

From: "Richard Flynn" <RFlynn@town.arlington.ma.us>
To: "Andrew Meier" <amsmeier@gmail.com>
Cc: "Ashley Maher" <AMaher@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 12/20/2022 10:11 AM
Subject: Re: Dog Attack Report

Andrew and Sue

Thank you for the email. I have included Ashley Maher on this, Ashley is the Office Manager for the Arlington Select Board and should be able to advise you on the next potential steps. I will be sending the information I have on this case to Ashley so that she and the Select Board can review.

Thank you again.

Captain Richard Flynn
Operations - Community Services Commander/PIO
Arlington Police Department
Phone: (781) 316-3907
Fax: (781) 316-3919
Email: rflynn@town.arlington.ma.us

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Arlington values equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are committed to building a community where everyone is heard, respected, and protected.

From: Andrew Meier <amsmeier@gmail.com>
To: Richard Flynn <RFlynn@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: Sue Sheffler <ssheffler247@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, 19 Dec 2022 20:38:59 -0500
Subject: Re: Dog Attack Report

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Thanks for looking into this. We are interested in filing a dangerous/nuisance dog complaint officially under Title VIII, Article 2. Do you know if there's a particular form to use, and who on the Select Board we might contact about this?

-Andrew and Sue

On Fri, Dec 16, 2022 at 11:20 AM Richard Flynn <RFlynn@town.arlington.ma.us> wrote:

Andrew Meier

Thank you for the email and the information contained within and attached. As discussed, I will add this into a supplemental report which will be attached to the original report filed by Officer Collins.

As of several days ago the dog in question was still in the custody of the Cambridge Animal Control Program who were attempting to convince the owner to surrender the animal. I have a call into Cambridge Animal Control this

morning to obtain an update on the status of the animal. Our hope remains that the dog would be surrendered, and Cambridge AC could rehabilitate and find it a home with the proper owner(s).

As I had mentioned in our previous phone conversation, I researched your rights as a resident of the Town of Arlington in these type situations. Under Title VIII, Article 2 - Canine Control, Section 1 - Dogs. Complaint. Any person may file a written complaint with the Select Board that a dog kept in the Town is a nuisance dog or dangerous dog.

The only issue I see here is that the dog is not "kept" in the Town on a consistent basis. I am sure the Select Board or a representative on behalf of the Select Board could provide a clear interpretation of this.

I will continue to provide updates from Cambridge AC as soon as I receive them.

I hope this information is helpful and again I am sorry for your loss of Athena.

Thank you again and have a good weekend.

Captain Richard Flynn
Operations - Community Services Commander/PIO
Arlington Police Department
Phone: (781) 316-3907
Fax: (781) 316-3919
Email: rflynn@town.arlington.ma.us

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From: Andrew Meier <amsmeier@gmail.com>
To: rflynn@town.arlington.ma.us, Sue Sheffler <ssheffler247@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2022 20:04:23 -0500
Subject: Re: Dog Attack Report

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Hi Captain Flynn,

Here's our account of the dog attack. I've also attached relevant images and video evidence referenced in our report. (As a warning, the 'Athena Photos' and 'Athena Videos' may be unpleasant to view.)

-Sue and Andrew

Report:

At around 8am on November 14th, 2022, I was walking my dog Athena around the Arlington Reservoir, near Drake Village, when we encountered Mr. Picket attending a dog (Ziggy). As I walked by, Athena casually approached Ziggy. Her greeting was not aggressive or even playful, merely attempting to briefly sniff him. Ziggy, a much larger dog than Athena, lunged at her unprovoked, biting deeply into her neck, jaw, and cheek. I physically intervened, attempting to pry him off of Athena, but was not able to do so. Mr. Picket appeared surprised but did not intervene in any way. Athena was unable to resist the attack. John Fahey, a construction worker who happened to be near the scene, ran to us and helped me to separate Ziggy from Athena; but then Ziggy re-attacked, and it took three adults to pry him off.

John Fahey called the police, and filed a report with Officer P. Collins once he arrived. I then quickly took Athena home and, after carefully cleaning off the significant amount of blood, I examined her injuries with my son Andrew Meier. She had an open wound on the left side of her neck and deep bite marks in her left cheek (see attached Photos 1 and 2, and Video 1). She could barely stand or lift her head and was constantly trembling (Video 2), a condition which she did not have previously. She attempted to eat and drink water, but did not have the neck or jaw control required to do so (Video 3). Athena had difficulty walking, appearing to have significant weakness in her front legs. I contacted our veterinarian at Arlington Animal Clinic, and scheduled the soonest appointment available, which was the following morning. For the rest of that day and evening, Athena was unable to eat or drink. She spent most of this time lying down, attempting to hide under tables and other dark places.

When we brought her to the veterinarian the following day, they quickly confirmed the severity of Athena's condition and transferred her to the Massachusetts Veterinary Referral Hospital (see attached Emergency Vet Form). Radiographs revealed that the bite had punctured her cervical spinal cord. Hours after leaving Athena at the hospital for treatment, I talked extensively with the veterinarians treating her. They were not optimistic about her prognosis for survival. Early the next morning (November 16th), I received a call from the hospital informing me that Athena had not survived the night there.

In the following week, I contacted the Property Manager of Drake Village, the Arlington Housing Authority residence where Mr. Picket resided and presumably where Ziggy was being kept. After inquiring about Mr. Picket and Ziggy, the Property Manager informed me that she would "take action on our end with respect to the resident," but did not provide further details (see attached Drake Village Email Screenshot). In the following days, my son Andrew and I contacted the Arlington Board of Health and the Police Department about further actions to take, which led to the submission of this report.

We had raised Athena from a puppy, and losing her this way was an emotional blow not only to myself but to our whole family. Despite her age, she was healthy and well cared for. Were it not for this attack, we were expecting to have her as a family pet for at least another few years. I want to emphasize that this attack was completely unprovoked: Athena had no history of aggressive behavior, was fully vaccinated for rabies (see Vaccine Form), presented no threat to Ziggy based on her size and age, and did nothing to incite the mauling (see attached November 14 Police Report). In addition to the emotional damage, the veterinary bills cost us multiple thousands of dollars (see attached Emergency Vet Bills).

I believe that it was extremely irresponsible for Mr. Picket and the attacking dog's owner (Heather Sue Duncan) to allow Ziggy in such a public place with obviously insufficient training. The pathways near the Arlington Reservoir are used daily by many, including families with small children and dogs similar to Athena. I think that it is essential for public safety that Ziggy not be exposed to such public areas without significant restraints or additional training.

Thank you for your attention.

Sue Sheffler
26 Kensington Park
Arlington, MA, 02476

[Athena Video 1.mp4](#)

Athena Video 2.mp4

Athena Video 3.mp4

On Wed, Dec 7, 2022 at 5:37 PM Andrew Meier <amsmeier@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi Captain Flynn,

Thanks for helping out regarding the dog attack report. My mom (Sue Sheffler, copied here) and I are writing our version of events, and will send it to you along with other relevant documents around the weekend.

Sincerely,

-Andrew

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Andrew Meier, PhD
Postdoctoral Fellow
Guenther Lab
Boston University