

Banks council tells veterinary service to shut kennel operations

Lengthy public hearings preceded the Banks City Council meeting Oct. 8, and resulted in a packed house to hear or testify about an appeal of a zoning violation and/or a chronic public nuisance.

K. J. Won, Banks City Planner, told the council that Banks Veterinary Service (BVS) was notified in August that kennel operations at their building were a violation of the city's zoning ordinance. Won said the written notice of violation emphasized that prohibition of kennel use was "made explicit at the time when city council originally approved the veterinary service."

Dr. Steven Vrendenburg, who operates BVS with his wife, Jill, appealed the notice of violation and requested a public hearing.

When Vrendenburg requested a hearing, Won said, his letter noted that "most veterinary

offices, including many in the Forest Grove, Cornelius, and Hillsboro areas do limited boarding for their clients." In his report Won told council that that an outdoor kennel is a prohibited use in Washington County, which is not the case with the outdoor kennel at BVS. An additional issue, Won said, is compatibility with the adjoining residential district. Based

on his findings, Won recommended that council deny the appeal. BVS would still have the option of seeking a change in zoning.

In his response, Vrendenburg expressed astonishment that neighbors found it necessary to sign a petition complaining of noise at his kennel because, since beginning the service approximately a year ago, he had not once received a complaint and his home

phone number is clearly posted at BVS. Vrendenburg "apologized emphatically" for any disturbance the kennel had caused but said he was unaware of a problem. The kennel is a minimal part of his practice, Vrendenburg said, and he started providing the service because clients were having difficulty finding boarding space. Many of the animals he has boarded require daily medication and/or treatment. He also

stressed that he often performs veterinary services for the community, such as picking up animals struck by autos and providing temporary boarding for strays.

Most of the animals kennelled are inside a glassed-in room within the concrete block building, Vrendenburg said, and, since dogs are not usually left outside after dark, he didn't understand how people could

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