

**Planning Commission
Planning Comm Meeting
Government Services Center & Zoom Id 267-094-2170 password 56587
6:00 PM on Monday, July 27, 2026**

1. Call to Order

2. Agenda Additions or Deletions

3. Minutes

June 22, 2026

4. Status of Council Recommendations

None.

5. Permits

- A. Active Construction Permits
- B. Construction Permit Applications
 - 1. Clerk Approved
 - a. 351 S Pelican Ave - shingle garage
 - 2. Needing Approval
 - a. 410 Scharf Ave E. - 6x6 patio area and a 34x5 sidewalk
- C. Grade and Fill Permits
 - 1. 660 W Glenn St - create building pad for 1600 sq feet

6. Old Business

- A. Nuisance Properties
- B. City Ordinance Update

1. ' 91.06 KENNELS.

(A) *Definition of kennel.* The keeping of three or more dogs on the same premises, whether owned by the same person or not and for whatever purpose kept, shall constitute a kennel; except that a fresh litter of pups may be kept for a period of three months before that keeping shall be deemed to be a kennel.

(B) *Kennel as a nuisance.* Because the keeping of three or more dogs on the same premises is subject to great abuse, causing discomfort to persons in the area by way of smell, noise, hazard, and general aesthetic depreciation, the keeping of three or more dogs on the premises is hereby declared to be a nuisance and no person shall keep or maintain a kennel within the city.

Penalty, see ' 91.99

2. Camper Ordinance

7. New Business

8. Adjournment

Table of Contents

4. Minutes	3
5. Status of Council Recommendations	8
6. Permits	9
7. Old Business	12
2026 Nuisance Spreadsheet(Sheet	13

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4. Minutes

June 22, 2026

Files Attached

- Planning Commission Minutes 6.22.26.pdf

City of Vergas Planning Commission Minutes

Monday, June 22, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Government Services Building and Zoom

The City of Vergas Planning Commission held a regular hybrid meeting on Monday, June 22, 2026, on Zoom and at the Vergas Government Services Building.

2026	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alex Ohman, Chair	A	P	P	P	P	A						
Bruce Albright, Liaison	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Dave Johnston, Member	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Rebecca Hasse, Member	P	P	P	A	A	P						
Jim Courneya, Member	P	A	P	P	P	P						
Julie Lammers, Clerk-Treasurer	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Mike Dufrane, Utilities Superintendent	P	A	A	A	P	P						

P: Present. A: Absent N/A: No Meeting

Present in person: Citizens Julie Bruhn, Marcia Huddleston and Dean Haarstick.

Present via zoom: Editor Bob Williams of the Frazee-Vergas Forum; and Citizen, James Stenger.

Call to Order

Vice Chair Albright called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Agenda Additions or Deletions

An addition was made to include a discussion of the noxious weeds ordinance (§ 92.38).

Motion by Courneya, seconded by Albright, to approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes

Motion by Courneya, seconded by Johnston, to approve the minutes from May 18, 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

Status of Council Recommendations

None.

Construction Permits

Active Construction Permits

Did not review.

Construction Permit Applications

Approved by email

Lammers reported that the following permits had been administratively approved:

250 1st Ave N — Parking lot and curbing for Vergas Auto. The City's loan program was utilized for the repairs.

110 S Railway Ave — A 10×16 pre-built building to be placed approximately 5 feet from the property line on the railroad side of the property.

Needing Approval

306 E Frazee Ave — 8×24 Garage Addition and 218' Privacy Fence

Lammers presented this application, noting that the property is adjacent to the ball diamonds and had previously received a nuisance letter. The applicant intends to enclose vehicles and equipment behind a privacy fence just under 6 feet in height, placed 12 inches from the property line as required by ordinance—placing it approximately 96 feet back from the front of the 100×250-foot lot. The applicant had located and flagged his property pins. Commission members noted the fence would come close to the road accessing the park but confirmed it would remain within the applicant's property. Lammers confirmed that the applicant's existing and proposed structures total approximately 2,512 square feet, well within the permitted 25% lot coverage of 6,250 square feet. The applicant also submitted a letter clarifying the purpose and use of items on the property.

