

SCHD Advisory Committee
Dangerous Dog Appeal Hearing Minutes
February 20, 2023 at 6:30 pm

Attendance

Board Members: Dr. Jeffrey Bell, Dr. Cynthia Davis, Dr. Shane Sundlie, Yire Hernandez, Russel Devan, Daniel Cumbo, Linda Peterson, Cassie Faircloth.

County Employees: Wanda Robinson, SGT. Jessica Byrd, Deputy Cribbs, and Cherish Allen

Speakers:

I. **Call to Order:** Dr. Jeffrey Bell called Hearing to order. Dogs in question are Braveheart and Jake. Owners are Oscar Williams and Evelyn Williams.

II. **Dangerous Dog Hearing:**

a) Overview of Dangerous Dog Hearing Process: Dr. Jeffrey Bell reviewed Article 1A.

Dangerous Dogs Sections (a) (1) a. and b; (2) a. b. and c. (See attached). Dr. Jeffrey Bell stated explained that all speakers will have five minutes to speak, then will be asked questions by the Committee. He explained that it is important to stay on topic and give facts of exactly what happened and what was witnessed during the events that occurred on January 26, 2023.

b) Public Comment:

Dr. Jeffrey Bell called Theresa Petty to speak. Ms. Petty was sworn in under Oath by Wanda Robinson.

- Ms. Theresa Petty stated that on 1/26/2023 her granddaughter asked if she could go for a walk, which she does all the time, typically just around the block and then back home. She then changed clothes, grabbed her cell phone, and left. At approximately 3:40 PM (approximately 5 minutes after Emily left the house), Ms. Petty received a call from Emily. She stated that Emily was hysterically crying and unable to tell her where she was. At this time, Emily's father left the house on foot and started down the street. Ms. Petty stated that Mrs. Evelyn Williams heard Emily's screams and walked out of her residence and called off the dogs. She then brought Emily and Emily's fathers back to Ms. Petty's residence. When she arrived, Ms. Petty was standing in the yard. She stated that Emily she was bloody and hysterical. Ms. Petty then put Emily in her car and rushed her to the ER, where she had to be sedated. Ms. Petty stated, "I watched flesh fall as they cleaned her wounds." She stated that the hospital staff called Animal Control. She explained that it is hard to talk about and that Emily is now fearful and has anxiety.

When the attack happened, Ms. Petty believed that Emily was across the street from the William's residence and in the driveway of the "blue double wide".

Russell Devane asked the approximate weight of Emily Williams. Ms. Petty replied that she was about 150 lbs.

Dr. Jeffrey Bell called Michael Petty to speak. Mr. Petty was sworn in under Oath by Wanda Robinson.

- Mr. Petty stated, "I don't have a lot to say because I was at work, but the dogs have come in my yard before. There are outside cats, and they've killed them. I have chased the dogs off and I told him I'd shoot them if they were in my yard. It's not right, you can't walk the city streets without these dogs chasing you. They are a nuisance."

No questions from the Board.

Dr. Jeffrey Bell called Emily Williams to speak. Emily Williams was sworn in under Oath by Wanda Robinson.

- Emily stated she didn't know what to say about it. She stated that with her anxiety, PTSD, and depression she now wants to move and change schools because of this and it's a lot.

Dr. Jeffrey Bell asked if she were ever on the Williams' property? Emily replied "No."

Russell Devane asked if she saw what direction the dogs came from or if she heard them coming towards her? Emily proclaimed she did not see them or hear them. She stated, "I had in both of my air pods."

Dr. Cynthia Davis asked if the diagnosis of Anxiety, PTSD, and Depression were new since the attack. Emily replied, "Yes."

Dr. Cynthia Davis asked if there were any broken bones or stitches? Emily replied, "No."

Ms. Petty stated that skin grafts and laser surgery will be required due to the extent of the wounds on the back of Emily's thigh. When asked why they didn't place stitches instead, Ms. Petty stated there was no skin to attach to. Photos were passed around to the Board Members that showed Emily's wounds. Dr. Cynthia Davis asked if it was an ER physician, Pediatrician, or Plastics that recommended the skin graft? Ms. Petty stated it was an ER physician, as the pediatrician would not touch it and recommended her go back to the ER, due to the redness, swelling and bleeding of the thigh wound. She stated she did take Emily back to the ER on February 6, 2023.

