

MARSHALLTOWN

— I O W A —

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TO: Mayor Greer and City Council
FROM: Michael W. Tupper, Chief of Police
DATE: April 20, 2022
RE: Dogs At Public Events

Policy Issue: Council approval is required for resolution and ordinance revision.

<input type="checkbox"/> Goal 1: Expand and improve development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal 3: Continually improve the City's organization & services
<input type="checkbox"/> Goal 2: Enhance Marshalltown's public image	<input type="checkbox"/> Goal 4: Partner with others to improve quality of life

Specific Objective/Action: Objective 1: Review policies, procedures, and ordinances for updates.

Recommendation: Staff recommends repealing Resolution 2008-090 Designating Public Events at Which Dogs are Prohibited and repealing Code of Ordinance section 90.036 Dogs at Public Events.

Budget Impact: N/A

Description/Background: In 2008 the City Council implemented an ordinance prohibiting dogs from the immediate vicinity of certain public events in the city. A resolution was then adopted establishing the specific events they were prohibited at.

Since 2008, communities throughout Central Iowa have adopted more lenient rules for public events as it relates to dogs being allowed to be present at public events while under the supervision of the pet owner. The current rule in Marshalltown is an outdated practice and has become difficult to enforce.

The use of service animals is also more common today than in 2008. Consequently, the current rule leads to confusion. We should not keep service dogs out of a public event. When people see a service dog, they may not understand the purpose of the service animal and they assume law enforcement is either ignoring the rule or picking and choosing who can or cannot have a dog at a public event.

Whether dogs are allowed at public events or not is not a matter of public safety and should not be a concern of government requiring police intervention. Asking law enforcement to enforce these minor rules is a poor use of law enforcement resources and can diminish the relationship law enforcement has with community members. Enforcement of these minor rules comes off as trivial and can lead to unnecessary confrontation between police and the community. There are already ordinances on the books that require dog owners to have their animal under control and on a leash. Further government restriction is unnecessary.

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Jeff Schneider, Gary Thompson, Dex Walker



For these reasons, staff recommends repealing the ordinance and resolution and allowing event organizers to determine if dogs are allowed at an event. The event organizer would then be responsible for enforcement.

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