Motion by Johnston, seconded by Courneya, to approve the construction permit for 306 E Frazee Ave. The motion passed unanimously.

230 E Frazee Ave — Vergas Veterans Memorial Park — Signs

Lammers advised that the Veterans Memorial Park project involves the installation of several 2×3-foot signs. Work had already commenced, with post holes dug in the areas previously used for the park's ongoing development. Signs include one describing the painted rock, one honoring Henry Ditterich, and others recognizing veterans.

Motion by Haase, seconded by Johnston, to approve the construction permit for 230 E Frazee Ave — Vergas Veterans Memorial Park. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Nuisance Properties

Lammers provided an update on properties that had received nuisance letters following the May inspection. City staff had photographed properties that day. Lammers summarized responses received from several property owners:

- **840 E Sharf Ave** — The owner contested the zoning designation, believing their lakeshore property was in an R-2 district; Lammers clarified it is zoned R-1. The owner indicated lumber on-site was intended for a future permitted structure and offered to have it moved if required prior to permit approval.
- **390 S Pelican** — The owner stated that vehicles have collector plates and that tabs were being obtained for the other vehicle.
- **161 3rd Ave S** — The fish house was removed prior to the letter being sent.
- **431 Lake St** — The owner called to say a pickup had been moved, and that campers on the property are stored, not occupied.
- **306 E Frazee Ave** — The owner submitted a letter clarifying that his orange structure is a permitted fish house, the wood pile has been removed, and that his trailers are work equipment essential to his livelihood. He noted the privacy fence, if approved, would screen the remaining items.
- **201 Hill St** — The owner expressed frustration at repeated notices, stating all vehicles are licensed and drivable and that no more than four are outside at a time unless being worked on. He inquired about the possibility of a conditional use permit for demolition derby vehicles.

The commission discussed the demolition derby car situation at length. It was noted that the City Attorney had advised that all vehicles must be treated equally within city limits. Huddleston noted the practical difficulty of licensing demo cars, as the DMV typically does not register them given they are transported by trailer. The commission recognized a tension between enforcing the ordinance's requirement that vehicles be licensed and operable, and the reality that demo cars are generally not considered road-operable by their nature. Albright noted that placing a demo car on a trailer technically satisfies the ordinance, but acknowledged it presents no visual improvement over leaving it on the ground.

Haarstick spoke regarding his commercial property, explaining that he operates a specialist tractor repair business and that customers travel from as far as Montana and Plymouth to have equipment serviced. He noted that some tree removal and tidying had begun. The commission acknowledged that his property is zoned commercial, and that a different set of ordinances applies, including to his residence which remains commercially zoned.

Regarding **130 E Elm**, Lammers stated that neighboring residents had been calling the office as frequently as every day to report excessive garbage accumulation at the property—both inside and outside structures. Two neighboring properties reported an increase in rodent activity they attributed to the situation. The commission agreed this property warranted advancement to the next enforcement step.

Following further discussion, the motion to table all properties was withdrawn. The commission took the following actions:

Motion by Courneya, seconded by Johnston, to advance **130 E Elm** to the certified letter phase (Phase 2) of the nuisance enforcement process. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Hasse, to table further action on the remainder of the nuisance property list pending additional review. The motion passed unanimously.

The commission also took up two additional properties involving vehicles without current license plates:

- A vehicle parked behind a building at 146 Main St E was noted to have a valid license but four completely flat tires, prompting questions from complaining residents about operability.
- An unlicensed vehicle for sale in the 110 Railway Ave N parking lot was identified as lacking plates.

Motion by Courneya, seconded by Johnston, to send first-notice nuisance letters to the owners of both the 146 Main St E property and the 110 Railway Ave N parking lot property. The motion passed unanimously.

City Ordinance Update

§ 91.06 KENNELS

Lammers brought this item forward after receiving an inquiry from a resident wishing to own a fourth dog, and after learning of at least two households in town currently keeping four dogs. Under the current ordinance, keeping three or more dogs constitutes a kennel, which is further declared a nuisance and prohibited within City limits. The Commission noted that the City has historically licensed households with up to three dogs without apparent issue, which may constitute an inconsistency.

