

Meeting Minutes of the Special Meeting of Hanover Board of Selectmen held via teleconference on Wednesday, November 9, 2020 @ 7:00 PM.

Present at Town Hall, Chairman David Delaney. Present via Zoom video conference were Vice Chair Rhonda Nyman, Selectmen John Tuzik and John Barry and Selectwoman Vanessa O'Connor. Also present, Town Manager (TM) Joseph Colangelo, Executive Assistant Janet Tierney, Assistant Town Manager (ATM) Ann Lee, Police Chief Walter Sweeney, ACO Lee-Ann Meehl, Attorney Dan Brown, representing the Town of Hanover in this matter, Attorney Jeremy Cohen of Boston Dog Lawyers representing the Crowley Family.

Call Meeting to Order

The Chair called the meeting and informed those listening that the Board will accept commentary from people who have something pertinent to add to the hearing and hope to avoid being repetitive.

Attorney Cohen began the proceeding informing those listening that the Crowleys had requested an appeal hearing in order to appeal the order rendered by Miss Lee on October 16th.

He agreed that the number of instances is concerning but stated that he did not hear about a bite to a human. Attorney Cohen acknowledged on behalf of this client that Kyssa is a dangerous dog but disagreed with the remedy. He then listed steps the Crowley family has or will take to avoid Kyssa getting loose in the future.

Attorney Brown joined the discussion and all agreed that the Board will not be rehearing the entire case as the original hearing had been thorough and the Board's appeal process will also be thorough.

The Board heard from Estelle and Connor Crowley who were in favor of the Board imposing a different remedy than the one detailed in the Dog Order issued on October 16th.

The Board then heard from Residents Karen McCabe, Mal Haupt, and John Landry, all of whom expressed that this is a public safety issue, fear of living in the neighborhood with Kyssa and skepticism of the Crowley's ability to keep the dog contained.

Attorney Brown clarified that there are two issues before the Board. One regarding measures the Crowleys will take going forward and have taken recently, and the second part, the allegation that the Town's Animal Control Officer could have done more in instructing the Crowleys on these methods prior to the hearing. He advised against retelling stories from the original hearing as the Crowleys, and their attorney have acknowledged that Kyssa is a dangerous dog. The Board heard from residents Paul Vlassakis and Teresa Young, who expressed fear of Kyssa and doubt that the Crowleys are responsible dog owners.

Resident Colum Crowley who expressed concern regarding the Town's liability should the Board overturn the Assistant Town Manager's order and another incident were to occur involving Kyssa. The Board was informed that anyone can file a suit, however the Board would be vigorously defended and the care and attention they are giving to this process would afford them protective defenses. The Board was also advised that from this point forward the Board is making their own decision taking into account the record of what was heard before the Assistant Town Manager and the additional information provided at this hearing, then if the Crowley's are aggrieved by the Board's decision, they have the right to appeal it in court.

Approved
4/26/2021

Attorney Brown advised that if the Crowleys and the dog or just the dog were to move out of Town then there could be a reconsideration of the decision as the dog would no longer be here, however part of the Board's remedy cannot be an order that the dog be moved out of Town.

The Board heard further comments from residents Katie Clark, Cindy Berry and Mal Hauptert regarding the Animal Control Officer. The Board was informed their impression of the ACO was that she was incredibly competent and responsive and was trying to do what was in the best interest of the dog, and also skepticism regarding the Crowley's ability to follow through on the measures mentioned.

The Board asked for questions or input regarding the case. Seeing none.

Attorney Cohen offered his closing statements. The Board then offered their closing comments.

Selectwoman O'Connor ran through the different orders the Board could issue to Kyssa as a dangerous dog.

Animal Control Officer Lee-Ann Meehl provided a summary of the history of actions the Town/Animal Control Officers have taken with regards to Kyssa as well as her opinion with regards to the situation.

The Board voted to affirm the decision of the Assistant Town Manager regarding this Dangerous Dog Hearing.

The meeting ended and adjourned at 8:25 p.m.