

BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
REMOTE ONLY
DANGEROUS DOG HEARING
MINUTES
Wednesday August 28, 2024 at 7:00 pm

PRESENT: Richard Arnold, Chairperson, Kim Netter,

Staff: Abbey Myers, Acting Director of Health, Maureen Foley, Clerk, Samantha Gatchell,
Animal Control

In attendance Sara Goldman, Miriam Hoffman

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Myers called the meeting to order 7:04 pm

Rules of the Hearing

Ms. Myers set the rules for participants and the BOH to follow throughout the hearing.

ACO Presentation

Ms. Gatchell sworn to tell the truth. She gave a Power Point presentation stating the Massachusetts State Law regarding Dangerous Dog and reviewed the 3 incidents (12/23/23, 7/21/24, 7/24/24) when the dog, Kafka bit another dog and was quarantined within the year.

Ms. Netter inquired if all dogs involved in these 3 bite incidents received veterinary care. Ms. Netter wanted to know if the owner of the dog has initiated muzzle training.

Mr. Arnold asked about the process of a quarantine for an animal.

Witness Presentation

Ms. Goldman sworn to tell the truth. Ms. Goldman stated she was watching her friend's dog, Lily off leash in a common fenced in area behind her housing complex on 7/21/24. Kafka was released unleashed into the same fenced in common area. Ms. Goldman could not release Kafka from Lily. She ended up prying Kafka from Lily. Lily received a full veterinary work up.

Ms. Netter asked if the dog sitter for Kafka could handle this dog and was sitter help to you to separate the dogs.

Dog Owners Presentation

Ms. Hoffman sworn to tell the truth. Ms. Hoffman stated she had a dog sitter who took Kafka on the elevator in the building leashed. Another tenant brought their leashed dog on the elevator. Kafka bit the other dog. Another incident, Kafka was leashed coming out of the apartment when an unleashed dog came up to Kafka. Kafka bit the other dog.

Ms. Hoffman stated she is training Kafka to use a muzzle with a harness and a leash with multiple handles. Ms. Hoffman stated Kafka does not like other dogs. Ms. Hoffman stated she will need to use a dog sitter a few times this year.

Ms. Netter stated you have been in Boston for one year and adopted Kafka a year ago. Ms. Hoffman stated she was familiar with Kafka and his reactive temperament prior to the adoption. Ms. Netter asked if Kafka is neutered and if he is insured. Kafka has medical insurance.

Mr. Arnold asked about the weight of Kafka and he is 60 lbs. He asked how do the dog walkers control this 60 lbs dog?

Hearing closed

Hearing closed at 7:43pm

Discuss Determination

Ms. Gatchell stated the Massachusetts Law to deem a dog dangerous. BOH can put one or more restrictions on this dog.

Ms. Netter asked what the implications if this dog is deemed dangerous. Ms. Gatchell stated the dog is deemed dangerous for the life of the dog. If the dog is rehomed, then the owner must declare the dog is dangerous. If the owner moves to another municipality with the dog, the owner must contact the new municipality's ACO.

Mr. Arnold stated Kafka was protecting his territory and is not dangerous to humans. Mr. Arnold stated the muzzle is not comfortable and dogs can still be aggressive. The dog sitters must be screened to handle a reactive dog.

Ms. Netter stated there are ways for Ms. Hoffman to care for Kafka but at a higher cost.

Ms. Myers stated there will be no restrictions on this dog, if the dog is not deemed dangerous. Ms. Gatchell stated restrictions could be, Kafka must remain on a short leash at all times outside of his living space. Also, SNIFF SPOT is a program where people rent their fenced in yards for dogs to run off leash.

Ms. Netter stated she wants to make this decision in September about deeming Kafka dangerous.

This determination has been deferred to September 18, 2024 meeting.

Adjourned the meeting at 8:01 PM