

## Town of Pittsford SELECT BOARD – November 2, 2022

### DOG HEARING

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Alicia Malay, W. Joseph Gagnon, David Mills, and Thomas Hooker.

**ABSENT:** Mark Winslow. **OTHERS PRESENT:** Raymond Forrest, Chelsea Cleveland, David Forrest, Greg Hiltz, Chief Mike Warfle, Lt. Bill Pratico, Animal Control Officer - David Soulia, Brenda Fox-Howard - Town Manager, Kelly Giard – Recording Secretary.

The Select Board was called to order at 5:34 PM by Chair Malay.

Chair Malay swore in all in attendance.

Raymond Forrest stated that there have been issues with dogs at the Art Forrest property since 2018, which he has documented. Mr. A. Forrest is no longer living at the property; however, the dogs are remaining on the property. Mr. A. Forrest told a co-worker that this was an “F you: to Mr. R. Forrest. Mr. R. Forrest stated that his wife returned home from work at night and the dogs are “going crazy” and the neighbors are suffering. Mr. R. Forrest stated that the dog shock collars are not being used properly. Mr. R. Forrest stated that there are deer carcasses along the fence line to lure coyotes to make the dogs “nuts”. Mr. A. Forrest added pens because the fox was getting the chickens.

D. Mills inquired if the dogs were on the property and that Mr. A. Forrest was not living there. Mr. R. Forrest stated that the dogs were living in crates on the property. Ms. Fox-Howard stated that Mr. A. Forrest received notices of the dog hearing at both his Brandon and Pittsford addresses. D. Mills inquired if the dogs are being fed twice a day. Chief Warfle stated that they were being fed twice a day. Mr. Hiltz stated that his wife sees Mr. A. Forrest there at about noontime and feels that it is inhumane the way the dogs are kept in crates. Ms. Malay inquired how many dogs are involved. Mr. Hiltz stated that there are 3 dogs in the crates.

Mr. Hiltz stated that he lives at 2828 Fire Hill Road and hears the dogs barking all summer and sleep was disrupted due to the windows open and now that the leaves are off the trees, the noise travels up the driveway.

Sarah Ronfeld stated that she is also suffering from the barking. Ms. Ronfeld stated that she went to bed at 8:30 PM, woke by the dogs at 1:15 AM, and the dogs were still barking at 3:00 – 4:00 AM. Ms. Ronfeld stated that she has also witnessed a dog hang itself with the wire, but, was also able to free itself.

Chelsea Cleveland stated that she lives adjacent to the A. Forrest property and called Animal Control twice in June 2020, the Town Manager once, the Police Chief once, who stated that he would contact Mr. A. Forrest to use bark collars. The bark collars lasted one or 2 days, then returned to the barking. Ms. Cleveland stated that she is not able to leave the windows open and this is affecting the quality of life for her. Ms. Cleveland stated that she feels that this is unethical to have dogs kept in this manner.

Mr. R. Forrest stated that his wife has tried working in the yard and she was not able to due to the dogs barking at the horses, walkers, etc. in the neighborhood.

Chief Warfle stated that Mr. A. Forrest is at the property day and night and there is video of the dogs barking and when Mr. A. Forrest is contacted, he comes from Brandon, approximately 10 minutes to tend to the dogs. Mr. R. Forrest stated that he feels that this could have been resolved 3 years ago when the original hearing was scheduled.

J. Gagnon inquired if Mr. A. Forrest has attempted resolution. Chief Warfle stated that bark collars were used, however, they were not adequate. Mr. A. Forrest waters and feeds the dogs daily.

T. Hooker inquired if the dogs were registered. Chief Warfle stated that the animals are currently registered.

The Dog Hearing was recessed to Deliberative Session at 6:01 PM.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

T. Hooker made the motion and seconded by D. Mills to go into Executive Session for Contracts and Personnel, where premature knowledge could be damaging to the Town and may be jeopardized by public disclosure.

In accordance with 1 VSA 312 (b), where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the Municipality or person involved at a substantial disadvantage, the Board unanimously agreed to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of contracts and personnel at 7:21 PM. Ms. Fox-Howard was invited to attend for the contract and personnel discussion.

The Select Board adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Kelly Giard  
Recording Secretary

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Alicia Malay, Chair

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David Mills, Vice Chair

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Thomas Hooker, Selectman

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W. Joseph Gagnon, Selectman

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ABSENT

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Mark Winslow, Selectman