The Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on Tuesday, April 12, 2022 began at 5:30 p.m. Remote participation due to COVID-19.

Members Present: James Gennette, Antonio Goncalves, William Rosenblum and Manuel Silva.

Members Absent: Derek DeBarge

First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

VISITATIONS:

5:30 p.m. – Dog Hearing – 44 Center Street

Moved by Mr. Gennette to open the dog hearing at 5:31 p.m., seconded by Mr. Rosenblum. Vote 4-0. All in favor.

Mr. Goncalves: All parties that are testifying, please raise your hand so I can swear you in. Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give at this hearing shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth under pains and penalties of perjury?

All witnesses: I do.

Mr. Goncalves: Please identify yourselves.

Mr. Calvin Dowers.

Ms. Anderson: Octavia Anderson, Animal Control Officer.

Ms. Murphy: Shari Murphy, I am an animal behavioralist and dog trainer.

Ms. Lessard: Debora Lessard, dog trainer.

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Mr. Goncalves: Okay great. So, we are here to make a determination on the subject dog. There was an incident that happened on March 21st that prompted Animal Control to get involved and I understand that the parties have some type of an agreement put in place.

ACO Anderson: Yes, I have a surrender form that I think you all have copies of?

Mr. Goncalves: Yes.

ACO Anderson: I was actually called for them when I talked to them to pick up the dog for euthanasia. He called me at 12, I showed up at the house at 4, had the paperwork signed and then both Mr. Dowers and wife or girlfriend, not sure, put him in the car for me because when I asked if the dog would go in the car with me, they both said no let me do this for you. I was in the car; I stopped at the station and had an officer come with me. He is a big pit bull and he doesn't know me whatsoever, to help me get him out of the truck and into the kennel. So, he has been there ever since the 21st. Mr. Dower's then contacted me, actually his girlfriend, wife or girlfriend?

Mr. Dowers: Girlfriend.

ACO Anderson: Girlfriend, contacted me the day after asking me if they could get his ashes. That would be up to Daiken, that is not my call whatsoever. I made an appointment with Daiken to have him euthanized after a 10-day rabies hold because he bit their daughter. It wasn't a horrible bite but he still bit their daughter. He does not have vaccinations, is not neutered and he wasn't very happy with me when we put him in the kennel. It progressed after to that to Mr. Dower's wanting his dog back. I'm not comfortable releasing the dog, especially with the behaviors that I was given. You know it takes a couple of days for a dog to go from his house to a kennel and adjust. He just probably two days ago started to wag his tail at me. I have not touched him for the first what now, 14-15 days it was a full snarl at the kennel even though I was literally the only one the dog has seen. I you know fed him, cleaned him. I go behind a metal kennel door and literally he is going from one kennel to another. He is not running in the yard; he is not doing anything. Normally when I have a dog in the kennel, we become friends very quickly. He can run in the yard when I'm cleaning, when I'm feeding. This hasn't happened with Copper. Then Mr. Dowers had called me and said it wasn't his dog, it was his girlfriend's dog so therefore, our surrender papers had no legal right and I'm sure as you all know he then contacted

everyone else and that is why we are here. I brought in a behavioralist, who has been doing this for years, to assess the dog to see if there is a chance of him being redeemed, I guess is the right word. I am concerned with if I release the dog, him biting again because dog bites do escalate. There has been a couple of really horrific ones in the news in the last few months. One thing all of these dogs have in common is they all took a nip, they all took a snap somewhere in their history and people just 'oh it's a nip, oh it's not a big deal'. It can be a big deal, really, really fast. They don't have a fenced in yard. The fact that the dog is not neutered. The fact that he doesn't have current shots. All of these show me that you know this is not necessarily a good place for the dog to be. I'm not saying they are bad dog owners but dogs are expensive and they take time to, you have to put in the effort if you want your dog to adjust to social life. You have all seen my dogs, my dogs are 140 pounds and as you know I take them everywhere but I also spend hours out of my day and night training them because that is the key to all of this when you have a large breed. They can do some serious damage and I'm uncomfortable releasing him. Sherry, would you like to come up and make a couple of statements? I have full faith in her ability to assess.

