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BY EMAIL & REGULAR MAIL

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Jeffrey M. Donofrio, Esq.
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Re: Town of Cheshire - Investigation of Cheshire Animal Control and ACO Leiler

Dear Attorney Donofrio:

We have prepared this letter to summarize this firm's independent investigation conducted at your request of the Cheshire Animal Control facility ("Cheshire ACO facility") and allegations concerning current Animal Control Officer ("ACO") April Leiler ("Leiler").¹ This letter describes the steps that we took and the opinions we reached on the matters we were asked to investigate.²

I. SCOPE OF ENGAGEMENT

Through you as its Town Counsel, the Town of Cheshire retained this firm by letter agreement dated February 7, 2025, *see* Exhibit A, to conduct an independent investigation of allegations of wrongdoing concerning Leiler's treatment of dogs seized from Allison Ling ("the Ling dogs") during the time they were housed at the Cheshire ACO facility.³ While we do not represent the Town of Cheshire or anyone affiliated with it in this matter, we understand that we were retained by you, in your capacity as Town Counsel, to conduct this investigation in an agency capacity and thus come within your attorney-client and work product privileged relationship with

¹ We have used only last names in subsequent references to people mentioned in this letter. We wish to be clear that we mean no disrespect by failing to use honorifics at all times. We do so solely to streamline the discussion.

² We have applied a preponderance-of-the-evidence (more likely than not) standard in considering and reaching the opinions, including regarding credibility, contained in this letter.

³ It is our understanding that the dogs were seized sometime in October 2022.

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the Town. We further understand that the allegations we were assigned to investigate were the topic of a consent order between the Connecticut Department of Agriculture and the Town, dated December 23, 2024. That consent order, *see* Exhibit B, found the Town in violation of certain state statutes and regulations: Regs. § 22-336-17, § 33, § 37, § 38, § 40, and General Statutes § 53-247.

The consent order was provided to us for this investigation, along with a preliminary scope of topics to investigate. The broader question presented for the investigation was: “Did the care provided by the Cheshire Animal Control staff and facility to the seized dogs deviate from the legal obligations of the Town as set forth in C.G.S. § 53-247, State of CT Regulations §§ 22-336-17, 33, 37, 38, and 40, or other applicable laws, during the October 2022-December 2024 time period.”

II. INVESTIGATIVE TEAM

Thomas J. Murphy, Esq. and Shivangi Bhatia, Esq. principally conducted this investigation.

III. INVESTIGATIVE STEPS

We took the following steps in carrying out this investigation:

We began by reviewing extensive documentary information provided by you and the Town, including, *inter alia*, documents pertaining to the case against Ling⁴ and records within the Town’s possession related to the Ling dogs. From there, we interviewed 12 individuals, including Leiler. We interviewed people we believed were likely to have information concerning the allegations made against Leiler.

At the outset of each of our interviews, we explained to the interviewee that our firm had been hired by the counsel for the Town of Cheshire to conduct an independent investigation related to allegations concerning Leiler. We explained that we did not represent the Town, the Town’s counsel, or any individuals associated with it, including the interviewee. Instead, we explained, our role was to gather facts as investigators and make a report to the Town’s counsel who would decide what, if anything, to do with that information. We also noted that, because the investigation was being conducted pursuant to the Town’s attorney-client privilege, which the Town controlled, the interviewee was requested to keep the substance of the interview confidential. Every person we spoke to confirmed that he or she understood and was prepared to proceed.

The individuals we interviewed are listed below, in order:

- Melissa Kryzanowski, Town of Prospect ACO
- Jessica Moffo, Town of Woodbridge ACO
- Robert Ericson, former Town of Cheshire Assistant ACO and current Town of West

⁴ *See Town of Cheshire, and April Leiler, Town of Cheshire Animal Control Officer v. Allison Ling A/K/A*, Docket No. NNH-CV-22-6128294-S

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Hartford ACO

- Dr. Amy Anderson, Veterinarian at Meriden Animal Hospital
- Alex Conrod, former Town of Cheshire Assistant ACO and current Police Officer with the Town of Orange
- Alex Wells, former Town of Cheshire Assistant ACO and current Police Officer with the Town of Cheshire
- Chief Neil Dryfe, former Cheshire Police Department (“CPD”) Police Chief and current Chief of Police for Avon Police Department⁵
- Lt. Donald Miller, Lieutenant, CPD’s Division of Support Services
- Dr. Jessica Mirto, Veterinarian at Meriden Animal Hospital
- April Leiler, Town of Cheshire ACO⁶
- Jeffrey Donofrio, Counsel for the Town of Cheshire
- Louis Dagostine, Counsel for the Town of Cheshire

As we conducted these interviews, we also reviewed additional documentation and other materials that were provided to us by the individuals with whom we spoke.