Discussion centered on whether the definition of "kennel" was ever intended to apply to private households with multiple pets, or whether it was meant to address commercial boarding operations. Several members felt the term "kennel" more naturally describes a commercial boarding enterprise, and that the current language is a poor fit for a small City like Vergas. The Commission agreed that a commercial-style kennel with numerous dogs would be inappropriate in town due to noise and odor concerns, but recognized that simply increasing the permitted number of dogs for private ownership may be a more sensible approach.

It was agreed that staff would research how other municipalities—including Perham, Detroit Lakes, and Ottertail County—address dog ownership limits, and also review applicable state statutes and county ordinances, before any amendment is considered.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Hasse, to table § 91.06 for further research. The motion passed unanimously.

§ 92.38 OWNERS RESPONSIBLE FOR TRIMMING, REMOVAL AND THE LIKE

Bruhn presented this item, noting particular concern about the Lawrence Acres addition, where approximately eight homes have been built but many vacant lots remain unmowed and are heavily infested with thistles and other noxious weeds. She shared photographs showing widespread weed growth along roadways throughout the addition, and noted that letters had been sent approximately three weeks prior without any observable response. Several landowners had indicated they do not intend to mow because they are not yet building, and at least one stated the City should mow first.

The Commission discussed the practical and physical challenges involved, including terrain that is too steep for riding equipment in some areas, low or soggy ground in others, and a large lot where a farmer is expected to cut hay. Albright emphasized a distinction between noxious weeds—which are regulated by state law and must be controlled regardless of terrain—and general vegetation height, which may be impractical to enforce uniformly on large or difficult parcels. He noted that the ordinance itself acknowledges that mowing may sometimes be "unreasonable or impractical under certain circumstances."

Courneya noted he holds 17 acres within City limits and could not realistically manicure that entire area, pointing out that a single standard does not fit the diversity of properties within the City. Members agreed, however, that thistles are an urgent matter given their imminent bloom and rapid seed spread, and that noxious weed control is both an ordinance and a state law obligation that must be acted upon immediately regardless of construction status.

The consensus was that the ordinance adequately distinguishes between noxious weeds and general vegetation, and that the City's immediate priority should be ensuring noxious weed control in the Lawrence Acres addition. Bruhn confirmed she would follow up with affected landowners as the City's designated Weed Inspector under state law. The Commission also noted that road right-of-way maintenance is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner, including mowing and weed control up to the edge of the road, consistent with practice throughout the rest of the City.

The commission also discussed thistle growth along the county road between the nursing home and the swimming beach, noting that a member could contact Otter Tail County directly to request spraying and mowing of that corridor.

Motion by Courneya, seconded by Johnston, that noxious weeds must be addressed as a priority and that no further action be taken regarding the general vegetation/height provisions at this time. The motion passed unanimously.

Camping Ordinance

Lammers introduced this item, explaining that the current camping ordinance was adopted in February 2016 at the initiative of the EDA, which had hoped to encourage development of a formal campground in Vergas. The ordinance defines a Recreational Camping Area (RCA) as any area with three or more tents or recreational camping vehicles, and no licensed RCA currently exists in the City. Lammers noted a growing number of residents are keeping campers on their properties for extended periods—sometimes the entire summer—with family members residing in them, without registering as required.

The Commission discussed challenges with enforcement, as owners often deny occupancy when contacted. Sanitary waste disposal was identified as a primary concern, with Albright recalling a prior situation where a camper's waste was being discharged into a hand-dug pit. It was noted that the City's fee schedule does not currently include a camping registration fee, making it difficult to collect one this year.

Members also discussed the potential community benefit of a formal campground and the popularity of similar facilities in nearby communities such as Barnesville and near Pelican Lake. The Commission agreed the ordinance, as written, is focused on the development of formal camping areas and does not adequately address the reality of private residential camper use.

It was agreed to table action on this item to allow members time to review the full ordinance text (available on the city website) and the applicable Otter Tail County Shoreline Management provisions, which allow camping for up to 14 days within 1,000 feet of designated lakes—a buffer that covers nearly all of Vergas.