Ms. Murphy: Hi, nice to meet you. So, I met the dog today and I actually think he has potential. My concerns with him if he was to go back into that house, that he's not vetted at all. He has not been socialized. He has not been trained in any way. He doesn't even seem to be loose trained, which means handling him is going to be difficult. I've worked with dogs like him in the paste. I've adopted dogs like him, I've fostered them, I've found homes for them. He is salvageable but I'm not convinced that they have what it takes to help this dog. I understand they have another dog in the house that nobody has really ever seen and we don't know what the condition of that dog is either. Whether it's vetted, whether it's vaccinated, whether it's licensed. So, my concern is if he goes back to the house, he's going to escalate but I do believe that he has the ability to be redeemed. I pet him, I touched him, he was very affectionate towards me today. A complete stranger walking into the space but he seemed to be able to sit, lay down, he was able to do those things for me with a little coaxing and some treats. So, I know that I can handle him but he has to be handled a certain way. So, if you guys do decide to release him for you know care from somebody else, I would be solely responsible for that. So, he would be under my insurance, he would come to my house to start and I live in Oxford. So, he would be removed from Ludlow but he would come to me where I am situated to be able to handle him until I'm comfortable with him going to another home. If he leaves my house to go to another home. So, I asked Octavia if she could give me a little bit of leeway and give us like a month once he has been vetted, once he has been fixed to see if we can break his habits and if we can, he will be adoptable. But, for her own peace of mind because of his history, I want to make sure we have in place regulations and rules for him to be sure that this does not happen again. That he's not put in this position to have this happen again. So, in my world, I have not met bad dogs, I've met dog owners that need help. So, that's the way that I approach this. I'm not looking at them like they've done anything wrong, they are just not educated and they are not able to handle a dog like that in my opinion. My professional opinion.

ACO Anderson: If the dog does get returned to them, there are stipulations that I am absolutely insisting on, including an enclosed fence. I have the papers at home, I'm sorry. I have a dog in the car too, so I've been really busy. It is basically an enclosed kennel, buried into the ground, it has a covered roof, the dog will be deemed dangerous. Absolutely has to be neutered. Absolutely has to have his vaccinations. He has to have his license. Being deemed a dangerous dog, he cannot go out in public without a muzzle. They have young children and I don't believe, even with all of those stipulations, I am really not comfortable with all of this.

Ms. Murphy: I'm also not that comfortable with it but if you do decide that he can go back to that house, I ask that you send him to me for the training. I want to make sure that they are taken care of and that the dog is taken care of. I don't want to have to visit this again in a month or two months or a year from now. The fact that he is six and he hasn't had all of this done in six years, kind of leads me to believe that he might not be, in my professional opinion, I don't believe he should go back to that house. It takes a lot of work to get a dog like that ready for adopting and if they got kids and other dogs and other things going on, I just don't think they can dedicate the time to it. That's really what I'm saying here, he needs time and he needs patience and he needs handling.

ACO Anderson: Or we can go back to the euthanasia order. That if they're not comfortable with what the Board or what I'm asking for then that would be the other option, adoption, fostering/training through someone that knows what they're doing, or euthanasia.

Ms. Murphy: And I would agree with that as well.

Mr. Goncalves: Mr. Dowers?

Mr. Dowers: We actually, I think she's actually running late but the woman who is going to take the dog, we are not going to take the dog back. Like they said, we have three young children and a fourth one on the way actually. But we have someone who actually lives in Pittsfield who wants to take the dog who has dealt with pit bulls before, pit-bulls that have bitten.

ACO Anderson: Do you have her name?

Mr. Dowers: Yeah, she is supposed to be here. I can reach out and see, I know she said she was going to be a couple of minutes late because she is coming from Pittsfield. But yeah, that was the plan get him back and that's why she wanted to come here, maybe take him right from here and not even come back to the house at all.

