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— M A Q U O K E T A —

SENTINEL—PRESS

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Town's ban on pit bulls stands

By **DOUGLAS MELVOLD**

The Maquoketa City Council will not review its ordinance banning pit bull terriers from the city.

The council on Monday night, July 19, voted down a request by Councilman Todd Mang to re-open a public debate over whether the city should ban the pit bull and related breeds from being kept in the city.

Mang's motion to refer the issue to the council's Public Safety Committee for study and a recommendation failed on a 4-2 vote.

Councilman Eric Pape joined Mang in favor of reconsidering the ordinance.

Council members Neil Morehead, Ed Turney, Amy Moore and Margo Shouse voted against sending it to the committee and Councilman Don Schwenker was absent.

The decision came two weeks after a split council narrowly upheld an order by Police Chief Brad Koranda that a Maquoketa woman remove her pit bull terrier from the city.

On a 4-3 vote, the council on July 6 found that Koranda acted properly in serving Stacy Eby with an abatement notice in June ordering her to remove her dog from the city within 30 days.

Eby, who acknowledged that her dog is a pit bull, appealed the abatement to Koranda. When he upheld the abatement, she took the next step of appealing the abatement to the council.

In an appearance before the council on July 6, she indicated she may challenge the council's decision in District Court.

Koranda said he has issued abatement notices to six owners of pit bulls in the city.

Eby and several other pit bull owners and supporters attended the July 6 council meeting. Her comments sparked a discussion of whether or not the city should ban pit bulls or have an ordinance that prohibits all dogs of a certain breed.

Maquoketa's ordinance banning pit bulls has been on the books since the mid-1980s. The city suspended enforcement of the ordinance for a time about two years ago when the state ombudsman office said the city's ordinance was too vague. The ombudsman also said the city needed to have someone trained in identifying pit bulls.

As a result, the city rewrote the ordinance to ban the Staffordshire terrier breed, the American pit bull terrier, the American Staffordshire terrier or "any dog which has the appearance and characteristics of being predominately of the above breeds."

Police officer Brendan Zeimet, who is the handler of the department's police service dog, Ricky, underwent training to identify pit bulls. After Zeimet completed police resumed enforcement of the ordinance.

Under the ordinance, owners of pit bulls in the city are served with an abatement notice giving them 30 days to remove the dog from the city.

Owners may appeal the order to the police chief. If the abatement is upheld, they may appeal further to the council. From there, the next step would be to District Court.

Mang said Monday night that he received calls about the ordinance, with about half of the callers in favor of retaining the pit bull ban and about half opposed to it.

He said the city should not "take on a breed of an animal and condemn it based on a few animals' actions." He suggested that the ordinance be sent to the Public Safety Committee

for review.

Mayor Jason Hute agreed with Mang's proposal, saying, "at least it would give an opportunity to look at it again."

Council member Amy Moore said she received "a lot of calls" about the ordinance. Most callers favor the ordinance as is and oppose a review.

Morehead said he also received many calls regarding the ordinance. He said two callers favored reviewing the ordinance and the remainder favor keeping the ordinance as written without a review.

He said he feared that re-opening the issue of whether or not the city should ban pit bulls "would raise a lot of ill feelings in town."

He said City Manager Brian Wagner has supplied the council with information about pit bulls. He said that for every person who has

argued against the ordinance before the there are several who favor the ordinance.

Tracy Green of Maquoketa addressed the council Monday night. She called the pit bull ban discrimination. She was critical of the \$9,000 the city spent to train Zeimet in identifying pit bulls.

She noted that if Zeimet leaves the department, the city will have to spend a similar amount to train another officer.

Deb Jenkins of Maquoketa said she has had three rottweilers for 10 years and was concerned that the council may expand the ban to other breeds of dogs that are considered aggressive, including rottweilers.

"They've never bothered anyone," Jenkins said.

Morehead said the council is not considering expanding the ban to prohibit other breeds.

Parade tragedy report clarifies event details

By **SARA MILLHOUSE**

Police still don't really know what agitated the team of horses that tore along Bellevue's Heritage Days parade route July 4, killing one woman and injuring several dozen more. At this point, they may never know.

But Bellevue police chief Lynn Schwager released a final report on the accident Monday, identifying five more parade accident victims and giving a more detailed narrative of the accident's start. The report attempts to clarify basic questions that remained hazy despite hundreds of witnesses: questions like "How many people were in the buggy?" and "What happened to the horses?"

Police say they've ruled out suggested manmade causes for the horses' initial agitation, including fireworks, sirens, vehicle horns, backfiring, squealing tires or children throwing objects.

Another theory of the accident's cause looked up. "Witnesses report that the buggy was parked next to a purple martin house when the incident started and that the martins were agitated and swooping around the people, vehicles and animals that were in the area of their birdhouse," reads the report. "It could be speculated that these may have caused or contributed tot the horse's initial agitation but there is no evidence to support this at this time."

The report revised the

number of buggy occupants from four to seven, including Mardell and Janet Steines of Springbrook; their son Craig Steines, 26, of Bellevue; their son Kevin Steines, 38; Kevin's wife Jennifer Steines, 33; and their two children, Aubree, 5, and Keegan, 7, all of Dubuque.

The police narrative tells of multiple attempts to regain control of the horses after the right horse rubbed its head against the left horse or its rigging, partially dislodging the bridle. As Craig Steines dismounted the buggy and approached the horse to replace it, she dipped her head and swung it back up, completely dislodging the bridle.

He attempted to restrain the right horse as they started forward, moving to the left of the wagon in front of them and then back into the center of the street, continues the report. Craig lost his grip on the horse, and as the buggy turned to the right, Mardell Steines fell from the wagon onto the pavement.

Mardell held onto the reins for about a block, after which his son Kevin jumped from the buggy in an attempt to grab them.

This left only Jennifer Steines and the two children in the back of the buggy and Janet Steines in the front seat yelling warnings to the crowd. In another revision to the original narrative, the horses struck a tree near the intersection of Park Street. That collision—not the collision with a nearby sign—detached the horses

and threw Janet Steines from the buggy, according to the report. Jennifer Steines and her children kept their grip in the buggy until it stopped. They went into a nearby house.

The horses continued down the street, striking more bystanders and eventually colliding with a van pulling a float for Maquoketa State Bank. A family friend took them to the family's farm. One had an injured leg, and the friend took the horse to a Jackson County veterinarian, who discovered three breaks in the leg and put the horse down. The remaining horse survived.

Added to the rolls of those injured were Jan Sieverding, 76, of Bellevue; who was treated at Acute Care in Dubuque; Rany Kittleson of Verona, Wis., treated at U.W. Health in Madison, Wis.; Sandy Crilly, 46, of Willow Springs, Ill., treated at LaGrange Community Hospital in Chicago, Ill.; Jack Crilly, 8 and also of Willow Springs, treated by EMTs at the scene; and Mary Wiegert, 99, of Bellevue, who did not seek treatment. Besides the more than 25 victims treated, others suffered minor injuries.

"The Bellevue Police Department continues to offer sympathy and condolences to the Steines family as well as all the other victims of this incident and their families," reads the report, signed by police chief Lynn Schwager.