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Edwardsville strengthens animal control ordinance

By [John Beal](#)

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Edwardsville — The Edwardsville City Council modernized the community's animal control ordinance Monday, updating definitions and strengthening penalties.

The new ordinance includes definitions of 33 terms, from "abandon" to "work dog."

But the centerpiece of the ordinance is that it abandons proscription of breeds such as pit bulls that are generally regarded as dangerous in favor of a prohibition of animals that are found to be dangerous or vicious.

Veterinarian Sheila Dodson, medical director of No More Homeless Pets KC, supported the revisions.

She was especially enthusiastic about doing away with the breed-specific bans.

"We, as a profession, have come out very strongly against breed-specific bans," she said. All dogs have the capability to cause harm, Dodson said. Breed-specific bans give a false sense of security.

She noted that she was recently attacked by a vicious dog that might have been a Labrador-Great Dane mix, neither of which is a breed usually considered to be dangerous.

Animals attack for many reasons other than heredity, she said.

"I applaud the recommendations," she said. "I think they're very well written."

The key to success with an animal-control ordinance is in educating people how to behave around potentially dangerous animals, especially children, who are most often the victims of dog attacks, most of which occur in the home.

"What's really important is educating the people in your city," she said.

In other action, the Council approved:

- A planning commission recommendation change the zoning of property from C-2, Commercial Intensive, to I-1, Industrial Non-Hazard, for JC Speedy Lube, 9701 Kaw Dr. City Administrator Michael Webb said the proposal had been rejected before, but city staff got everyone together and made sure they knew what was needed. As a result, the developer is revising the site plan, which will soon be submitted to the Planning Commission. Both the Planning Commission and the city staff recommended approval of the change.
- An ordinance authorizing the issuance of Industrial Revenue Bonds not to exceed \$1.8 million, with a 10-year, 50 percent tax abatement, for J. Coleman Enterprises in the FedEx Freight Subdivision.

- An ordinance authorizing the sale of Industrial Revenue bonds not to exceed \$825,000 for Van Booven Investments for a lawn and landscape business at 10021 Woodend Rd. The business also was awarded a 10-year, 50 percent tax abatement.
- Based on the recommendation of Police Chief Mark Mathies, the termination of police officer Louis Henry for just cause.
- Payment of bills totaling \$81,098.

Toward the end of the meeting, Council member Craig Crider said Tornado Tower developer Tom Overby offered to pay to run sewers from the area of the tower as far south as Kansas Highway 32. He said Overby needed to know where the sewers would need to connect, and encouraged Webb to contact him. Webb agreed to do so.

Webb briefed the Council on some developments that were likely to come forward in the next few weeks. By Wednesday, he expects an application from Midpoint Corporate Centre for an 8,000-square-foot facility. The city also has had discussions with another property owner about a 10-acre development in that area.

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