Mr. Silva: That was my question, I know if a dog bit my child and I have just a little dog, I know if he bit my child, he's gone. Period. I'm sorry, I'm not going to chance it so I was going to ask why would you want it to come back to your house with children?

ACO Anderson: I'm with you.

Mr. Silva: But if you are saying that he is going to go somewhere else now, the question that I have, do we have any responsibility with this person taking the dog as is without any of license and all of that stuff?

ACO Anderson: Oh, I can't release him by state law before at least he goes to a vet and gets all of his shots.

Mr. Silva: Oh, so he'll get all of that first and then this person if we,

ACO Anderson: I don't know this person, I don't know her name, I don't know her experience. Everybody can be an expert on pit bulls. Everybody can be an expert on anything you know and even if you have years of experience, I have years and years of experience dealing with really large dogs and you know small nasty dogs, you know dogs in general; I wouldn't take the chance of, I would need to see the property, where the dog is going. Dogs get loose, it's a fact of life. Dogs end up in playgrounds, dogs end up in hallways, dogs end up everywhere and if they already have the tendency to not be social, they are on edge anyways, the chances of that happening again are really high and I don't want to necessarily take that chance. On the news someone getting loose and killing someone, that scares the hell out of me to be perfectly honest. You know regardless if the dog is Pittsfield, where you live, in Ludlow, he still needs to be deemed dangerous, still needs to go through neutering, shots, serious training, in order for him to be a productive member of our society.

Mr. Rosenblum: I believe that,

Mr. Goncalves: Is this the young lady from Pittsfield?

Mr. Dowers: Yes.

Mr. Goncalves: Come on up. I'm going to swear you in. Can you raise your hand? Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give at this hearing shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth under pains and penalties of perjury?

Ms. McCue: I do.

Mr. Goncalves: Great, can you state your name and address for the record?

Ms. McCue: My name is **Bear** McCue and I live at 31 Turner Ave in Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Mr. Goncalves: Okay. So, do we have questions, Octavia?

ACO Anderson: Hi.

Ms. McCue: Hi, how are you doing Octavia?

ACO Anderson: I'm okay. So, you know you have heard his side and,

Ms. McCue: I did, I did and I had pits that both died recently. I had a red-nosed pit that died.

ACO Anderson: Did I speak to you on the phone?

Ms. McCue: Yes, yes. So, I'm very aware of pits and I used to keep them separate and it's a six-foot fence in my back yard and I'm very aware of how pits are specifically. They are the most beautiful dogs but you have to handle them in certain ways, keep them away from other animals, things like that. I did. I believe that I can create a,

ACO Anderson: How many pits have you had?

Ms. McCue: I've had two.

ACO Anderson: Okay.

Ms. McCue: Yeah. Pearl and Walker.

ACO Anderson: And how, did they pass?

Ms. McCue: For years. They did.

ACO Anderson: I'm sorry to hear that.

Ms. McCue: Yeah, Walker had cancer.

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ACO Anderson: Have you had any other experience with dogs that could be aggressive besides pits?

Ms. McCue: Umm, I have quite a,

ACO Anderson: I'm trying to establish your K-9 knowledge I guess is the right word here because with his past history, I brought in a behavioralist to asses him so I'm not anti-pit at all. They can be really great dogs but statistically pit-bull bites are 78% more intense than any other dog. In 2020, over 547 people have died from dog attacks. Out of that number, 67 of them were from pit bulls, then it goes down to rottweilers with 3% and then it breaks down to the other breeds. This is from the CDC. This is not just some website that I found numbers on. Dogs that bite can and are a serious problem.

Ms. McCue: I don't mean to interrupt but I do have a friend that stays with me often who is a Vet Tech. So, I can get you in touch with her so she probably does know more then I but,

ACO Anderson: This is the behavior specialist, Shari. With his history and his age, I am not comfortable sending him out of town to anybody that doesn't have years of dog training experience.