A number of people declined to speak with us, including the State Animal Control Officers (“SACOs”) who inspected the Cheshire ACO facility during the relevant time period. However, we did receive and review extensive documentation and records from the Connecticut Department of Agriculture concerning their inspections of the facility.

We were also unable to connect with several other people we had attempted to interview, including two staffers at the Meriden Animal Hospital, Alexandra Dumas and Carlos Estevez, who had provided statements to the SACOs that prompted the State’s investigation into the Cheshire ACO facility in August 2024. Estevez did schedule an interview with us, but did not attend and subsequently did not respond to our follow-up email.

Similarly, we were unable to get in touch with Tisa Lynn-Wilson, an animal groomer who had assisted Leiler at times with grooming the Ling dogs, despite our multiple efforts to reach out to her over the phone.

There were also two people whom Leiler recommended we speak to and whom she believed would support her perspective: Diane Ulbrich (a current volunteer at the Cheshire ACO facility) and Joyce Glass (an animal activist). We indicated our interest in hearing from them, but both individuals thereafter declined Leiler’s requests to speak to us.

IV. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

⁵ At the time we interviewed Dryfe, he was still in his role as Chief of CPD.

⁶ Leiler was accompanied at her interview with us by her attorney, Eric Brown, Esq., and her union representative, Thomas Ruggiero.

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Our investigation has established that on August 6, 2024, SACOs Tanya Wescovich and Jeremy DePietro conducted an inspection of the Cheshire ACO facility after a complaint pertaining to the health and wellbeing of the dogs was made by Anderson. It is our understanding that the Ling dogs were being housed at the facility during that time, and had been at the facility starting around October 2022. During their inspection, Wescovich and DePietro noted multiple violations at the facility, including, *inter alia*, that the facility was unsanitary; that multiple dogs were being housed per run; that the paint on the floors was peeling; and that food was not being stored properly. *See Exhibits B & C.* On August 12, Wescovich and DePietro met with Dryfe and Miller to advise them of the status of the pound and the need to correct the noted deficiencies.

As the SACO's investigation into the facility progressed, the State initially considered animal cruelty charges against Leiler for the conditions at the Cheshire ACO facility and the revocation of her license. Instead, as noted, on December 23, 2024, the Connecticut Department of Agriculture and the Town entered an agreement to close the case and execute a consent order. *See Exhibit B.* The State found numerous statutory and regulatory violations by the Town, in particular under Connecticut Regs. § 22-336-17, § 33, § 37, § 38, § 40, and Connecticut General Statutes § 53-247.

As more thoroughly summarized below, it is our opinion that more likely than not the care provided by the Cheshire Animal Control staff and facility to the Ling dogs deviated in multiple respects from the legal obligations imposed on the Town pursuant to Connecticut regulations. During our investigation, multiple witnesses provided information that we believe corroborated many of the allegations set forth in the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's reports with respect to Leiler's treatment of the Ling dogs and the conditions of the facility. For her part, Leiler disputed certain specific claims made against her, but overall, remorsefully expressed regret for how she had handled things and noted in hindsight that she would have done things differently.

V. CREDIBILITY OF THE KEY WITNESSES

As a preliminary matter, before we provide an overview of the principal topics of our investigation, our opinion with respect to the credibility of key witnesses is set forth below:

The individuals closest to the allegations in question are Leiler, Kryzanowski (who assisted Leiler with grooming dogs, including the Ling dogs), Ericson (who was Leiler's Assistant from around August 2023 to August 2024), and Anderson (a doctor with Meriden Animal Hospital who made the complaint against Leiler that precipitated the State's investigation in August 2024).

