Town of Keene

Public Hearing

Local Law on Comprehensive Dog Control

 January 14th 2025

 5:15 P.M. Town Hall

**Board Members Present**: Joseph P Wilson Supervisor, Christopher Daly, Teresa Cheetham-Palen, Ann Hough Council Members

**Absent:** Robert Biesemeyer

**Town Officials Present:** Anna Whitney Town Clerk, Reggie Whitney Highway Superintendent, Emily Whitney Dog Control Officer

**Town Counsel Present:** Bryan Liam Kennelly, Esq

**Members of the Public**: Martha Allen, Ann Hartson, Carter Gill, Stephen Hall, Barb Dumas, Doug White, Yvette Tillmen, David LeClair, Sydney Brown, Ben Stechschulle, Noreen McCarthy, Andrew Wadsworth, Jill Bassett, Jeanie Cross

**Call the Public Hearing to Order** at 5:15 by Joseph P Wilson

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING:**

Notice of Public Hearing was published in the Sun Community Newspaper, posted on the **Town of Keene website**, and posted on our signage boards at the Town Hall. This public hearing is to hear comments on the draft, Local Law on Comprehensive Dog Control, from the public.

Mr. Wilson explained Local Law 1 of 1998 was the running at large;

Local Law 1 of 2001 is about health, safety, and care of the dog;

Local Law from 2010 is primarily about following the Ags and Market requirements. These 3 laws are in place. If a new law is passed, some of these may rollover into the new law.

**Public Comment**:

Jeanie Cross stated she supported the leash law, the control of dogs. She explained she has had two dogs attack. Locals owned them. The first was ¼ mile up her driveway. The second time she stated she was walking up Lacey and saw two women coming at her with her dog unleashed and she called ahead to ask them to leash the dog, the response was “its friendly”, the dog got under her dog, the owner didn’t know what to do. She stated her point is, neither of these things would have happened if the dogs were leashed.

Barb Dumas stated she always thought there was a leash law. She has questions and concerns of the language of the law. She tried to surrender her dog for over a year, she worked with North County SPCA and she could not give the dog away. The director of the SPCA was more concerned of the dogs situation and not hers. She asked how is the Board going to handle a dog that is surrendered? Where are you going to put them? How are you going to enforce this? She feels we need to educate people. The language feels a bit strong. She feels we need a leash law, but also have to figure out how to enforce this.

Stephen Hall stated in 2021 his wife was attacked and the dog was on a leash. He stated he does support the leash law; we do need laws in place.

Noreen McCarthy stated some of this is over kill. Giving authority for 15 days in jail, we do not want to end up in jail. She understands a leash law but to say you always have to have your dog on a leash is extreme. People post their dog is lost and they will be scarred to ask for help because of what this law states.

Chris Daly asked, to be clear, the penalty prevision say in this law was in the 1998 law; this is not something we came up with.

Doug White stated he takes his dog to Marcy Field and he cannot see walking down Marcy Field and then someone giving him a ticket.

David LeClair stated he agrees with Doug. He asked if there are any thought about having certain times dogs could be off leash in Marcy Field?

Deana Brown stated a few thoughts for consideration to have this allowed; Bartlett, Jack Rabbit, East Branch Trails; creating places and times to have a happy dog.

Yvette Tillman asked how many dogs were taken to court?

Barb Dumas said section 8 paragraph c, this doesn’t make sense for dog waste.

Noreen McCarthy stated this is very heavy against dog owners. Leashed at all times is not reasonable.

Deanne Brown worries the shelters are already full.

Received three letters from residents, shared with the Town Board and on file with the Town Clerk.

Recording posted to the Town Website.

**Adjourn** Mr. Wilson adjourned at 5:47

Town Clerk

Town of Keene

Ann Whitney