks later the dogs escaped again only to frightened the neighborhood. The sight of people rushing to get home with pets and grandchildren, afraid that the dogs would maul them was terrifying and ridiculous in that it should never have happened.

As a result the following changes of the city's code/ordinance are supported by my neighbors and my household:

- 1) When Animal Control is notified of dogs roaming loose, neighbors should be notified using the existing Nigel system.
- 2) When an attack occurs, the victim family should be immediately provided the information regarding the owner's address and contact information.
- 3) Dogs that attack animals or people should be kept by Animal Control until a full investigation can be conducted to evaluate the seriousness of the incident. Dog owners should be required to comply with the dangerous or vicious dog requirements prior to being returned, with the owner paying the cost to board the animal(s). This includes the required collars, posted signs, and check of yard to ensure no escape.

If these things are required, neighborhoods will feel safe and have trust that the government systems in place are responsive and thorough.

Sheralynn FREITAS



Santa Rosa, Ca

Sent from my iPad

From: [Tygerson, Margie](#)
To: [Public Safety Subcommittee Comment](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Safety Subcommittee -June 15, 2022
Date: Monday, June 13, 2022 11:47:20 AM

Dear Public Safety Committee,

In regards to updating the city code pertaining to potentially dangerous/vicious animals; simply put; what will it take to update these outdated dangerous animal codes? When more innocent pets are viciously killed? When a small child is mauled? I don't understand the hesitancy to change these codes, to reasonably update them, before more life is lost due to the irresponsible owners of dangerous animals.

While I realize it is impossible to legislate stupidity, it is possible to at least be able to hold irresponsible pet owners accountable and remove the dangerous animals from their watch. These dangerous dogs are the innocent victims here too, at the expense of people that should not have the privilege of owning any type of pet.

Sincerely,

Margie Tygerson megtyger@gmail.com [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

From: [donna bley](#)
To: [Public Safety Subcommittee Comment](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Safety Subcommittee Meeting 6/15/22
Date: Saturday, June 11, 2022 8:08:39 PM

Dear Public Safety Subcommittee Chair Fleming, and Subcommittee Members Schwedhelm and Rogers,

I live in the immediate neighborhood where two pit bulls on the loose killed two cats at different residences on February 18, 2022, and then were apprehended and returned to their owners by Santa Rosa Animal Control the same night. My hope is that you will be able to make adjustments and improvements to our Santa Rosa Animal Control codes. In this case, the animals should have been impounded until a full investigation was completed.

Here are some other ideas that would greatly help improve the procedures at Animal Control so they could better protect our communities:

1. Registering domestic animals that are considered family members, so they can be recognized by City and County and be required to keep shots current and pay a fee for the registration.
2. Notify households within a two mile radius with the address of a dog deemed vicious, so we can stay clear.
3. Enact some type of warning system to warn neighborhoods of loose dogs. Nixle could be used as we did with a loose mountain lion at the Mall.
4. Signs for homes with potentially dangerous or vicious animals need to be large and out close to the street, not at the door of the house.
5. Each animal killed should be counted as a separate offense, rather than requiring two different days of killings in order to label animal as vicious.
6. Bias in Animal Control written reports needs to stop.
7. There should be no denial by Animal Control of records for the victims. The attacking dog owner information should be immediately available to the victims.
8. Recorded video must be admissible for dog misbehavior evidence, rather than first-hand witness by the Animal Control officer, as is now the protocol.
9. Animal Control should fall under the umbrella of Law Enforcement rather than the Department of Health Services. Animal Control has only 10 officers.
10. The revision of our Animal Control code should be focused on protection of our families and victims, and not geared to protecting out of control loose animals.

Thank you for your time in considering changes to our Animal Code, something we had no idea needed revamping until this horrendous tragedy occurred in our neighborhood. I appreciate all your time, and all you are doing for our City.

Thank you,

Donna Bley

[REDACTED]

Santa Rosa, CA 954046

[REDACTED]