


**ARLINGTON POLICE
ARLINGTON, MA**
INCIDENT # / REPORT #
22024356 / 1

OFFICER
COLLINS,P

RANK
PTL

REVIEW STATUS
APPROVED

INCIDENT #22024356 DATA

As Of 12/20/2022 10:44:36

BASIC INFORMATION
CASE TITLE

ANIMAL COMPLAINT

LOCATION

o DRAKE RD

APT/UNIT #
DATE/TIME REPORTED

11/14/2022 08:15:19

DATE/TIME OCCURRED

On or about 11/14/2022 08:15

INCIDENT TYPE(S)/OFFENSE(S)

(9902)INJ ANIM

PERSONS
ROLE

INVOLVED PARTY

NAME

DUNCAN, HEATHER SUE

SEX

FEMALE

RACE

UNKNOWN

INVOLVED PARTY

PICKETT, WALTER

MALE

WHITE

REPORTING PERSON

SHEFFLER, SUSAN

FEMALE

WHITE

WITNESS

FAHEY, JOHN

MALE

WHITE

[NO OFFENDERS]

[NO VEHICLES]

[NO PROPERTY]

OFFICER REPORT: 22024356 - 1 / COLLINS,P (3420)
DATE/TIME OF REPORT

11/14/2022 11:15:50

TYPE OF REPORT

INCIDENT

REVIEW STATUS

APPROVED

NARRATIVE

On November 14, 2022 at approximately 0850 hours, I was dispatched to Hurd Field for an investigation of a dog-on-dog attack.

Upon arrival, I spoke with Sue Sheffler. She stated she was walking her dog (Athena, 15 yr. old Terrier) in the parking lot near the wooded area next to the creek when another dog (a pitbull now known to me as Ziggy) attacked

her. She attempted to remove Ziggy from the attack, but was unable to due to Ziggy's strength and viciousness.

Witness John Fahey, who was working on the construction project at the field, heard the attack and came over and physically removed Ziggy from the attack. He stated the dog owner (Walter Pickett) did nothing but stand by and watch. A short time later, Ziggy got loose from its collar and went to attack Athena again. Fahey took Athena and carried her into the construction site to keep her safe.

Athena had significant wounds in her neck. Photos have been attached to this report. Sheffler stated she was taking Athena to a local animal clinic to be checked.

I located Pickett at his apartment at 23A Drake Road. He stated Ziggy was not his dog, rather, he was sitting for its owner Heather Duncan. He stated he did not know where she lived or when she was coming back to retrieve Ziggy. A photo of Ziggy was attached to this report.

REPORT OFFICERS

Reporting Officer:	COLLINS,P	3420
Reviewing Officer:		
Approving Officer:	PORCIELLO	3769


**ARLINGTON POLICE
ARLINGTON, MA**
INCIDENT # / REPORT #
22024356 / 2

OFFICER
FLYNN R

RANK
CAPT

REVIEW STATUS
APPROVED

INCIDENT #22024356 DATA

As Of 12/20/2022 10:44:36

BASIC INFORMATION
CASE TITLE

ANIMAL COMPLAINT

LOCATION

O DRAKE RD

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11/14/2022 08:15:19

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INCIDENT TYPE(S)/OFFENSE(S)

(9902)INJ ANIM

PERSONS
ROLE

INVOLVED PARTY

NAME

DUNCAN, HEATHER SUE

SEX

FEMALE

RACE

UNKNOWN

INVOLVED PARTY

PICKETT, WALTER

MALE

WHITE

REPORTING PERSON

SHEFFLER, SUSAN

FEMALE

WHITE

WITNESS

FAHEY, JOHN

MALE

WHITE

[NO OFFENDERS]

[NO VEHICLES]

[NO PROPERTY]

OFFICER REPORT: 22024356 - 2 / FLYNN R (2445)

DATE/TIME OF REPORT

12/20/2022 10:44:33

TYPE OF REPORT

SUPPLEMENT

REVIEW STATUS

APPROVED

NARRATIVE

On or about 11/23/2022, this Captain was contacted by Cameron Bishop of the Arlington Board of Health regarding Heather Duncan (homeless) and her dog Ziggy. Since Duncan's animal was involved in dog bite on another animal on 11/14/2022, I have been in touch with Cameron Bishop, members of the Arlington Housing Authority, and the owners of the dog that was bitten and subsequently euthanized. Cameron Bishop requested

assistance in locating and meeting with Heather Duncan in an effort to quarantine Ziggy.

This Captain was able to arrange Homeless Outreach Officer Joseph Canniff and APD Clinician Christina Valeri to assist Bishop in meeting with Duncan on 12/2/2022. Duncan claimed to be living at 112 Lynn Way in Revere and after the meeting the 45 day quarantine on the animal was put in place for that location. Duncan agreed to the quarantine and the restrictions in place. Bishop informed Revere ACO Anthony Masiello about the case and faxed them all information available.

On the weekend of 12/3-12/4 Duncan was involved in an incident in Cambridge MA and as a result was transported to a local hospital for a mental health evaluation. At the time of this incident Duncan was in possession of her dog L Ziggy. This was less than 48 hours after agreeing the animal would be quarantined in Revere. Ziggy was taken into custody by the Cambridge Animal Control Program and secured at their facility. Subsequently this Captain has had several phone conversations with Cambridge AC Coordinator Christina Correa. After evaluating Ziggy and the situation the animal is in, Correa hoped that Duncan would agree to surrender the dog which could hopefully be re-trained and put out for adoption/placement with a more responsible owner.

On 12/7/2022, this Captain was contacted by Andrew Meier and Sue Sheffler who were the owners of L Athena the dog that was bitten and subsequently had to be euthanized. Both Andrew and Sue were still upset about the incident and wanted to provide more information on the incident and what they believe is a dangerous animal in the community. I informed them that they could send me this information via email and I would add it to the original report from 11/14/2022. I also informed them that I would research the process of reporting a dangerous dog in the community.

On 12/13/2022 Andrew Meir provided the following information via email (attached will be made available if needed):

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 me 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.

On 12/16/2022, this Captain responded to the email with the following:

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 was 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.

On 12/19/2022, Andrew Meier and Sue Sheffler provided the following response:

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?

On 12/20/2022, I provided the following information via email.

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.

On 12/11/2022, at approximately 1520 hours, Heather Duncan was arrested in Arlington for a 209A (Restraining Order) Violation. She is currently being held on a probation detainer until 1/9/2022. This information was shared with Cambridge ACO Coordinator Christina Correia on 12/20/2022.

REPORT OFFICERS

Reporting Officer:	FLYNN R	2445
Reviewing Officer:		
Approving Officer:	FLYNN R	2445