In our opinion, Leiler presented credibly during her interview. She was forthcoming with information and, as detailed further in this letter, acknowledged responsibility for certain consequences of her actions. She was emotional at various points during her interview. She offered multiple times that, in the future, she would ask for more help and that she has learned a lot from this incident.

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In our opinion, Ericson also appeared credible. We are aware, including through interviews of both Ericson and Leiler, that Ericson and Leiler did not have a good relationship. It is also our understanding, from Leiler, that Ericson has been making disparaging comments about Leiler's treatment of the Ling dogs on Facebook. That said, we have no basis to question any of the specifics of what Ericson told us. We thus do not have a basis to reject Ericson's factual statements, but have assessed Ericson's opinions as likely affected by some amount of animus towards Leiler.

Kryzanowski also appeared credible during her interview, in our opinion. Although it is clear that she and Ericson are close friends, our investigation revealed no reason to believe that she has personal animus towards Leiler. To the contrary, Leiler expressed that she and Kryzanowski remain in contact to this day and help each other in their roles as ACOs.

Finally, in our opinion, Anderson was also credible. We understand from Leiler that Anderson had no prior relationship with Leiler that would cause Anderson to have any animus towards her.

VI. PRINCIPAL TOPICS OF INVESTIGATION

a. Conditions of the Cheshire ACO Facility

The documents we reviewed show that on February 22, 2023, SACO Kelli Baker received an anonymous complaint regarding a dog being injured at the Cheshire ACO facility. *See* Exhibit D. Along with that complaint, she also received a video of a small white dog, later identified as "Lily," which showed that dog "sitting awkwardly." The next day, Baker visited the Cheshire ACO facility. During that visit, Baker noted that the facility was not maintained in good repair and was "not approved." Baker issued a warning notice, *see* Exhibit D, finding that the facility was in violation of state regulations because the paint on the kennel floors was peeling. Baker noted that "[t]here are approximately 30 dogs at this facility because of an ongoing cruelty investigation. Repairs to the flooring cannot be scheduled until the case is resolved or dogs are moved to another facility." Exhibit D.

During Wescovich's and DePietro's investigation of the facility eighteen months later in August 2024, Wescovich likewise noted in her report that the floor of the kennel had peeling paint which prevents one from being able to properly sanitize the floors, the chain-link fence on multiple kennels needed to be fixed, and eight trough covers in the kennels were not installed properly, thereby preventing dogs from accessing them. *See* Exhibits B & C. Wescovich also noted that there were obvious signs of vermin in the facility, and that Leiler admitted to having a "mouse issue." Exhibit B. During her inspection, Wescovich also found unopened bags of food across the facility, with a large amount "piled up in the hallway area."⁷ Exhibit B.

⁷ When asked whether she had any reason to believe that either Baker or Wescovich has any animus towards her, Leiler said no. Leiler proceeded to explain, however, that she thinks that

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Throughout our investigation, multiple witnesses claimed that the Cheshire ACO facility needed to be upgraded, was cluttered, and was unsanitary during the time that the Ling dogs were there. Kryzanowski described the facility as “disgusting.” She noted that the dog runs were usually filled with urine and feces which resulted in an “awful ammonia-like smell,” the facility needed repairs, and opined that Leiler was a hoarder who was neglecting her cleaning duties.⁸

Ericson corroborated Kryzanowski’s descriptions. He too described Leiler as a “hoarder.” In addition to noting the peeling paint on the floors, Ericson described finding moldy food in the laundry room cabinets, with some containers even having maggots.⁹ Ericson told us that Leiler was too busy to clean the facility. Ericson also claimed that Leiler would store her own personal property at the facility and use the ACO van to transport such personal property.

Although, as noted, it came out through our interviews that Ericson and Leiler did not get along, given our ultimate opinions regarding the credibility of Kryzanowski and Ericson, it is our opinion that it is more likely than not that the facility was cluttered, unsanitary, and in need of basic repairs, such as repainted floors.

That opinion is reinforced by other information we gathered during our interviews:

Leiler’s prior assistant Conrod, who worked at the facility from February 2021 until around April 2023, corroborated that the Cheshire ACO facility needed improvements. He also confirmed that rats and mice were present at the facility, noting that they would occasionally have to put out traps.