Ms. McCue: Well, I did go to six classes with Pearl, my white pit and I feel like I have years of experience because I had two pits who I kept away from other animals and children and things like that and I was very methodical and this is the first time I've ever seen this guy by the way and how this came to me is I was in my office sitting there and I had a kid come in my office balling his brains out about this dog and yes I am a social worker but I really felt like I could help in this situation because I do have all of those years of experience with specific kind of dog.

ACO Anderson: Your pit bulls, did they bite people?

Ms. McCue: No, I didn't allow them that latitude. They probably would have, yes because they were, I got them, I'm also a landlord. So, I'm a social worker and I'm also a landlord. So, I think that I have quite a lot of experience, enough to know how to but if you saw my set up, there really is not a way for the dog to get out and I wouldn't be walking him in the park. You know that's just not what I did with my pit bulls, that's not what I would do with this pit bull. You know he just lived with a family for six years I mean,

Ms. Murphy: His rehabilitation must include socialization. He must not be locked away. It's not healthy.

Ms. McCue: I would not just lock him away.

Ms. Murphy: I know. I'm not accusing you of anything, I'm just saying that being in the house is different than being in the outside world. He needs experiencing other people, other experiences,

bringing him into places like you know, the park, being around kids from a distance so he learns these sounds and these movements are not a problem. He learns to desensitized to them so he's not reacting to them so that he's not overreacting to them. This is what he needs. He needs a lot of intensive care in order to be saved. I've worked with him today for a little while, I'd say a good hour and a half maybe. So, I handled him, I touched him, I talked to him. I got a good sense of his energy. I do think that he needs to be still considered a dangerous dog. So, if he's taken off property, he has to be muzzled. He has to be muzzled if he's leaving any part of his house. If he can't be handled properly then there's no other options for him. He has to go someplace where somebody has enough experience not only to prevent but to change how he feels. In the right hands, that dog could become a PTSD service dog for a vet, in the right hands.

Ms. McCue: Well that says it all right there, doesn't it?

Ms. Murphy: It does, in the right hands.

Ms. McCue: That says it all right there, can we all call it a day now?

Ms. Murphy: In six months that can happen in the right hands though.

Ms. McCue: I agree.

Ms. Murphy: But that's a lot of work and you have to know what you are doing because I mean people see a dog that's muzzled, they are not going to approach it. So, how do you socialize a dog that's muzzled if you are not a professional? That's the thing, you don't get the opportunities to bring them places to get things done because you are busy.

Ms. McCue: I do have a friend that's a Vet Tech, I did say that right?

Ms. Murphy: Yup, absolutely.

Ms. McCue: Okay.

Mr. Silva: Yeah, so how long do you think you need,

Ms. Murphy: Me, realistically?

Mr. Silva: no, obviously, I think we are all on the same page quite honestly, but you do need to vet them, you do need to whatever you got to do that you see needs to be done and before you would even consider moving them on to her property, how long do you figure that would take?

ACO Anderson: That would be up to her.

Ms. Murphy: So, it would depend on his level of adjustment. Every dog has a different stress level. They also have different learning curves depending on their stress levels. So, when you have a dog that's automatically, like right now he has a very hard intensity about him because he doesn't understand what's happening. So, when a dog isn't socialized, they don't understand what is happening in social situations, so they tend to overreact. So, I need to judge that by taking him out and putting his feet to the fire in a safe way. Once that has been evaluated, I can give you a time frame. I would say most dogs like him, within 4 months they were ready to go. So, I usually foster between three and five months and then they are ready to go to a home that is specifically designed for them. So, like right now I have two dogs that I have kept since COVID because I'm not ready for them to go to a home. They weren't able to be socialized the right way during COVID. So, now I'm playing clean up with them. So, one of them is ready to go to a new home, so I have new spots opening up in my house but when you deal with dogs like that, whoever has him has to make sure that they have all of their ducks in a row. Otherwise, he is going to end up euthanized.

Mr. Goncalves: Who pays for all of this?

Ms. Murphy: That's the other question.

ACO Anderson: That's the other question.

Mr. Goncalves: You are going to have a tenant for a couple of months, you know.

Ms. Murphy: For me, I will do it for free to save his life.

