City Council Rejects Sex Offender Residency Restrictions

BY Elise Waller | January 4, 2016

FALLS CITY – City council discussed and action on whether or not to draft an ordinance restricting the distance a registered sex offender(s) can live to a school or a licensed daycare.

Joan Stoller, the resident that requested this particular ordinance would protect children in the community. Stoller originally requested the agenda item after a registered sex offender had moved into a home or street. A daycare provider, who also run business on the same street, also attended meeting and spoke to the council. The daycare provider stated to the council that she has had issues with the offender.

Police Chief Duane Armbruster said, in the December 7th council meeting, that the proposed ordinance would only restrict where sexual predators live. He clarified that a sexual predator is individual who is required to register under the Sex Offender Registration Act, who has been classified as a high risk sexual offender by the State Patrol, and who has victimized a person 18 years of a
younger.

Armbruster stated at Monday night’s meeting that only 5 out of the 10 sexual offenders that live in Falls City would be considered a sexual predator. Armbruster also stated, to the best of his knowledge, none of the offenders that currently reside in Falls City have reoffended. Sexual offenders are required to register through the Sheriff’s office.

Armbruster stated many factors would need to be considered if the ordinance were to be put into effect such as a city survey would need to be conducted. He also warned council members of the potential for law suits.

The offender who has moved onto the street where Stoller also resides, did attend Monday night’s meeting. He stepped forward and spoke to council members on how, based off of his research, ordinances haven’t shown evidence of being effective. He also stated creating barriers on where offenders reside could possibly increase the chance of homelessness and create multiple financial and personal burdens on the offender.

Councilmen Dougherty made the motion to request a draft of the ordinance be written by the City Attorney, Councilmen Scholl seconded the motion. Council members tied in voting for a draft to be written: 4 yea; 4 nay, Mayor Oliver then took action by placing his vote of nay.
Marlena Gordon

Imagine that, they have had no problems before. Now they decide they need an ordinance because of a charge. That charge could have been a consensual Romeo and Juliet case! Since when does the state patrol decide who is a risk and who isn’t? There are people that specialize in that and those are the ones that need to make that determination, not the police. Also, a "sexual predator" tag on a registrant is really just words from specific charges and very common. It doesn’t mean they are dangerous. Kudos to the lady that stood up and said she had no problems with the registrant. I have said it before, stop driving fear into people and making them believe that every registrant is dangerous. Stop trying to alienate them from society!

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Katrina Kane

Well now we get the rest of the story. The woman complaining is trying to drive out one particular sex offender who dared to move in near her and so she goes to the council to create a law that would affect ALL offenders in the area and she doesn’t care if it makes them homeless which would just put them in front of her house out of their cars. Dumb twit! Glad the sheiff mentioned lawsuits too because there would most definitely be a lawsuit if they do this. Lots of cities being sued over this right now. Total waste of taxpayer money that do make anyone safer. Kudos to the sex offender too for stepping up and not hiding or just hoping it will go away. BTW, as my mother would say concerning other towns that have passed such laws, so if the next door neighbor jumps off a cliff does that mean you have to too?

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Shelly Stow

So good to see a town listen and pay attention before rushing to foolish action. This is well done.

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