

## Public Safety & Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes, 10/8/12, City Hall Council Chambers

Present: Michael Halley, Connie Boyer, Kevin Flanagan, Julie Harvey, Jim Rubis, LaVon Hostetler, Deb Johnson, Arden Messer, Marilyn Messer, Charlie White, Dave Fredericks

### Points of discussion

The one agenda item was to discuss a possible deer bow hunting season within city limits with a Greg Harris from the Iowa DNR, who was unable to attend. Boyer reviewed her research of other city ordinances and highlighted the common parameters for how bow hunting seasons generally work. She also spoke with those in charge of the Jefferson County Park bow hunting program. To date only one person she's spoken with was against a deer bow hunting season within city limits, with many more citizens in favor including local bow hunters willing to help draft an ordinance.

Committee then invited those in attendance to comment. Dave Fredericks, who lives near Lamson Woods on East Filmore Ave, supports bow hunting within the city. He's witnessed deer that have been struck by vehicles being put down by police along the roadside and feels that organized bow hunting would be more discreet and safer. Chief Harvey feels that deer stands that allow hunters to shoot at a downward angle are the safest option. Jim Rubis shared pictures of deer in his garden at 1202 S Main St. during the day in summer of 2011 as evidence that deer overpopulation has been a problem for years. He feels that the safety issue of car accidents balances any potential safety issues of bow hunting. He also shared pictures of a buck that got caught in chicken wire around tree and starved to death. To maximize safety he recommends limiting hunters to areas where deer live/travel; possibly hold shorter hunting season, such as two intensive weekends instead of several months; and require hunters to use portable hunting stands.

Charlie White lives near the old hospital and has had problems with deer in that area. He feels that even one month of bow hunting (no firearms) would help with overpopulation. Arden Messer and his wife Marilyn, who live in a subdivision at the south end of town, have had a severe deer problem all summer. Deer have eaten both their garden and landscaping plants and leave their droppings in their back yard. They feel that it's been an ongoing severe problem in the entire neighborhood and would like to see something done. LaVon Hostetler spoke about the HUSH (Help Us Stop Hunger) program that allows hunters to take deer to a meat locker in Packwood. Chief Harvey would like as much of the deer to be put to use as possible. The Police Dept currently has a list of people who will take deer killed by vehicle collisions, so the need and interest already exist.

When considering the details of a hunting season yet this year Boyers prefers a shorter intensive season of either two or three weeks or over several weekends. Flanagan encourages safety and recommends that hunters bag does in high population areas (e.g Lamson Woods). The City must comply with all state hunting standards, including tag fees per deer, though the DNR does have a depredation tag program that offers tags at a lower rate. Rubis is concerned if the city doesn't take action soon citizens may take matters into their own hands.

Chris Flynn from the Iowa DNR called in. He explained that Jefferson County has a quota of deer tags but has never reached it. Tags are \$24 initially and \$12 after that. The City may be able to get depredation status for reduced tag fees. The Conservation Board might have deer population numbers the city could use to obtain depredation status.

### Recommendations/Actions

A sub-committee was formed to develop a bow hunting city ordinance, consisting of Boyer, Harvey, Fredericks, Flanagan, and Scott Timm. Hunting licenses would be available at city hall; the Police Dept could manage proficiency tests; the City would notify neighbors of hunting locations; deer can be given to those who want them (Police Dept has list). Sub-committee will work to develop a program that can be put in place yet this year then fine-tuned later.