



**CITY OF**  
**FREMONT**  
**NEBRASKA**

**ANIMAL APPEAL COMMISSION MEETING**

**June 5, 2025 – 9:00 AM**

**City Council Chambers 400 East Military, Fremont NE**

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**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

**ROLL CALL**

1. Approve Minutes of the June 4, 2025 meeting
2. Hear the Reckless Owner Notice appeal of Matt Hareless
  - a. City presentation
  - b. Appellant presentation
  - c. Witness / Public Comments
  - d. Q&A / Discussion
  - e. Motion to Affirm, Deny or Modify Notice
  - f. Vote
3. General Matters Discussion

**ADJOURNMENT**

This meeting is preceded by publicized notice in the Fremont Tribune on May 30, 2025, is displayed in the Municipal Building and is open to the public. Agenda posted at the Municipal Building on May 27, 2025, the official current copy is available at City Hall, 400 East Military, City Clerk's Office. The Commission reserves the right to go into Executive Session at any time. A copy of the agenda is available in the Hearing Room and the Nebraska Open Meeting Law is posted in the City Council Chambers for review by the public. The Commission reserves the right to adjust the order of items on the agenda.

RECKLESS OWNER APPEAL - MATT HARLESSS



**Chatterson, Michael**

brad yerger

5/27/2025 8:19 AM

From Chatterson, Michael 

[Michael.Chatterson@fremontne.gov](mailto:Michael.Chatterson@fremontne.gov)

To [brad yerger](#)

 [scan\\_chattersonm\\_2025-05-23-15-59-33.pdf](#) (1 MB)

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To whom it may concern,

**Matt Harless**

1435 North Madison  
Fremont, NE, 68025  
mdh2242@gmail.com  
402-669-7728

05/23/2025

Re: Dog Ownership and Commitment to Prevention of Future Incidents

I am writing to you in regard to my dog, Rex, a 2-year-old Alaskan Malamute and German Shepherd mix, who has unfortunately gotten out of my yard on multiple occasions. I deeply regret that this has caused concern in the community, and I take full responsibility for these incidents.

First and foremost, I want to assure the court that I am a committed and responsible dog owner. Rex is more than just a pet to me—he is a beloved member of our family, and my children have developed a strong, loving bond with him. He is extremely affectionate and enjoys spending time with everyone in our household. His temperament is gentle, and he has never shown any aggression toward people or other animals. In fact, he is known to be friendly and well-mannered around both children and other dogs in our neighborhood, which makes these incidents of escaping particularly concerning for me.

The third and fourth offenses (10/15/24) (4/22/25), were due to two separate storms that had damaged two different sections of my privacy fence. Because the dogs are younger, they were able to spot the weaknesses in the fence and sneak out. After each offense noted i took the time to fix the fence where they escaped.

The fifth offense (5/12/25), rex had dug a hole under the back deck at the edge of the house and we did not notice until he had gotten out again. I have filled this hole with bricks to block him from getting out. Before this offense, i had also purchased an electric fence collar that he blatantly disregarded and ran away.

The sixth offense (5/19/25), i had worked a long weekend and had woken up early that day and had fallen asleep in the afternoon with Rex right next to me, and when i woke up, my 3 year old proudly told me he had let rex outside. I am unsure if he let him out in the backyard or out the front door.

Everytime Rex has gotten out of my yard, i have noticed within at least 30 minutes and immediately go out and look for him. I also have many friends and family that help me look immediately as well.

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MAY 32 23 2025

May 23 2025

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

3:58 PM  
MC

Rex is well taken care of. He has food and water at all times and is very much loved by myself and all of my children of all ages. Rex has never hurt any person or animal when he has escaped. He is also very intelligent and knows better than to run out in the street and cause chaos that way.

It was brought to my attention that rex is "underweight", i took him to the fremont pet hospital on 5/20/25 and the vet assured me he is healthy and although he may be on the slim side his age, breed, and being intact has something to do with it.

Since 5/19/25, Rex is hooked to a tether when he goes in the backyard i am planning on purchasing and installing extra fencing that will go on top of my current privacy fence to prevent him from jumping over it. I have also spoken to all of my children and informed them of the severity of making sure rex does not get out again. I will also be getting him micro chipped at the next Furever Homes drive through event. I understand the importance of keeping him safe and secure, and I deeply regret any disruption or worry his escapes may have caused. I want to emphasize that I am fully committed to addressing the issue and ensuring it does not happen again. To that end, I have taken several immediate and ongoing steps to prevent further escapes and enhance his safety:

1. **Upgraded Fencing:** I have reinforced the perimeter of my yard with taller and more secure fencing, including additional locks and barriers, to prevent any further escapes.
2. **Increased Supervision:** I am committing to increased supervision, especially during times when he is outdoors. I am also working on training him to be more comfortable in the yard with appropriate stimulation and activities.
3. **Use of a GPS Collar:** To further ensure his safety, I have purchased a GPS tracking collar so that I can monitor his location at all times and respond immediately if he does escape again.

I would also like to highlight that I have a deep, emotional connection with Rex. My children adore him, and he is an important part of our family life. He brings us joy and companionship, and we all love him dearly. I have always done my best to provide him with a safe and happy environment, and I am committed to continuing to do so.

