

Pit bull ban approved by city council

BY JOE FOREMAN
Editor

Despite hearing some passionate pleas from a handful of constituents, the Glenwood City Council refused to take any of the bite out of its pit bull ordinance.

The council passed the third and final reading of the measure at its regular meeting Tuesday, Aug. 14.

The ordinance bans the ownership, possession or sale of an American Pit Bull Terrier, American Staffordshire Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terrier or any other dog that displays physical traits of one of the banned breeds. Existing pit bull owners will be allowed to keep their dogs until they die or are sold, but must meet a series of conditions mandated by the city, including licensing of the animal. The dog's owner must be at least 18 years of age and provide proof of specific pit bull liability insurance with coverage of at least \$100,000. The owner is also required to have the animal spayed or neutered within 30 days of the ordinance taking effect and confined in a secure structure at least 10 feet away from the nearest property line in their yard. The dog's owner must also place a "Pit Bull Dog" warning sign near the entrance to his or her property.

Glenwood resident Christine Felos, who has attended all three readings of the ordinance, said she considers her pit bull to be a part of her family and believes it's unfair for the city to target the

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dogs.

"I am totally opposed to breed-specific legislation" Felos said.

Others in the audience who oppose the ordinance, including Josh Ehrenhard, Emily O'Tool and Brian Williams, voiced concerns about the breed-specific language and questioned how the ordinance would be enforced.

Glenwood Police Chief John O'Connor said his department would follow a standard process in investigating reports of pit bull ordinance violations. Officers would issue citations to put bull owners found to be out of compliance with the ordinance and the matter would be turned over to the court system.

Mayor Dyle Downing said the ordinance can be amended if deemed necessary by the council. Downing also read aloud a police report from an officer who utilized his stun gun on an attacking dog. Downing said the incident involving the officer was one example of why the ordinance is needed. The mayor called the ordinance a proactive measure that would prevent the city from becoming a haven for pit bulls and their owners.

"It's a basic ordinance that addresses the problem we have at hand," Downing said.

Craig Florian, the lone council member to vote against the ordinance, said he believes the arguments presented against the legislation brought out some legitimate concerns.

"We already have a vicious dog ordinance on the books and I do believe it's discriminatory," Florian said.