Dr. Jeffrey Bell called Mr. Oscar Williams to speak. Mr. Oscar Williams was sworn in by Wanda Robinson.

- Mr. Williams stated, "First, I am truly sorry this happened. I know it does not change things, and that's from the heart." He explained that at the time of the incident he was in Salemburg. When his wife called him, he immediately headed home. He asked that the Board members view the video he had from his

outdoor camera (video was passed around). He mentioned that in the video you could see that as soon as his wife called the dogs they came, as well as Emily was sitting in his front yard, not across the street. He explained that Emily was no stranger to Braveheart and Jake. He stated, "She had been over several times when they were puppies and held them, especially Braveheart." He mentioned that his dogs go over to the church and have no history of biting. He stated, "My dogs are not dangerous or aggressive." He questioned the incident occurred 1.5 year ago, as there is no medical report or animal control report. Mr. Williams stated, "My dogs have never broken out of the fence. When they have gotten out, it is due to our negligence." He explained that on the day of the incident, his wife was putting them in the fence, they got loose once she unleashed them and escaped through the open gate. Mr. Williams added he has witnessed people harassing his dogs from the road.

Russel Devane asked if Mr. Williams had a circle driveway? He explained that he did not. His fence was about 20 ft from the front steps. Russel Devane asked if Emily was inside the fence? Mr. Williams stated she was not. The dogs were outside the fence due to getting through the gate when Mrs. Williams was putting them in the fence. Russel Devane then asked where this was in reference to where the wife was standing in the video? At this time, Mrs. Williams showed a photo of the front yard and where the gate/fence was located that was on her phone. Mr. Williams explained again that his dogs are never allowed to run loose and are inside dogs. They only go into the fence when they must go outside or for fresh air.

Dr. Shane Sundlie asked the time frame from when the dogs got loose to when the incident occurred. She asked if maybe they had been out wondering for approximately 2 hours? Mrs. Williams replied, "Yes." It was stated that they got loose around 1:00-1:30 PM.

Dr. Cynthia Davis asked if Mr. Williams had ever been notified before that his dogs had killed cats? He stated, he had not except for the last time he was looking for his dogs, he was told "something about cats" in person. That is when the threat from the Petty's was made that they were going to shoot his dogs. Shortly after this threat, one of his dogs had been shot.

Linda Peterson asked if Mrs. Williams knew the dogs were out and free roaming? Mr. Williams stated, "Yes." Mrs. Williams explained that when they did get loose, they ran from the home.

Dr. Jeffrey Bell asked if any Board Members wanted to hear from Animal Control. Dr. Cynthia Davis asked how they were at the shelter. Sgt. Byrd stated that they are not over friendly with the staff, therefore they are taking precautions to not get bit. She then mentioned that there was no issue when the owner was present at the residence. Mr. Williams stated that when the dogs were picked up by animal control, they jumped in the truck when animal control knocked on the tailgate, without barking or growling. He stated he goes to see them every day at the animal shelter and the staff there has had no problems.

Russell Devane asked if they were muzzled and what kind of area were the dogs currently in? Sgt. Byrd stated that they do not use muzzles, only catch poles and the kennel was approximately a 5x6 kennel.

Dr. Cynthia Davis asked if there were prior reports of a bite to the face. Sgt. Byrd stated that both reports were reported on the same day.

Dr. Cynthia Davis asked had there been any previous reports of these dogs roaming the area. Sgt. Byrd stated that they have multiple reports of pit-bull breeds roaming the area. Due to the number of calls, she cannot say if they are or are not these dogs.

c) Discussion: Dr. Cynthia Davis stated that the video was very telling.

No further discussion.

Dr. Jeffrey Bell requested that the Board vote if no other questions or discussion. He asked for a show of hands of all members that vote to uphold the Potentially Dangerous Dog determination; 7 members raised their hand. He then asked if any members opposed; 1 member raised their hand.

Determination that Jake and Braveheart are Potentially Dangerous Dogs; Upheld.

III. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned by Dr. Jeffrey Bell.

Linda Peterson 3-20-23
Jeffrey Bell Absent Date
Chair Vice
Linda Peterson

Wanda Robinson 3/20/23
Wanda Robinson Date
Secretary