

May 20th, 2021

RE: Dangerous Dog Order

Owner's Name(s): Dennis and Jennell Sielaff

Dog's Name: Bernie

Address: 1428 S. 87th St.

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MAY 25 2021
CITY OF WEST ALLIS
CITY CLERK

To whom it may concern:

We are writing today to contest the dangerous dog order that was placed on our dog, Bernie, from the incident that occurred on Saturday, April 24th, 2021 at our residence (see address above).

What occurred on Saturday, April 24th was purely an accident. Dennis had just arrived home on the motorcycle and closed our front gate behind him, or so we thought. The gate did not latch entirely, which we weren't aware of, until we noticed Bernie running out of our fenced in backyard and into the front yard. Bernie had run after a dog walking with his owner on the sidewalk in front of our house. We have observed this dog and his owner walking around the neighborhood many times before, but we have never had any issues with either of them prior to this. In fact, a week before this incident, the other dog owner Allison and her dog Axel, stopped in front of our house to complement our spring flowers that were blooming and continued to chat it up with Dennis, telling him that they love walking past our home because they like to look at our beautiful flower bed.

To label Bernie as a "Dangerous Dog" is completely unacceptable to us. Bernie has NEVER attacked or bitten a person. Although the police report from this day states that the other dog owner Allison and her dog Axel were attacked by Bernie, I am 100% sure that Bernie would not have, even accidentally, bitten the owner, Allison. Bernie got out of the yard with the intent to check out her dog Axel and that was it.

Bernie has been known to not get along with other dogs in the past, but his aggression has NEVER been towards people. For whatever reason, Bernie picks and chooses which dogs he likes and doesn't like. There is no rhyme or reason in determining the dogs that he will get along with or not. Because we are responsible pet owners and we know this about him, we choose to not put him in any situations where he could possibly become aggressive towards another dog, both for his sake and theirs. That being said, we have NEVER worried about him being aggressive to a person. We have had our nieces and nephews over as small, crawling babies and he never did anything to show any type of aggression towards them...EVER. We have even taken him to nursing homes to visit the elderly many times, where he has shown both us and the nursing home residents that he is calm and gentle. The residents would all LOVE Bernie and appreciate the time they were able to share with him.

We understand that this accident was our fault, but that's all it was-an ACCIDENT! We would never want anything to happen to our pets or another person's pet. We are, and always have been, the biggest animal lovers.

After Bernie and Axel had been separated from their initial altercation, Allison did nothing to get control of her dog, despite what her statement says in the police report. Axel proceeded to walk all the way around both Dennis and I standing to keep the dogs separate, and began to retaliate by attacking Bernie this time. In the process of now trying to remove Axel from attacking Bernie, Dennis watched Axel latch onto his hand. What could've been a minor dog altercation, was now exaggerated because of Allison's irresponsible actions after the fact. A few of the statements that Allison made that were written on the police report were completely false as well. Although Allison and Axel are the "victims" because WE made a mistake, they were not entirely innocent in the events that occurred on this day. We apologized immensely to Allison and Axel with tears in our eyes because we obviously NEVER meant for this to happen. Allison's statement in the police report said that she told us that "she was going to call the police to report the incident". In the moment though, Allison said very serious things that could be viewed as inappropriate, yet she never mentioned THIS to the police when they responded to her residence for her statement, because her and Axel were the "victims", why would she incriminate herself?

Dennis went to the Emergency Room where he received multiple stitches from Axel's bite. We followed all of the necessary requirements given to us by the West Allis Police Department for Bernie too. We kept Bernie quarantined at home for 10 days. He was seen by the emergency veterinarian the following day (within 24 hours) of the incident, where he received extensive medical care for his wounds from Axel's attack on him. The health department was notified of Allison's alleged bite wounds from Bernie, but upon talking to Lindy at the Health Department, we found out that Dennis' bite wounds from Axel were never even reported and there was no record of Axel biting Dennis. We never even found out if Axel was up to date on his Rabies vaccine until almost 2 weeks after the incident! I was required to show proof of Bernie's current Rabies vaccination immediately after the incident when the police arrived at our house to get our statements.

We would like to have our time with a Judge to discuss the Dangerous Dog Order that has been placed on our dog, Bernie. He isn't a mean dog towards people, and never has been. Dogs get into fights with each other at dog parks, on walks, or in the household every day, and for no reason at all. I personally have witnessed many dogs, on the wrong end of a dog fight, while working for 10 years at a veterinary clinic. I have the experience and knowledge to understand how serious this is and what steps need to be taken in the future, to make sure that this NEVER happens again. We feel horrible for what happened to both Axel and Bernie and we hope that we get a chance to be Bernie's voice and fight for the Dangerous Dog Order to be removed.

We look forward to hearing back from The City of West Allis to set up a day to attend court or figure out our next steps so we can continue to give Bernie the love and care that he deserves.

I (Jennell) can be reached at 414-305-0672 or by email at jennell5@yahoo.com to set something up. In the meantime, please let us know if there is anything else you need from either myself or Dennis and we will be happy to provide you with whatever you may need. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Jennell (and Dennis) Sielaff