No formal motion was taken; the item was carried forward to the July agenda.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

Motion by Hasse, seconded by Johnston, to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorded by Rachel Nustad (assisted by ClerkMinutes)

Secretary,
Julie Lammers, CMC
Vergas City Clerk-Treasurer

Council Recommendations

None.

Follow Up Actions

- Deputy Clerk: Send certified letters (Phase 2) to the property owner and tenant at 130 East Elm regarding nuisance property cleanup.
- Deputy Clerk: Send first letters regarding unlicensed/flat-tired vehicles to the property owners at 146 Main St E and 110 Railway Ave N
- Deputy Clerk: Research state statute, county ordinance, and other cities' ordinances regarding kennels and number of dogs allowed, and report back at the next meeting.
- DuFrane: Contact Otter Tail County regarding noxious weeds along the county road from the nursing home to the southern beach.

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 - 1. 660 W Glenn St - create building pad for 1600 sq feet

Files Attached

- 2026 Construction Permits 7.27.26.pdf

2026 Construction Permits -
Vergas MN

Permit #	Issue Date	Parcel Number	Name	Address	Description	Date Closed	Value	who closed
2024-017	6/24/2024/ 05/21/2025	82000990166001	Keith Kuehne	306 E. Frazee Ave,	Build 12'x24' addition on to existing garage, steps & railing on porch			
2024-026	7/24/2024 7/1/2025	82000990218000	Andrew & Jackie Bunkowske	1220 E. Scharf Ave.,	Moving a shouse onto the property EXTENDED			
2024-028	8/20/2024 8/18/2025	82000500035001	Mike Baumgart	540 S Pelican Ave	Shingling			
2025-006	4/28/2025 4/28/2026	82000990167000	James Stenger	316 E Frazee Ave	replace doors, windows, skirting			
2025-008	4/28/2025	82000990089001	Merel Kvam	125 1st Ave	Remove existing additions and add onto structure			
2025-030	7/15/2025	82000990076000	Noah Olds	101 E Linden St	Build 23 X 22' Garage			
2025-041	12/4/2025	82000500012002	Keystone Storage & Rentals	235 E Frazee Ave	New Sign, 2 new doors, and service 2 windows			
2024-036	9/23/2024	82000990295000	Mark & Mary Anderson	620 Glenn St.	Build new single residence	3.11.26	550000	Homeowner
2025-009	4/28/2025 4/28/2026	82000990250000	Colton Ditterich	230 Eva St	New home		190K	
2025-010	4/28/2025 4/28/2026	82000990243000	Hunter Ditterich	411 Diane Ave	New home		190K	
2026-001	3/24/2026	82000990054000	Vergas State Bank	106 E Main St	Remove existing roof and install new roof			
2026-002	4/29/2026	82000990057000	Natalies Serendipity	124 E Main St	Repair Roof Sections			
2026-003	5/11/2026	82000500010000	Gary Maneval	401 W Lake st	Build 16X10 deck in front of house with a roof	6/24/2026		Homeowner
2026-004	5/21/2026	82000990043000	Vergas Auto Repair	250 1st Ave N	Install curbs and fix parking lot, remove old pavement and concrete and install new			
2026-005	5/26/2026	85000500012006	Wildfire Furs	110 S Railway Ave	Moving in a 10'X16' pre built building			
2026-006	6/2/2026	82000990166001	Keith Kuehne	306 E Frazee Ave	Build 8' X 24' garage addition and 218' privacy fence			
2026-007	6/11/2026	82000990164000	Vergas Veterans Memorial Park	230 E Frazee Ave	Install 2' X 3' signs			

2026-008	7/20/2026	82000990139000	Brian Haglund	351 S Pelican Ave	Replace shingles on garage roof			
2026-009	7/22/2026	82000990244000	Dora ARCP LLC	415 Dianne Ave	New home			

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7. Old Business

A. Nuisance Properties
B. City Ordinance Update

1. ' **91.06 KENNELS.**

(A) *Definition of kennel.* The keeping of three or more dogs on the same premises, whether owned by the same person or not and for whatever purpose kept, shall constitute a kennel; except that a fresh litter of pups may be kept for a period of three months before that keeping shall be deemed to be a kennel.