Most importantly, Leiler did not herself disagree with most of these allegations. She admitted that the facility would get mice but said that she would put traps out. She admitted that she was storing food on the ground until Wescovich told her not to do so (although Leiler claimed that she had talked to other ACOs in the area and no one knew that you could not store food on the

DePietro, who accompanied Wescovich to the inspection, had been angry with her from an unrelated incident. Leiler explained that she also serves as a part-time ACO for the Town of Haddam and the Town of Durham. In her position as the Durham ACO, she had an issue with the SACO for that Town. Leiler claimed that DePietro is friendly with that SACO and she believes that is why he was angry with her.

⁸ Moffo, who is Kryzanowski’s sister and is herself an ACO in Woodbridge, had also been in the Cheshire ACO facility on a handful of occasions. She similarly described it as “disgusting” and even reported seeing rats eating from open containers of food, which she opined risked exposing the dogs to Leptospirosis.

⁹ During his interview, Ericson showed us photos of what appeared to be clutter in the Cheshire ACO facility and moldy food. At the end of his interview, he provided us with those photos. One such photo attached here shows what appears to be a moldy food container with maggots. *See Exhibit E.*

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floor). Leiler also explained to us that she did not always de-clutter the facility because she “thought [she] might need something.” Leiler sought to shift some of the blame on Ericson, noting that Ericson was supposed to help with cleaning the facility but that he was always watching ESPN.

As for using the facility to store personal property, Leiler claimed that she keeps extra clothes at the facility (in case she is sprayed by a skunk) and would keep objects she found, like golf clubs or a mirror, in the garage. But she emphasized that any such items have since been removed. Leiler also told us that she had used the ACO van to transport a coffee table, but that she was bringing that table to be used at the facility.

In regards to facility repairs, Leiler noted that the fencing outside the facility needed to be fixed, but that repairs on that had recently begun. Leiler, along with Dryfe and Miller, all acknowledged that there was chipping paint on the floors of the facility. They all, however, explained that the floors could not be fixed until the Ling dogs were moved out of the facility. It is our understanding that improvements to the floors had begun not long after our visit to the facility.

It is also our understanding that these conditions existed to some degree even before the Ling dogs arrived at the facility. Wells, who served as the Assistant ACO from around March 2019 until September 2020, explained that the facility was cluttered with donations, it did have mice, and he would sometimes find bags of open food. He also noted that the facility smelled terrible. However, Wells explained that the kennel itself was kept fairly clean by Leiler. This divergence of views, in our opinion, is likely based on the fact that, at the time Wells was the Assistant ACO, there were usually no more than three dogs in the kennel at any point in time. He did not work there during the time the Ling dogs were housed there.

b. Treatment of the Ling Dogs

i. Condition of the Ling Dogs Upon Arrival

As an initial matter, multiple witnesses confirmed to us that when the Ling dogs arrived at the Cheshire ACO facility, they were in good or okay condition, including Conrod, who was Leiler’s Assistant when the Ling dogs first arrived in October 2022. During our interview with Ericson, he showed us photos of what, he claimed, the dogs looked like when they first arrived at the facility.¹⁰ *See, e.g.*, Exhibit F. Based on those photos, the dogs appeared to be in okay condition.

Mirto, who evaluated and conducted physical exams of around 15 to 20 of the Ling dogs a week or so after their arrival at the Cheshire ACO facility also explained that the dogs were in good condition, except for one dog that had pre-existing neurological issues. In addition, Leiler herself confirmed that the dogs were in “okay” condition when they arrived. She also acknowledged that the caretaker at the Ling household, Maria, had been grooming the dogs prior

¹⁰ It is not clear to us how Ericson got access to these photos. He was not employed there at the time.

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to their seizure.

ii. Housing Multiple Dogs Per Runs

The SACO documents make clear that as of February 23, 2023, multiple dogs were being housed in one run at the facility, and that the dogs were being housed together for “health and welfare reasons.” That inspection report went on to provide that “dog pound regulations do not allow multiple dogs in enclosures except mothers and offspring,” and noted that a written warning was issued for that violation. Exhibit D.