ACO Anderson: So, from my point of view and from the Town's point of view right now he owes kennel fees since he has been in my care since the 21st, the neutering fee, rabies shots, etc.

Ms. McCue: So, how much is it?

ACO Anderson: So, right now it's kennel fees, he has been in 21, I need my calendar, hold on.

Mr. Goncalves: How much a day?

ACO Anderson: It's $10.00 a day.

Mr. Goncalves: $210.00.

ACO Anderson: $210.00, neutering for a dog that size is gong to run probably $300-$400.

Mr. Rosenblum: $510.00 or no.

Mr. Goncalves: Well, let's go $610.00.

ACO Anderson: Rabie shots are probably a good $150.00.

Ms. Murphy: He will need a senior or junior wellness panel to check out his kidneys and liver. Make sure everything is functioning because he's never been vetted before.

Ms. McCue: I'll give you a credit card right now. I'm just saying.

ACO Anderson: The dog itself, whoever he ends up with, will still need to have the proper fenced in yard and be inspected because,

Ms. McCue: I can send you pictures.

ACO Anderson: because of the dangerous dog destination that I'm hoping we are going to get with him, he will also need to have insurance put on him from, for whoever gets him.

Ms. Murphy: I have my own business insurance. So, if you need a copy of that, I have no problem providing that.

ACO Anderson: She does the dog training at Smithland also and she has dog trainers that work with her throughout the area.

Ms. Murphy: Like seven.

ACO Anderson: She's been doing this for years. I'm comfortable releasing the dog to her and then we can make a decision in 4-5 months to where he goes.

Ms. Murphy: Where he goes from there.

ACO Anderson: The other question that comes into play though with a dangerous dog hearing is the Town wherever the dog ends up being adopted, the Town needs to approve of it. So, you know whether it's Pittsfield or wherever the dog ends up, they need to be notified that there is a dangerous dog, that designation is for all of Massachusetts. It's not, you know she can go out of state and nobody cares but if it's in Massachusetts, by state law, we have to notify them. They can say no we don't want that in our back yard. I don't know if they will or not, I've never dealt with it so I don't know. You know hopefully they don't. You know, the last thing I want to do is euthanize a dog. You know, that isn't why I'm here.

Mr. Gennette: I got a question, was it your child that was bit?

Mr. Dowers: Yes.

Mr. Gennette: What is your recommendation?

Mr. Dowers: Well, that's why I brought her along. Obviously, I want to save the dogs life. At the time, it was obviously, like you said, a scary situation. The dog bit a child and so we instantly called her and said Hey can you get him out of the house and then it was actually my girlfriend's brother who she is the counselor at his school, who he went in and again because we have had the dog since he was probably three months old and then that is when she contacted my girlfriend and said hey is there any chance I can adopt the dog and that's why we are here.

Ms. McCue: He looks a lot like Walker.

Mr. Gennette: So, here's my issue with it. First off, knowing Octavia Anderson and how thorough she is and she even proves it by bringing in a behavioralist. She has always come in here and fought for the life of a dog. She has always considered and care for the life of the dog. It's always of paramount interest to her. She would never recommend anything outside that she didn't see fit. I have a problem with this dog possibly biting another child more fatally in the future, just as happenstance. That is a big concern to me that we have this issue right now in front of us and if we pursue the behavioralist and something still happened, we didn't do our just do as far as a child goes. That's my only concern. I value the life of animals myself. I certainly don't, nobody wants to be in this situation because it's a valuable life but I would have to go along with whatever recommendation Ms. Anderson has because I respect her opinion and wherever she decides this needs to go is probably what I will follow.

Mr. Goncalves: Can I ask a question? The time you have had this dog, you take to the park on a leash?

