



Bandon mayor has bone to pick with anti-pit bull proposal

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BANDON, Ore. (AP) — Pit bulls are still welcome in this coastal city.

Councilman Mike Claassen's proposed a ban on pit bull terriers and similar breeds, but couldn't find support from Mayor Mary Schamehorn or any other member of the council.

Scores of residents who attended this week's council meeting also objected. Schamehorn asked them whether they supported the pit bull ban. Only one man raised his hand.

Schamehorn, who called the proposed ban "absurd," promised to press for a change in council rules that would make it tougher to get such items placed on the council agenda.

"(Councilwoman) Nancy Drew got so many phone calls from irate people that she had to put her phone on answering machine," Schamehorn said before the meeting. "Apparently, any city councilor can put anything they want on the agenda, without regard for any kind of support from even a single other councilor or the mayor."

Claassen said he received about 20 angry phone calls, but also two or three from people in support.

The council removed the issue from the agenda without taking public comments.

Claassen said he would have liked to have shared statistics on human deaths and maimings by dogs. One study indicated almost three-quarters of such attacks in North America were caused by pit bulls and Rottweilers over a 12-year period through 2006.

Dozens of audience members left after the dog ban discussion, but several remained to criticize another proposal Claassen wanted on the agenda — a ban on the cutting of Monterey cypress trees on private property.

Schamehorn again asked for a show of hands of those in support of such a ban. There wasn't one.

"I guess this is my week to get slapped back," Claassen said.

"It has, and unfortunately, all of us got slapped, too," Schamehorn replied.

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