During her interview, Leiler explained that the facility contains only sixteen runs and because there were close to thirty dogs when the Ling dogs were being housed there, she had no choice but to house multiple dogs per run, even when the dogs were not related to one another. Leiler, however, believed that this situation did not pose a problem because she claimed that Baker told her that it was okay to house multiple dogs per run for their “emotional well-being.” There was no way for us to corroborate Leiler’s statement as it was not made in writing, no one witnessed the interaction, according to Leiler, and Baker and her colleagues denied our request for interviews.

Leiler did later admit during her interview that it was a mistake to fail to consider sending some of the Ling dogs to other ACO facilities. However, she explained that she did not think to do so in the moment because she continued to think that the situation “was going to end any minute.” Leiler claimed that no one ever expressed any concerns to her about housing multiple dogs per run. Leiler appeared to genuinely believe that the dogs should be kept together for their well-being.

Ultimately, based on our review of the documents and the interviews, it is conceded by Leiler that she was housing multiple dogs per run and, in hindsight, wishes she would have considered sending some of the dogs elsewhere, which she never did over the two-plus years they remained at the Cheshire ACO facility.

iii. Failure to Groom Animals Adequately

We understand that Wescovich’s August 2024 investigation revealed that the Ling dogs were not being groomed adequately. *See* Exhibit C. Per her report, Wescovich spoke with Kryzanowski who told Wescovich that when she arrived to groom the dogs in May 2024, they were “caked with matted fur, urine, and feces.” Kryzanowski also explained to Wescovich that she was not sure how often the dogs were being groomed, and that on several occasions prior to May 2024, she had offered to assist in grooming them but Leiler told her “they are fine, we got it.” Wescovich also spoke with Wilson. Wilson assisted Kryzanowski in grooming the dogs in May, and explained to Wescovich that the dogs she groomed were “severely matted with long, curling nails and red/raw irritated skin.”¹¹ Wilson further told Wescovich that as each dog was groomed,

¹¹ Kryzanowski, who was friendly with Wilson, told us that she would speak to Wilson about speaking with us. Despite that reference, and despite several messages left for Wilson by us,

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Leiler was informed of the condition and advised to seek veterinary care.

During our interview with Kryzanowski, she noted that she had helped Leiler groom dogs at the facility on multiple occasions. She reported having groomed four dogs in January 2023, Lily in February 2023, another dog in June or July 2023, all of the Ling dogs in May 2024, and then all of the Ling dogs again in August 2024. Kryzanowski claimed that the dogs had matted fur and that she believed that Leiler was not grooming the dogs at all. She described their conditions as filthy, which resulted in skin irritation. She also recalled that in September 2023, she was called in to assist with a dog that needed its nail clipped. Kryzanowski was of the opinion that the dog likely had never had its claws clipped since coming to the facility because its nail had grown into its paw pad. In her interview with us, Kryzanowski described multiple times when Leiler would acknowledge that she, Leiler, was not caring for the dogs adequately.

Ericson's version of the events was consistent with Kryzanowski's. Ericson told us that the Ling dogs were not in good condition while at the facility. They had skin infections and matted fur, according to Ericson. Ericson opined that he used to think that the dogs were in that condition when they first arrived, but later learned from Kryzanowski that they used to be in good shape.

In light of our interviews, it is our opinion that it is more likely than not that Leiler did not adequately groom the dogs. Our conclusion is bolstered by the fact that Leiler did not meaningfully deny these allegations. Leiler admitted that Kryzanowski had been hired at times to help with grooming. Leiler explained that prior to Kryzanowski doing the grooming, she was doing it herself but it was not turning out well. Leiler acknowledged that she was not as skilled a groomer as Kryzanowski. When confronted by us with the allegations that she had failed to groom the dogs properly, Leiler responded that she could have groomed the dogs more often and admitted that the dogs' fur would get matted, and that that would often happen because they had "wet" fur.¹² Leiler also admitted that one of the dogs had an ingrown toenail and she took that dog to Central Vet. However, she believed that Kryzanowski had just cut the dogs' toenails and had missed that one.