Mr. Dowers: Yeah, we actually moved to the Town of Ludlow here probably two years ago now. We used to live in the hill towns, Chester actually and there was a school across the street that we used to take him in. He actually never used to be chained. We let him out to go to the bathroom, it was just wide open but obviously now that we live on Center Street it's a little bit busier, we can't obviously do that and then we have been planning on getting a fence this whole time, which is actually coming in a couple of weeks but again he is not coming back to our house. He is going to be going to her house with a fence. Yeah, I mean he has been socialized. My grandmother here who lives in the in-law apartment, he's been around her dog, her dog is a little basset hound, probably 20 pounds. Never did anything with that dog. We went on vacation to Myrtle Beach and he stayed with my mother's friend who has, I believe a poodle but I'm not positive of the breed. So, he's been around other dogs. The only thing that I would say is that, obviously you take a kid out of even a kid out of a house, they are going to be obedient right away. I actually happen to have it when I was younger, I got put in foster care for a week or two and you know what I mean and I'm not going to be obedient right away. It's going to be, like she was saying, he way growling at her, snarling at her. I mean,

Mr. Goncalves: But the dog, you were in this new house for almost two years when he bit your daughter?

Mr. Dowers: Right.

Mr. Goncalves: So, it wasn't anxiety from moving last week?

Mr. Dowers: Right, right. We did notice though because my daughter, the one he bit, is a one-year-old, obviously she doesn't know any better and she was climbing on him and he had gotten stung by a bee just the day before and I believe my girlfriend has a picture of the bee sting on his nose. She had touched that and that's when he bit. So, it wasn't like he was doing it maliciously, obviously he has been around our three kids. I got a 4-year-old, a 2-year-old and a 1-year-old so you know what I mean. It's not like, I don't think he was intending to do it otherwise,

ACO Anderson: Did he see a Vet for his bee sting?

Mr. Dowers: No, because it was the day before that happened.

Mr. Rosenblum: It kind of goes to the point of what you were just discussing because you were talking about the socialization aspect of the dog. Now if you go ahead and train the dog to the point that the dog becomes social again and then it ends up going into her care where from the sounds of it doesn't see anyone else,

Ms. Murphy: That has to change.

Mr. Rosenblum: That's my point though is because,

Ms. Murphy: It needs to be worked out so,

Ms. McCue: And you can talk to my friend who is the Vet Tech.

Ms. Murphy: That's fine.

Mr. Rosenblum: but, that's my point is the fact that you teach the dog to be social and then the dog gets penned up and then does it go back to where it was before?

Ms. Murphy: It gets worse.

Mr. Rosenblum: Right, so that's my point was that.

Ms. Murphy: That's my concern as well.

Mr. Rosenblum: Okay, so I think to where we are all kind of going is it would be, we have always said it that we go with the experts, who we trust their opinions. My opinion, my opinion is yes you go to the behavioralist for the amount of time that you see deemed fit. When you two believe that it's a good enough time for dog to be released and you also vetted where the dog is going and when it's you opinion that it's find and to do so and then I would go with that. But, it's only at your recommendation.

Ms. Murphy: Okay. They don't leave unless I'm 1000% comfortable. If you look at my arms and my legs, I have been bit over 300 times from dogs like him. I only work with dogs like him.

Mr. Rosenblum: Because it goes to Mr. Gennette's point is the fact is one bite is one bite too many because,

Ms. Murphy: Exactly.

Mr. Rosenblum: especially you know when I read this, I go Oh my God a one and half year-old face and forehead,

Ms. Murphy: Face and forehead is the worse area for dog bites.

Mr. Rosenblum: and I'm just kind of like you know plastic surgeon, you know scarring, things of that nature. I would be fine with that aspect of it. It's not a motion but that's just my opinion right now.

Mr. Dowers: Sorry, not to interrupt but it's actually her head and a little mark on her forehead.

Mr. Rosenblum: Okay so it was up here not down here.

ACO Anderson: It was definitely a snap; you know it wasn't an all-out because we would not be having this conversation. A child would be dead and we would not be having this conversation at all. If was an actual bite.

Mr. Gennette: That's my concern for the future. You just touched on it, that's my concern for the future. When is it next time?

Ms. Murphy: The next time will be a harder bite.

