

Office of the
Board of Health
City Hall
166 Boulder Drive - Suite 108
Fitchburg, Massachusetts 01420
978-829-1870

A Conference Call was held on July 2, 2020 at 2:00 pm.

Present: Stephen Curry, Director; Sandra Knipe, R.N.B.S.N.; John Bogdasarian, M.D., Chairman; Ian Murray, Board Member; Todd Pickett, Animal Control Officer; Nicole Silva, 485 Arn How Farm Rd; James Witzgall, 455 Arn How Farm Road; Carissa and Nicholas Perez,

Dr. Bogdasarian opened the meeting at 2:15 pm.

Nuisance Dog Petition: 509 Arn-How Farm Rd- “Haley” – Isreal Quiels-Morales and Yasaira Garcia, Owners, Nichole Silva, Jim and Tara Witzgall, Don and Andi Kwapien, Petitioners:

Nicole Silva who resides at 485 Arn-How Farm Road stated she has called the dog officer several times since October, 2018 regarding the neighbor’s dog “Haley” who constantly is eating Amazon packages defecates on her lawn and repeatedly running loose and causing damage on her property. They have spoken to the owners on several occasions yet the dog continues to be a problem and is never on a leash. Mr. Witzgall who resides at 455 Arn-How Farm Road also stated the dog “Haley” defecates on his property repeatedly and is always wandering the neighborhood. Todd Pickett, ACO stated that he has responded to complaints by the petitioners and has verified the dog “Haley” is loose and running around the neighborhood. Mr. Pickett stated he has issued the property owners fines, but has not stopped the problem and the fines have not been paid.

After discussion and testimony from all parties, Ms. Knipe made a motion that the dog “Haley” is a nuisance dog. The motion was 2nd by Ian Murray. All were in favor. Motion carries.

Meeting Minutes Review and Approval:

Sandra Knipe made a motion to table the minutes until the next meeting. Motion was 2nd by Ian Murray. All were in favor. Motion carries.

COVID-19 Update:

Mr. Curry stated as of July 2, 2020 there are 7 active cases in the City. There has been a total of 794 cases and a total of 685 recovered and 68 deaths from COVID-19 in the City. A total of 34 people in the “other category” which is from loss of follow up or the community tracing collaborative.

Dangerous Dog Petition:
48 Garnet St – “Blitz” – Carissa and Nicholas Perez, Owners
Todd Pickett – ACO Petitioner:

Dr. Bogdasarian opened the hearing

Ms. Salvastano stated her son accidentally opened the door and the dog (“Diamond”, Chihuahua) got loose and ran over to the Perez’s house. There was yelling between the two owners and Ms. Salvastano stated that Ms. Perez was threatening her and then she stated she sent the dog out the broken window and the dog knocked her to the ground. She then stated the Chihuahua then tried to hide and the Perez’s dog “Blitz” went after her and started mauling her. Ms. Salvastano said Ms. Perez never came out to stop the attack.

Ms. Perez stated she saw the neighbor’s dog running loose which happens frequently. Her dog “Blitz” was in there dining room at the time and started to bark because the dogs were loose. There was yelling at the dog to shut up and there was arguing between both parties at this time. Ms. Salvastano then picked up a rock and threw it at the kitchen window as they were moving closer on their property. At this time the dog Blitz is going ballistic from all the yelling and commotion and sees Ms. S as a threat and then the dog jumped through the window and ran over to Ms. S and jumped on her to get to the dog. Blitz then grabbed “Diamond” and did end up killing “Diamond”. At the time Ms. Perez was outside and didn’t run right over because she was afraid Ms. Salvastano would attack her. There are signs posted on their property to beware of the dog. Ms. Perez said her dogs are always secured and have never been an issue.

There was lengthy discussion and questions from the BOH members and both owners.

Ms. Knipe made a motion to dismiss this case. The Motion was 2nd by Ian Murray. All were in favor. Motion carries.

The next BOH meeting is scheduled for August 6, 2020.

Ms. Knipe made a motion to adjourn. Motion was 2nd by Ian Murray. All were in favor. Motion carries.