I fully understand the responsibility I have as a dog owner, and I take this matter very seriously. I am dedicated to ensuring that Rex remains safe and secure, and I have made the necessary changes to prevent any future incidents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Matt Harless

### **Sec. 6-107.2 DANGEROUS AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ANIMALS; ACTIONS REQUIRED**

Within 30 days of declaration, the OWNER or CUSTODIAN of a DANGEROUS or POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ANIMAL shall comply with the following actions required:

- (1) A DANGEROUS or POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ANIMAL shall be spayed or neutered by a licensed veterinarian. Within 72 hours of this procedure, written notice provided by the licensed veterinarian shall be given to the ANIMAL CONTROL AUTHORITY.
- (2) A DANGEROUS or POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ANIMAL shall be implanted with a microchip identification number by a licensed veterinarian. Within 72 hours of this procedure, written notice provided by the licensed veterinarian shall be given to the ANIMAL CONTROL AUTHORITY. Written notice provided by the company under which the microchip was sold confirming satisfactory ownership registration of the microchip shall also be provided to the ANIMAL CONTROL AUTHORITY prior to the expiration of the 30 days following declaration.
- (3) The cost of the aforementioned processes and procedures shall be the responsibility of the OWNER or CUSTODIAN of the DANGEROUS or POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ANIMAL.
- (4) It shall be unlawful for any person whether OWNER or CUSTODIAN to harbor any DANGEROUS or POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ANIMAL in this City without having complied with this section.

### **Sec. 6-107.3 DANGEROUS AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ANIMALS; CONTINUOUS CONTROL REQUIRED:**

The OWNER or CUSTODIAN of a DANGEROUS or POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ANIMAL shall be responsible for control of the ANIMAL at all times. Under no circumstance will the OWNER or CUSTODIAN permit the ANIMAL to go unrestrained or out of direct control when outside the secure confines of its cage or pen. Restraint shall include a muzzle, or chain or leash affixed to a harness secured around the ANIMAL'S body as per manufacturer recommendation. In addition, no OWNER or CUSTODIAN of a DANGEROUS or POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ANIMAL shall permit the ANIMAL to be under the control of a person under 19 (nineteen) years of age while outside of a securely fenced area as defined in 6-107.4 and off the property of its OWNER or CUSTODIAN.

### **Sec. 6-107.4 DANGEROUS ANIMALS; OWNERSHIP, SECURE FENCE CONFINEMENT; WARNING SIGNS REQUIRED.**

- (a) While on the OWNER'S property, a DANGEROUS ANIMAL shall be securely confined, in a humane manner, indoors or in a securely enclosed and locked pen or structure suitably designed to prevent the entry of young children and to prevent the ANIMAL from escaping. The pen or structure shall have secure sides and a secure top. If the pen or structure has no bottom secured to the sides, the sides shall be embedded into the ground at a depth of at least one foot. The pen or structure shall also protect the ANIMAL from the elements. The pen or structure shall be at least ten feet from any property line of the OWNER. The OWNER of a DANGEROUS ANIMAL shall post warning signs on the property where the ANIMAL is kept that are clearly visible from all areas of public access and that inform persons that a DANGEROUS ANIMAL is on the property. Each warning sign shall be no less than ten inches by twelve inches and shall contain the words "WARNING" and "DANGEROUS ANIMAL" in high-contrast lettering at least three inches high on a black background.
- (b) No person, firm, partnership, limited liability company, or corporation shall own, keep, or harbor or allow to be in or on any premises occupied by him, her, or it or under his, her, or its charge or control any DANGEROUS ANIMAL without complying with the requirements of this section or other portions of this section or this chapter regarding DANGEROUS ANIMALS.

### **Sec. 6-107.7 APPEAL OF DANGEROUS OR POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ANIMAL DECLARATION**

When the owner(s) of any animal that has been declared to be dangerous or potentially dangerous; or when an owner(s) has been declared to be a Reckless Owner by the Animal Control Authority or an Animal Control Officer, they may APPEAL said declaration(s) to the Animal Control Commission by submitting a letter of intent to appeal within 10 days of either receiving a citation, or personal service, or mailed notice of such declaration.

An Appeals Commission shall schedule and hold a hearing within ten (10) days of receipt of the letter of APPEAL to the Commission. The hearing shall be conducted informally. The animal's owner and Animal Control Authority or Animal Control Officer are encouraged to file materials with the Commission in advance, but shall have the opportunity to present relevant oral argument and/or written material, as well as statements or reasons supporting or opposing the citation or declaration(s). Statements by each participant, inclusive of representation or any supporting witnesses, shall be limited to a total time of one (1) hour. Upon conclusion of the hearing the Appeals Commission shall affirm, modify or deny the declaration(s) of the Animal Control Authority or Animal Control Officer. If the declaration is affirmed, or modified and affirmed, applicable provisions of State Statute or this Chapter shall be enforced. If denied, the declaration(s) shall be nullified.

Written notice of the Appeals Commission's decision shall be provided to the animal's owner(s) and the Animal Control Authority, either personally or by United States Mail. The materials received, meeting minutes and the decision rendered by the Appeals Commission, may be used by the Animal Control Authority or the owner(s) in any subsequent Court proceedings.

### **NOTICE OF APPEAL SHALL BE SENT TO:**

**FREMONT APPEALS COMMISSION  
400 E MILITARY AVENUE  
FREMONT, NE 68025**