ACO Anderson: On the flip side, you have all seen my dog, he's 140 pounds. He is protection trained. He would take someone out within a minute. He's also had three-year-old and four-year-old, I don't have young children, my children are all grown up, literally crawl all over him, pull his ears, touch his eyes. He has had eye surgery; he avoids being touched in the eye and he does not snap. He literally will sigh and put his head down because he knows this is what he is supposed to do.

Ms. McCue: Well, and I know how to desensitize them like you touch their ears, their face and as far as socializing so,

Mr. Dowers: And if you guys would like to, to her point, that's what our, especially our one-year-old does and we have videos. My girlfriend has them all over Facebook too, she's always climbing on him and that's exactly what he does, he puts his head down and sighs.

ACO Anderson: You know unfortunately, that one time. You were really, really, really lucky and even if he is not meaning to bite hard, he has canines that are at least an inch and a half long and a canine on a dog are designed for one thing. They are designed to rip flesh off bone. To be perfectly honest, that is

what they are designed for and I trust Sherry. I think if the dog turns out to not adjust as well as we're hoping he'll adjust then he needs to be put down. I am more than willing have Sherry, after he get neutered and his rabies shots, take him for at least four months. You two can be in contact with each other.

Ms. Murphy: I will have you come down and work with him. If he acclimates to you,

ACO Anderson: If it comes to a point where this looks like yes this might go through and might work out, obviously I would need to talk to the ACO and to the Town of Pittsfield to see if they will even allow this to happen but I don't want to keep, none of us want to keep coming back here and I am in the same boat as you are. I watch the news and I cringe because I'm like if they only did, if they only did and you now dogs are dogs. Dogs bite, that's what they do. You know, you can have the best dog in the world and if he bites, you cross that line.

Ms. Murphy: But he did show remarkable restraint touching the child.

ACO Anderson: Yes.

Ms. Murphy: It could have been a lot worse. A lot, lot worse. Thank God it didn't crack the skull, it didn't pop out and eye. I mean those are things that can happen with just a small bite like that.

ACO Anderson: With just a snap. This dog is probably 70 pounds. He's not a small little dog.

Ms. Murphy: So, it's definitely a warning. It means it will escalate if it's not diffused.

Mr. Silva: So, what is it that we need to do? Do we need to deem the dog as dangerous or have you done that?

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ACO Anderson: No, we need to deem the dog dangerous.

Mr. Silva: So, we need to deem the dog dangerous which is obvious,

ACO Anderson: Mr. Dowers needs to pay the fee. I might be able to get a voucher for the neutering, I don't know. There is a backup of like 300 people waiting to have Daiken,

Mr. Silva: So, as far as the fees go, obviously she is willing to pay the fees for him. It doesn't have to be him, does it?

ACO Anderson: No, I can have the bill for you tomorrow.

Mr. Silva: My recommendation Mr. Chairman, is that we, we seem to be all on the same page, allow our experts to take the dog and do whatever it is they see fit to do and get the fees from them because once the fees are all paid,

Ms. Murphy: The only other thing that I would ask is that they pay for the food and whatever things they need. That would be it.

Mr. Dowers: I have two full bags so.

Ms. Murphy: Okay, perfect.

Mr. Goncalves: First, one of the things I want to clear up Mr. Dowers, I want you to accept responsibility, as you are the owner of the dog. You said something, that it was your girlfriend's dog. You signed everything, you are here, she's not so I need you to just tell me you're are the owner of the dog.

Mr. Dowers: Yeah, I'll take responsibility, I'll take ownership.

Mr. Goncalves: Okay, good. Thank you.

Moved by Mr. Silva to declare the dog in question as a dangerous dog without justification or facts a person or domestic animal causing physical injury or death or behaves in a manner that is a reasonable person with a belief it poses an unjustified imminent threat of physical injury or death to a person or to a domestic or owned animal, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum. Vote 4-0. All in favor.

Mr. Goncalves: Now, we have to issue an order.

ACO Anderson: I would also like the order to state the dog is being fostered by the behavioralist.

Ms. Murphy: That will transfer ownership to me temporarily.

