City council hears suggestion about disposal of dead animals.

A crematorium for euthanized pets or strays is on the mind of one Gothenburg resident.

At the Dec. 15 meeting of the Gothenburg City Council, Bertha Daharsh said she'd like to see the city look into providing a crematorium for euthanized animals.

Daharsh spoke during open forum.

A proposed ordinance limiting pets in local households had been on the council agenda but was removed.

Daharsh said she had visited with veterinarian Roger Dudley about a humane way to dispose of pets since Dudley's clinic—the Gothenburg Animal Hospital—serves as the city pound.

"Maxwell and Brady bring their animals to town for euthanization," she said, noting that crematoriums range in price from $10,000 to $20,000.

She said she was told that the local clinic sometimes euthanizes as many as four pets a week while a month may go by with none.

Daharsh then addressed several council members and city administrator Bruce Clymer to see if they knew what happened to the bodies of euthanized animals.

They said they didn't.

“They put them in a dumpster that is hauled to Lexington for the rats to eat,” Daharsh said. “I think we can do better than that.”

She also suggested that the city could advertise the cats and dogs that need to be adopted like what is done in the North Platte newspaper.

Council president Jeff Kennedy said he thought the ads were paid for by a private organization.

“They’re not tax dollars,” Kennedy said.

Clymer said the council is working on an ordinance that outlines how animals can be adopted out.

Daharsh said the cost of adopting cats and dogs under the ordinance will increase be cause they need to be spayed or neutered.

She then quoted a poem by Cecil Frances Alexander.

All things bright and beautiful,

All creatures great and small,

All things wise and wonderful,

The Lord God made them all.

“I don’t think God put dogs and cats on this earth for the rats to eat,” Daharsh said.

Mayor Joyce Hudson said she appreciated Daharsh’s input, noting that the council has a long ways to go to make the pet limitation ordinance workable and acceptable.

Daharsh said she thought enough money could be raised to buy a crematorium.

Kennedy asked what other cities did about euthanized pets.

“I think Kearney has a crematorium but North Platte feeds them to the rats too,” Daharsh said. “But we’re better than North Platte.”

Local resident Lois Stanton, who also attended the meeting, said there was a crematorium in North Platte.

In addition to taking care of euthanized strays, Stanton said a crematorium could be a potential money maker. Pet owners who have their animals euthanized may want them cremated.

“It’s not necessarily a non-profit thing,” she said.

On another matter, the council passed a sub-recipient agreement with Dawson Area Development to administer Gothenburg’s grant for downtown revitalization.

By using DAD, Clymer told the council that grant money won’t have to meet federal

requirements because DAD is a non-profit organization.

DAD will maintain the fund and loan repayments from the grant as a Gothenburg downtown revitalization reuse loan fund under state Community Development Block Grant guidelines.

In other business, the council:

- approved a certificate of substantial completion for Avenue I sanitary sewer improvements, an application and certificate for final payment of $61,872 for the project and a change order for a $38,441 deduction from the original price because some quantities of materials were not used in the project. Because of an extension of the sewer line from Avenue I for a block of 11th Street, the cost of improvements was $251,148.15.
- agreed to draw down and pay two sums of $972 and $2,864 to West Central Nebraska Development District for owner-occupied housing rehabilitation. City clerk Connie Dalrymple said there are two owners using money to rehabilitate their homes but WCNDD officials seek more.
- okayed a Redevelopment Authority request for $28,510 in sales tax money to pay interest on an economic development loan at Gothenburg State Bank. Dalrymple said the outstanding loan is $846,000 which is made up of several smaller loans that were combined into one.
- granted a request for a special designated license from the owners of Lakeside Fun Center so they can serve alcohol for extended hours during a state women's bowling tournament on Jan. 17.

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