iv. Failure to Provide Necessary Veterinary Care to Animals

As noted, it is our understanding that Wescovich's investigation was prompted by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture receiving a complaint from Anderson about a dog named "Tiny." As noted in Wescovich's report, Anderson's complaint indicated that Tiny had been brought to the Meriden Animal Hospital due to skin issues on July 26, 2024. *See* Exhibit C. Anderson noted in her statement (supplemented by the statements of two other Meriden Animal Hospital employees, Dumas and Estevez) that Tiny "had urine scalding, urine-stained fur, multiple mats, stool stuck to the hair by his anus, alopecia on his distal limbs, red, raw skin, Grade 4/4 dental disease, an infected mouth with a rotten dangling canine, chronic dry eye, and a moderately

we never ultimately heard from her. As such, we are left with only Wilson's statements as reported by SACO personnel.

¹² The reason for the dogs' wet fur is discussed later in this report. *See* Section VI(b)(v).

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deep central corneal ulcer.” Exhibit G. Anderson made her report to the SACOs because she was concerned for the condition of the other dogs at the facility based on her observations of the condition of Tiny and Leiler’s statement to Anderson that the facility was understaffed.

Based on a report from Tiny’s prior veterinary visit to Central Hospital for Veterinary Medicine (“Central Vet”) about 12 weeks earlier on May 4, 2024, Anderson also believed that Tiny’s condition had worsened significantly in only a few months. *See* Exhibit C. In her statement to the SACOs, Anderson claimed that she had informed Leiler that Tiny needed extensive care to improve his condition and provided Leiler with antibiotics. She then stated that a few days later, Leiler scheduled Tiny to be euthanized and “requested a letter clearing her of any wrongdoing in his care,” which the hospital declined to provide. Exhibit G. Anderson noted in her statement that when Leiler brought Tiny back to be euthanized on July 31, he was in practically the same condition as at his previous visit. According to Anderson, Leiler expressed concern that the prior owner, Ling, was “going to sue [her] for having the dog euthanized.” Exhibit G.

Anderson repeated much of this same information during her interview with us. She also pointed out that when Leiler came in on July 26, Leiler told her that she did not have enough help to care for the dogs. Anderson also explained to us that urine scalding is caused by chronic exposure to urine and that Tiny suffered from red or raw skin that was caused by urine and/or lack of proper bathing. Anderson told us that she believes that Leiler had not done anything to treat Tiny in the time between July 26 and when she returned five days later to have Tiny euthanized. Anderson believed Leiler intended to have Tiny euthanized from the time of his July 26 visit.

During her interview, Leiler vehemently denied the general allegation that she had failed to take the dogs to the vet as necessary. She noted, for instance, that when Krzyzanowski noticed that one of the dogs was limping over the weekend (while Leiler was no longer on her shift), Leiler promptly took the dog to Central Vet.

Leiler also had a different view of the specific events related to Tiny. She claimed that she promptly brought Tiny to Meriden Animal Hospital after Ericson informed her that Tiny did not look well. Per Leiler, Anderson told Leiler that Tiny needed to be put down, even though Leiler believed that they could medicate Tiny instead. Leiler took Tiny home, but when he did not improve, she asked Anderson if Tiny should still be put down, to which Anderson said yes. Leiler admitted to asking for a letter stating that the euthanization was “medically necessary” because she was scared of getting sued by Ling. Leiler said she requested such a letter after she discussed the situation involving Tiny with counsel for the Town. Leiler reiterated that she did what she was supposed to do and, even though she was busy, she did not think Tiny’s condition was her fault.

In our interview with Dagostine, counsel for the Town, he clarified that he did not tell Leiler to request a letter absolving her of fault or responsibility. He told Leiler to have the veterinarian document why Tiny needed to be euthanized and what caused Tiny’s condition, whether that was due to Leiler’s treatment or otherwise.

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In our opinion, there is no reason to dispute Anderson's description of Tiny's condition in late July 2024. Although Leiler disclaimed responsibility for Tiny's condition, she did not appear to dispute the conditions that Anderson described. Further, Leiler confirmed that she and Anderson had no prior relationship that would cause Anderson to have any animus towards Leiler. Nor do we have any information to cause us to believe that Anderson would lie to harm Leiler.