(B) *Kennel as a nuisance.* Because the keeping of three or more dogs on the same premises is subject to great abuse, causing discomfort to persons in the area by way of smell, noise, hazard, and general aesthetic depreciation, the keeping of three or more dogs on the premises is hereby declared to be a nuisance and no person shall keep or maintain a kennel within the city.
Penalty, see ' 91.99

2. **Camper Ordinance**

Files Attached

- 7.2026 Nuisance Spreadsheet.pdf
- RESEARCH ON KENNELS FOR JULY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING.pdf

Parcel Number	Owner	Address	Mailing Address	City	St	Zip	Reason for letter	Date PC Requested	Letter Sent Date	Response	Removed Date	Ordinance Violation
82000990120000	Clifford Moe	101 E Mill Street		Vergas	MN	56587	Cars, boats and garbage,	5/18/2026	5/26/2026			92.20 & 92.16 E
82000990070001	Dean Haarstick	160 S 1st Ave S	PO Box 160	Vergas	MN	56587	Junk beyond fence	5/18/2026	5/26/2026			92.16 E
82000990070000	Dean Haarstick	170 1st Ave S	PO Box 160	Vergas	MN	56587	Unlicensed vehicles	5/18/2026	5/26/2026			92.2
82000990170000	Benjamin	339 E Frazee Ave	None				Trash all over	5/18/2026	5/26/2026			92.16 E
82000990046000	BJ's Real	130 E Elm St S Unit		Fargo	ND	58104	Trash all over	5/18/2026	5/26/2026	Trash is piled in trash can and moved to the weeds beside the		92.16 E
82000990124001	Merel Kvam	341 Unit Ave		Vergas	MN	56593	Variety				5/18/2026	
82000500037002	Elissa Novotny	840 E Scharf Ave	724 Oak St N	Fargo	ND	58102	Debris in yard and camper	5/18/2026	5/26/2026	property at 840 E Scharf Ave and noting that it is a R-2 High Density Family Residential District. I believe this lot falls under the Vergas MN Shoreland Management Ordinance updated 9/10/2024 - see snipping below that has reference to allowances for RCU's and definition is in snippings below. The RCU is not in use at this time. As for the bunk of lumber, I am submitting application with Ottertail County for a couple construction permits as I believe this is their review jurisdiction based on the map I found on your website and snipping of my lots within their permit review area below. If I need to move the lumber prior to permit approval, let me know and I can have one of my sons move it to the east side of the house until construction begins. I intend to comply with City Ordinances and will make corrections as needed, but just wanting your review of this additional information to determine if I am mistaken and what ordinances I should be operating under for my properties in Vergas, especially for		92.16 E & 151.28
82000990130000	Daniel Hoard	390 S Pelican Ave	390 S Pelican Ave	Vergas	MN	56587	Unlicensed vehicles	5/18/2026	5/26/2026	Called 5/28/26 and said they have collector plates for the old truck - will put them on. And they will also get current tabs on the dodge.		92.2
82000500012001	Skal	219 Frazee Ave E	None				Unlicensed	5/18/2026	5/26/2026			92.2
82000500014000	Jill Hoffman	161 S 3rd Ave	PO Box 7	Vergas	MN	56587	Fish house too close to	5/18/2026		Moved before letter was sent	5/26/2026	92.19
82000500010002	Larry Platt	431 Lake St W	25787 Lida Shores Loop	Pelican Rapids	MN	56587	Unlicensed vehicles and camper	5/18/2026	5/26/2026			92.20 & 151.28
82000990166001	Keith Kuehne	306 Frazee Ave E	306 Frazee Ave E	Vergas	MN	56587	Unlicensed vehicles	5/18/2026	5/26/2026	Called 5/28/2026 and said he would like to put a fence up so we can't catapillar as it will cost \$2000 to move. Wood will be removed when he can have a fire. All vehicles are license and		92.2
82000990155001	Brian Lende	201 Hill St W	201 Hill St W	Vergas	MN	56587	Unlicensed	5/18/2026	5/26/2026	licensed and driveable. No more than 4 out but have to take out of garage when working on occasionally. Silver car only there over a year. Can he do a conditional use permit for demo?		92.2
82000990060000	Doyles/Taylor Shields	146 Main St		Vergas	MN	56587	Unoperatable vehicle	6.22.26	6.23.26	Vehicle operatible and moved to parking space.		
82000500009003	Troy Tiegen	110 Railway Ave		Vergas	MN	56587	Unlicensed	6.22.26	6.23.26	Vehicle removed.		