ACO Anderson: And that will for one relieve Ludlow from any problems that could pop up and,

Mr. Goncalves: What's the dog's name?

Mr. Dowers: Copper.

Mr. Gennette: You are going to keep her informed of any moves that the dogs make, right?

Ms. Murphy: Absolutely, absolutely. Without a doubt.

Mr. Gennette: I want her to know where the addresses are, where this dog is going. I want her to have his records.

Ms. Murphy: You want a copy of my insurance too?

ACO Anderson: I do. Thank you.

Ms. Murphy: You got it. Anything you need. Do you need my address?

Mr. Goncalves: Give me your name too please.

Ms. Murphy: It's Shari, actually let me give you one of my business cards and then you will have the spelling because it's weird, it's hyphenated too.

Mr. Goncalves: Should we just do Paw Training Center?

Ms. Murphy: Yup. Paw Training Group and it's 6 Beverly Street in Oxford 01540.

Mr. Rosenblum: Would it be smart for yourself to check with Pittsfield will take the dog prior to this?

ACO Anderson: Yes, I will in 3 months I will touch base with her obviously I will touch base with her before that but as far as the dog being transferred to her then I would talk to Pittsfield; I would be able to take to them then saying the dog has been hopefully rehabilitated and they will take it from there.

Mr. Silva: So, let's say a few months down the road Pittsfield will not take the dog,

Ms. Murphy: Then we will find it another home.

Mr. Silva: you will find another,

Ms. Murphy: I will find another home. The dog will not leave me until I find a suitable home.

ACO Anderson: And I will approve that home.

Ms. Murphy: I have my own adoption contract if you need copies of those. I'm very, very rigid and I always say to people if I've had my hand in the dealing with the dog, they get free training for life once they get to their new home. So, that way the dog never ends up in the situation again. I'm always available 24/7, you can call me, text whatever to get ahold of me. It goes all right to my phone and I got other employees that I can pass this off to if I can't get to it, they get to it for me. I'm right over here, I've been over in Ludlow at Smithland for about 10 years now but I've been training for 33. I started because I got mauled by a dog at the age of 15 and I wanted to know why. So, that's how I started my career.

Mr. Gennette: I like you more and more every time you open your mouth.

ACO Anderson: Me too, me too.

Mr. Silva: So, if I get my dog to bite me, I'm going to get free training?

Ms. Murphy: Yup.

Mr. Goncalves: You're going to get training too.

Ms. Murphy: I'm also very active in the politics of Oxford. So, they know me very well there.

ACO Anderson: Thank you gentlemen very much.

Mr. Goncalves: Hold on, we have to make this motion.

ACO Anderson: Oh, we're not done yet.

Mr. Silva: Actually, as hard as these are, this one was relatively easy.

Mr. Goncalves: I'm going to read what I have here and maybe somebody can just say 'so moved'?

Mr. Rosenblum: Yeah, that's fine.

Mr. Goncalves: Okay. I think we are going to have the dog's temporary ownership be transferred to Paws Training Group, 6 Beverly Street, Oxford, MA 01540. All fees to be paid by Mr. Dowers or his assignee or designee to include $210.00 of kennel fees, $150.00 for rabies, up to $400.00 for neutering and $150.00 for lab work and any other fees that may be incurred as part of this agreement. The dog will remain with Paw Training Group, until Paws Training Group is acceptable that the dog is adoptable subject to the Town of Pittsfield or another town accepting the dog as it's designated home. Subject to Paws demonstrating insurance. So moved by Mr. Rosenblum, seconded by Mr. Silva.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum to close the dog hearing at 6:15 p.m., seconded by Mr. Gennette. Vote 4-0. All in favor.

Mr. Goncalves: You have 10 days to appeal anything that happened here tonight. That's if

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CLOSING COMMENTS

Moved by Mr. Goncalves to adjourn this meeting at 6:54 p.m., not return to open session, seconded by Mr. Silva. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Chairman

Ludlow Board of Selectmen

All related documents can be viewed at the Board of Selectmen's Office during regular business hours.

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