

TOWN OF EDEN
71 Old Schoolhouse Road
Eden Mills, VT 05653

Phone: (802) 635-2528

Fax: (802) 635-1724

Email clerk@edenvt.org

Website: www.edenvt.org

Vicious Dog Hearing Minutes

Present at the Hearing was Timothy Bullard, Ricky Morin, Clayton Whittemore, Melissa Whitcomb, Molly Morin, Faye Cochran, Matthew Hill, Holly Oldham, Charles Oldham, Whitney Lawrence, Zachary Lawrence, Tammy Horner, Larry Horner, Cody Horner.

Opening of the Hearing

- Tim opened the Hearing at 5:05pm
- Everyone is being recorded by state law.

Purpose of the Hearing

- Vicious dog hearing under 20 BSA 3546.
- Determine whether:
 - The dog bit the victim.
 - Without provocation.
 - While off the owner's premises.
 - The victim required medical attention.
- If all elements are met, the board can issue orders for protection, including euthanizing the dog.

Procedure

- Anyone who talks will be sworn in.
- Evelyn's parents will go first to present their statement, photos, medical records, and witness statements.
- The dog owner will then respond with their version of events and evidence.
- The hearing will be closed for deliberation after all information is received.
- A written decision will be made and all parties will be notified.

Presentation of Statement and Evidence

- Evelyn's parent(s) will present their statement and evidence (photos, medical records, etc.).
- Charles Oldham wrote the official complaint letter.
- Charles was not present when the incident occurred but witnessed the aftermath at the hospital.

Charles Oldham's Testimony

- Charles Oldham was sworn in and his statement was the following: Evelyn had 16 staples in her scalp and 6 stitches in front of her ear.
- She has been traumatized since the incident.
- Evelyn said the dog was inside, but someone let the dog out while they were playing outside.

Reading of the Letter into Record

- Charles Oldham's letter, under oath, details the incident that occurred on 5/26/25 at approximately 4:30 PM.
- Evelyn was attacked by a dog named Dozer, owned by Zachary and Whitney Lawrence, at their residence.
- Evelyn was playing outside with other children when she was attacked from behind and bitten on the scalp and side of her face.
- Charles believes the owners were negligent by not confining the dog properly.
- Charles requests the dog be labeled as vicious and disposed of humanely.
- Charles has reached out to an attorney is seeking compensation for medical expenses and emotional counseling costs.

Further Testimony

- Holly Oldham was sworn in and her statement was the following. Whitney initially said Evelyn was bitten by the dog, but later changed the story to scratches.
- Charles and Holly believe the dog was isolated from the children, indicating the owners knew the dog was a danger.
- Neither Charles nor Holly were witnesses to the actual event.

Dog Owner's Version of Events

- Dog owner can present their version of events, submit evidence, and call witnesses.
 - Anyone who talks will be sworn in.
- Whitney and Zachary Lawrence are the dog owners.
- Zachary Lawrence was sworn in and his statement is the following: He was in the shower when the incident happened.
 - He heard the door open and assumed it was his kids.
 - His 8-year-old son said Dozer slipped out when they opened the door.
 - Zachary claims this is the first time Dozer has shown aggression.
- Whitney Lawrence told Zachary what happened and took Evelyn to Copley to get looked at.
 - Zachary contacted Matt repeatedly after the incident.
 - Matt and Faye came to the house to visually inspect Dozer on June 5th.

Whitney Lawrence's Account

- Whitney Lawrence was sworn in and her statement is the following: The children brought stuff over to the house, and Dozer slipped by.
- The children said Evelyn was screaming and running after them, and they thought Dozer was scared that they were being hurt.
- Dozer jumped on Evelyn, getting her in the face, in front of her ear, on the side of her head, and a little on the back.
- Whitney feels horrible that the child got hurt.
- She claims Dozer has never been vicious and has had multiple kids over with no issues.

Tammy Horner's Testimony

- Tammy Horner was sworn in and is the owner of the property. Her statement is the following:
- She feels bad about the situation and has been staying out of it.
- She has never seen Dozer act this way and says he's always been a great dog.
- She wonders if the kids screaming outside might have altered the dog's behavior.
- Dozer is 1 year and 5 months old, born December 17, 2023.
- She was inside her home when the incident occurred.

Dog's Vaccination and Registration

- The dog is vaccinated and registered.
- All the information was given to Melissa on Monday June 9th.
- The dog was due for vaccinations, which were administered after his quarantine.

Dog Owner Side of Things

- One question was whether the incident occurred on the owner's property, which it did.
- Whitney and Zachary state that they kept the dog inside because he jumps a lot and they are getting him training to address the jumping.
- The owner contacted Faye multiple times a day.
- The owner claims the dog has never bitten anyone before and is around kids all the time.

Incident Details

- According to the hospital, the dog did bite the victim.
- Whitney was at the ER and can't confirm if it was a bite or scratch.
- The victim did not provoke the dog.
- Medical attention was required.

Closing the Hearing

- The members will deliberate in private.
- Everyone will receive a written form and a written response based on the hearing.
- Tim closed the hearing at 5:28pm.