With respect to the allegation that Tiny's condition was Leiler's fault, we heard conflicting evidence. For instance, Dryfe, despite acknowledging that he had little first-hand knowledge of the condition of the Ling dogs, did not believe that Leiler intentionally or negligently allowed the Ling dogs to deteriorate or that she treated them cruelly. He noted that Leiler had told him that she had taken the dogs to the vet when they were ill, followed the vet's guidance, and gave them any required medication. However, corroborating Anderson's suggestion that Leiler had not done anything to help Tiny between July 26 and July 31, Ericson told us that although he was giving Tiny his prescribed medication during that time, Leiler was not.

Based on the documents we reviewed and our interviews, it is our opinion that more likely than not Leiler failed to provide necessary veterinary care in at least the case of Tiny. We are aware of no reason why a long-practicing veterinarian like Anderson would report an ACO to the SACOs except in an exceptional circumstance.

v. Failure to Protect Animals While Cleaning the Facility

Multiple witnesses recalled seeing Leiler clean the kennel using water and bleach with the dogs still inside, including Kryzanowski, Ericson, and Wilson (who provided a statement to Wescovich that she saw Leiler spray a kennel down while the dogs were still inside). In a similar vein, Wescovich's report described that, at the time of her inspection of the Cheshire facility in August 2024, the "floors and walls of the kennel were very wet" and the dogs "themselves appeared to be soaking wet." Exhibit C.

During our interview of Ericson, he showed us a video of what he claimed was Leiler using a hose to clean the kennel with the dogs still in their runs. He reported having made the recording surreptitiously to avoid Leiler catching him. As a result, the video reveals little beyond the sound of a hose spraying the run. It does not reveal one way or the other whether any dogs were in the run at the time.

Leiler vehemently denied ever spraying the kennel with the dogs still in the run. Leiler maintained that the dogs were removed to crates while the kennel was cleaned. She claimed that although the dogs were returned while the floor was still wet, they had a dry bed to occupy. Leiler also noted that, after the State came in and said that the dogs could not be in wet pens, she would dry the floors with towels. According to Leiler, this would take about six hours and the dogs would have to remain in their crates while she did so. Leiler started to cry when describing this process. However, despite denying that she sprayed the kennel using water and bleach, Leiler did admit to us that the dogs' fur would get matted and that would sometimes happen because the dogs were

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“wet.”

Leiler’s cleaning practices appear to have differed over time, with no real consistency. Leiler’s prior assistant Conrod explained that while they were cleaning one side of the kennel, they would move dogs to the other side of the kennel. And it is our understanding from Wells that before the Ling dogs arrived, Leiler would move the dogs from the kennel to the outside fenced-in area.

Based on her own admission, the rest of our interviews, and the uncontested fact that the Ling dogs were “wet,” it is our opinion that it is more likely than not that Leiler was failing to adequately protect the animals either while she was cleaning or in the aftermath of having cleaned. Regardless of whether Leiler was spraying the kennel down with the dogs inside the runs, she admitted that the dogs were suffering from wet fur—no doubt at least from Leiler returning the dogs to the run while the floor was still wet. That suggests to us that, at a bare minimum, the dogs were regularly exposed to wet surfaces.

vi. Failure to Arrange for Proper Holding of Wildlife

Per Wescovich’s report, Wilson told Wescovich that when she was at one point retrieving a dog from the kennel to groom, Leiler told her to be careful in the bathroom because there were two cardboard boxes in there that contained wildlife. *See* Exhibit C. Wilson noted that there were no air holes in the boxes. Wilson told Wescovich that she and Ericson found a deceased baby rabbit in one. In her interview with us, Kryzanowski recalled the same incident, and noted they also found a dead bird in one box.

Leiler admitted to us during her interview that if she found an injured animal that was not “badly injured,” she would bring it to the facility and call wildlife rehabilitators. If no one called her back by the end of her shift, she would leave the animal at the facility overnight to give it a chance to survive in case a rehabilitator called the following day. Leiler noted that since the consent decree, she has been putting wildlife down if no rehabilitator calls back before she leaves work. Leiler said that this allegation is “unfair,” claiming that her prior practice was consistent with that of all other ACOs.

