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City officials working on dog poop ordinance



By Randy Bell

Dogwalkers in Clinton who aren't prepared to clean up after their pets could soon be facing a fine if the Board of Aldermen passes a new ordinance, which was discussed at one of their recent work sessions.

Director of Community Development Roy Edwards explains the proposed ordinance: "If you're walking your dog, you've got to have the means to pick up the feces that it leaves and dispose of it."

Edwards says that could be "a scooper or a bag. We didn't specify what it would have to be, just something that they could show [an Animal Control officer] that they do have something to dispose of it with."

Most of the complaints about dog poop on sidewalks have come from Olde Towne, but the proposed ordinance would be citywide and would apply to public or private property, with the exception of the dog owner's own yard. Edwards says violators could be ticketed and required to pay a fine starting at \$100.

It's one of several new ordinances the Board could be voting on soon.

There's a proposal to create a separate ordinance to deal with nuisance property, moving the enforcement provision from the zoning ordinance, possibly resulting in stiffer fines. While nuisance property includes the common issue of overgrown lawns, the ordinance would apply to a number of other violations.

Edwards says the list includes "vehicles parked in the grass, trailers in the front yard, RVs in the front yard, fences that are dilapidated, houses that are dilapidated and trees that have fallen in the front yard." Those are all spelled out in the proposal, but the last line in the ordinance says "this is not an all-inclusive list."

The Board will also consider adding a stipulation that data centers may locate only in industrial areas with a conditional use permit, requiring similar approval for food trucks in all commercial areas and updating the 1999 ordinance dealing with contractors.

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PUBLIC NOTICE
 The Clinton Cemetery Association will hold its annual meeting on Thursday, May 28th at 5:00 pm in the Nelson House at First Baptist Church of Clinton. The public is invited to attend.