

Paradise considers contracting with sheriff's office for animal control

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By Brandon Hadley

PARADISE—The Town Council met with Sheriff Lynn Nelson and Deputy Brian Locke of the Cache County Sheriff's Office Wednesday to discuss an animal control contract and get a feel for how the CCSO influence in town differs from that of the Cache County animal control.

Paradise requires all dog owners to license their animals with the town, ensuring that the animals have had rabies vaccinations. Spring is a one of the busiest times in Paradise with licensing enforcement. This year's dog clinic was held on Feb 26. Even though there was good turnout at the dog clinic, town officials think there's still at least a half-dozen or more dogs unregistered in the town. When someone fails to register their dog the town has to send letters to these people or even make house calls. According to Nelson, those who keep forgetting to register their dog or choose to ignore a letter from the town usually get it taken care of shortly after receiving one from the sheriff.

"People respond a little differently when they receive a letter with our letterhead on the top," said Nelson.

"Our main goal with animal control is to get people in compliance," said Nelson. Nelson also said that compliance levels have jumped from 80 percent to nearly 100 percent in towns once the sheriff's office took over animal control.

The animals of repeat offenders are usually picked up or the owners are cited, instead of a phone call or a knock on the door. "We're good at dealing with people and their animals," said Locke.

Should Paradise choose to sign a contract with the sheriff's office, their influence wouldn't be limited to animal control. The sheriff's office is already putting in about 500 hours of service with the patrol division each year.

"We issue about 12 tickets and warnings a month out here," said Nelson. Most of the time spent in Paradise by the sheriff's office is proactive, or for a reason, such as responding to calls. The presence of law enforcement would also be included in the contract.

Animal control wasn't the only topic at Wednesday's meeting. The council also discussed possible banking options, weighing the pros and cons of Wells Fargo and Zion's Bank. The town is looking for ways to make banking more convenient for them. One option being discussed is to switch to an automated checking system, which will save time in the check cashing process.

"Automated check depositing will save us three of our four trips into town each week," said Mayor Leland Howlett.

The council also decided on April 30 as the community clean-up day. A large green-waste bin will be in town for about a week, in which citizens can dump all their green waste. The council asks that people not use it for unwanted items such as refrigerators, old tires, construction scraps and dead animals.