RESEARCH ON KENNELS FOR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING 7/27/2026

- **Otter Tail County** – Same basic code, no ordinance on kennels or limit on number of dogs.
- **Battle Lake: 91.06 KENNELS. (A)** Definition of kennel. The keeping of three or more dogs on the same premises, whether owned by the same person or not and for whatever purpose kept, shall constitute a “kennel;” except that a fresh litter of pups may be kept for a period of three month before that keeping shall be deemed to be a “kennel.” (B) Kennel as a nuisance. Because the keeping of three or more dogs on the same premises is subject to great abuse, causing discomfort to persons in the area by way of smell, noise, hazard, and genera] aesthetic depreciation, the keeping of three or more dogs on the premises is hereby declared to be a nuisance and no person shall keep or maintain a kennel within the city. Penalty, see § 91.99
- **Pelican Rapids: 503.09 NUMBER OF ANIMALS RESTRICTED.** The number of licensed animals permitted shall not exceed four (4) per dwelling unit. Any existing dwelling which becomes nonconforming on the effective date of this Section shall not have the number of permitted animals enlarged, but may continue with the existing animals until the death of the animals in excess of the permitted number.
- **Lake Park: § 91.22 KEEPING.**
It is unlawful for any person to keep, maintain, or harbor within the city any of the following animals: (A) Any animals or species prohibited by state statute or federal law; (B) More than three dogs over the age of six months; or (C) Any non-domesticated animals or species as defined in § [91.21](#).
§ 91.23 EXCEPTIONS.
(E) More than three dogs more than six months old allowed by special permit approved by the City Council for such periods as the Council may determine. The Council shall designate the appropriate staff to investigate all such applications and make recommendation on the application and forward same to the Council. A permit may be issued only if the Council is satisfied that other residents of the city will not be annoyed thereby.
- **Hawley: KENNEL:** Any place four (4) or more dogs or four (4) or more cats over six (6) months of age are kept in a single location for breeding, hunting, show, training, field trials, exhibition purposes, or as personal pets. (An annual kennel license is required for any place where 4 or more dogs and/or cats over 6 months of age are kept.)
- **Detroit Lakes:** Pet: The City of Detroit Lakes requires the registration and licensure of dogs and cats within City Limits. Pet Owners must complete the application and adhere to the laws set forth in the City of Detroit Lakes Municipal Code. No person

shall own, keep, harbor any dog or cat over the age of three months within the city unless a license has first been licensed. Each person owning, keeping or harboring a dog or cat shall pay the license fee imposed to the city administrator on or before the first day in January in each year, upon acquiring ownership or possession of any unlicensed dog or cat. Every application for a license shall be accompanied by a certificate from a qualified veterinarian showing that the dog or cat to be licensed has been given a vaccination against rabies within a period of one year preceding the application for license. The City of Detroit Lakes limits the number of animals in a household to 2. There shall be no more than 2 animals per household, unless all of the animals are sterilized. Any combination thereof shall not exceed three sterilized animals.

Dog Kennel. Any place where three (3) dogs or more over six (6) months of age are boarded, bred, and/or offered for sale, except a veterinary clinic.

- **Perham: § 93.32 KENNELS.** (A) *Definition.* The keeping of three or more dogs on the same premises, whether owned by the same person or not, and for whatever purpose kept shall constitute a “kennel;” except that a fresh litter of pups may be kept for a period of three months before such keeping shall be deemed to be a “kennel.” (B) *Nuisance.* Because the keeping of three or more dogs on the same premises is subject to great abuse, causing discomfort to persons in the area by way of smell, noise, hazard, and general aesthetic depreciation, the keeping of three or more dogs on the premises is declared to be a nuisance, and no person shall keep or maintain a kennel within the city. (Ord. 211, passed 7-12-99)