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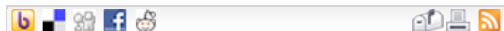


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City To Crack Down On Dangerous Dogs

Options Include Pit Bull Ban

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SPRINGDALE, Ark. -- One local city is considering whether to go pit bull-free in an effort to crack down on dangerous dogs.

Springdale wants to put more bite into its vicious animal laws. The city already has an ordinance that allows for animals to be removed or euthanized, but that can only happen after an attack. The new proposals call for prevention, tightening the leash before a dog becomes dangerous.

"Over half of the bites reported over the last 2 years have been by pit bulls. That can be a little misleading, but still that's a pretty hefty number," said Doug Sprouse, the mayor of Springdale.

That's why one of the two options being discussed is a city-wide ban on pit bulls. But Brett Harris, the Animal Services Manager for Springdale, isn't sure that's the right choice.

"If you ban pit bulls specifically, you're leaving 50 percent of the problems out of the mix," Harris said.

That leads to the second option, which wouldn't ban any specific breed of dogs, but would force the owner of any potentially dangerous breed to register with the city.

"From my experience, it's better to target a behavior or an owner who's responsible for their animal rather than a breed by itself," Harris said.

Harris said he's considering a ban as well. But either way, his goal is to prevent bites before they happen.

"Hopefully, through ordinances with the potentially dangerous restrictions, we'll give the owners a wakeup call before it's become a vicious dog," Harris said.

The city is still researching all of its options and looking for public input. But the discussion at last night's city council ordinance committee meeting showed that most members of the city government are leaning toward tightening restrictions, and not an all-out ban of any breed.

If Springdale puts a pit bull ban in place, it would not apply to pit bulls already within the city.

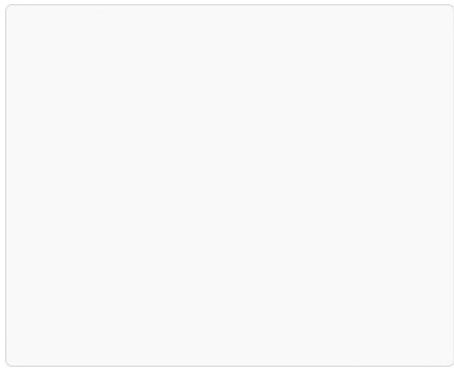
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