

CITY OF RUTLAND, VERMONT
Board of Animal Control Minutes
Thursday, May 15, 2025

Members present: Police Commissioner Pat Brougham, Tony Romeo, Michael Talbott. Also present, ACO Noah Sweeney, Sergeant Williams, Clerk Kapusta, and City Attorney LaChance.

Chair Brougham called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM and noted that the Board was asked to hear a Concerning Canine Complaints from ACO Sweeney, who investigated the incident. Chair Brougham asked if there were any conflicts or ex-parte communications from the Board. Seeing none, Chair Brougham asked Clerk Kapusta to swear in anyone giving testimony or evidence. Heidi Hilder and Andrew Lecuyer were sworn in.

On April 25, 2025, ACO Sweeney explained that Sergeant Williams responded to the area of 99 Evergreen Avenue for a report of a woman, Heidi Hilder, who had been severely bitten by a dog. Ms. Hilder stated she had been walking on the trails in Pine Hill Park at the end of Evergreen Avenue and came across a male who had been injured while riding a bicycle. The male had a dog with him and when Ms. Hilder attempted to move the male's bicycle off the trail the dog attacked her and bit her on her left arm. The male was identified as Andrew Lecuyer and the dog was identified as Jay, a 60-pound Staffordshire Terrier mix male who is approximately 6-years old. Mr. Lecuyer was transferred by ambulance for a shoulder injury. The case was transferred to the Animal Control Officer for follow-up. Based on the information received by both parties, this appears to be an unprovoked attack that resulted in injury and required medical attention.

Chair Brougham then asked the Board if they had any questions about ACO Sweeney's testimony. There were no questions from the Board.

Chair Brougham then asked Heidi Hilder to explain what happened.

Ms. Hilder explained that she walks on Pine Hill trails closest to Evergreen Avenue daily. While she was walking she came across a male that had crashed his mountain bike and asked if he needed any help as he appeared injured. The male had a dog with him and Ms. Hilder stretched her hand out for the dog to smell her and the dog seemed ok, and the male was attempting to hold onto the dog by the collar. Ms. Hilder stated that when she went to move the bike off the trail the dog bit her arm with no warning. The male told her that the dog was aggressive and had bitten someone before and didn't want the police to be called. After the bite, Ms. Hilder walked back down the trail and stopped a group of kids on a field trip from walking up the trail and she called the police and EMS. Ms. Hilder was checked out by EMS and later went to the hospital to get stitches and shots.

Chair Brougham then asked the Board if they had any questions about Ms. Hilder's testimony. There were a couple of questions from the Board.

Chair Brougham then asked Andrew Lecuyer what happened. Mr. Lecuyer stated that he was out mountain biking on Pine Hill Park trails when he crashed his bike. Mr. Lecuyer advised that Ms. Hilder found him and helped as he had a broken collar bone. Ms. Hilder was moving the bike off the trail so no one would run into it when Mr. Lecuyer's dog bit her. The dog was not on a leash. Mr. Lecuyer did not see the bite occur but saw that Ms. Hilder was bleeding on her arm.

At 5:54 PM Raechel Schuldenrein was sworn in. Ms. Schuldenrein gave supportive comments about Mr. Lecuyer and his dog.

Chair Brougham then asked the Board if they had any questions about Mr. Lecuyer's testimony. There were a couple of questions from the Board.

With no further questions from the Board this open hearing concluded at 6:00 PM.

At 6:02 PM the Board entered deliberative session.

At 6:10 PM a motion was made and seconded to come out of deliberative session and to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracy L. Kapusta
Clerk of the Board of Animal Control