Given Leiler’s statement, and those made by other individuals, it is our opinion that it is more likely than not that Leiler was not arranging for the proper holding of wildlife, as alleged by the SACOs.

c. Leiler’s Relationship with Ericson and Treatment of Staff

Although Leiler had a good relationship with her prior Assistant ACOs, it was clear from our interviews that she and Ericson did not get along. Ericson told us, and Leiler admitted that, early on in Ericson’s tenure, Leiler had informally written him up for, among other things, cleaning

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Leiler's office. Ericson provided us with that memo. *See* Exhibit H.¹³ Ericson explained during his interview that Leiler was a person who would come after you if you "crossed her." Ericson said that her supervisory style was the primary reason why he did not express his concerns to Leiler about how she was cleaning the runs. Ericson claimed to be worried that Leiler would take action against him if he took action against her. Ericson also noted that Leiler was rude to the volunteers and they were scared of her. Ericson said that one volunteer, Ulbrich, told him that Leiler needed to retire because Leiler was "destroying" the dogs.¹⁴

For her part, Leiler claimed that Ericson was hired to help her take care of the dogs, but was not happy about having to do so. Leiler said that Ericson was rude and dismissive to the volunteers, particularly Ulbrich. She noted that she raised this issue, among others, in her memo to Ericson. *See* Exhibit H. Leiler also criticized Ericson for representing himself as Cheshire Animal Control when he was volunteering with CT Dog Gone Recovery. Leiler noted that Ericson would go out in the middle of the night looking for stray dogs through that volunteer program. Leiler mentioned that she also recently learned that Ericson started an "I hate April Leiler" Facebook group.

Miller, Leiler's supervisor, remembered Leiler complaining to him that Ericson was lazy and did not clean the facility unless she asked. When Ericson resigned as Assistant ACO, Miller also recalled Ericson telling him that Leiler was a "pack rat." Dryfe likewise remembered Ericson telling him when he resigned that Leiler did not let anyone help her. Dryfe expressed his frustration that Ericson has been giving information to animal advocates since he left, but never brought his concerns directly to Dryfe or Miller while he was still working there. Dryfe noted that it was just as much Ericson's responsibility to ensure that the dogs were being taken care of properly as it was Leiler's.

With respect to his interactions with Miller, Ericson recalled coming in for his shift one Wednesday, and thinking that the facility had not been cleaned during Leiler's shift. He noticed that there was dried poop stuck to the floor. Ericson claimed he told Miller about the incident and Miller said he would have a meeting with Ericson and Leiler. Ericson said that the meeting never happened, but noted that it is possible that Miller met with Leiler alone. Although Ericson did not remember the exact date of this conversation, he thinks it happened in January 2024.

Ericson and Leiler unquestionably had a strained working relationship. As in most such contentious supervisor-subordinate relationships, there was no doubt blame to be assigned to both sides. That said, it is our opinion that, as the ACO, Leiler was principally responsible for the care of the animals in her facility, not to mention directly responsible for supervising any subordinate

¹³ The copy of the memo that Ericson provided bears his notes in the margins.

¹⁴ Leiler suggested in her interview that Ulbrich would back up Leiler's negative depictions of Ericson. She promised to provide us with Ulbrich's contact information. But, despite Leiler's agreement to put us in touch with Ulbrich, we followed up with Leiler's attorney to learn that Ulbrich was not "willing to cooperate." Thus, we do not have her input on this dispute between Leiler and Ericson.

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employee, such as Ericson, including for addressing any shortcomings in his performance. Thus, it is our opinion that any shortcoming in handling the Ling dogs is ultimately the responsibility of Leiler.

d. Did Leiler Have Adequate Assistance?

In Anderson's statement to the State, Anderson claims that Leiler told her that she was severely understaffed. *See* Exhibit G. We routinely asked witnesses whether they believed Leiler had adequate assistance. Some expressed that Leiler had adequate assistance. One witness, Moffo, claimed that Leiler had been offered additional assistance with the Ling dogs from another ACO in the State, but had declined.

Leiler, however, denied that she had told Anderson that the facility was understaffed. She also denied that other ACOs had offered to help her. Leiler admitted, however, that a private shelter in North Haven had offered to help, which she declined. Leiler did admit, and her supervisors at CPD corroborated, that she never asked for assistance. Leiler also expressed to us that she has learned a lot from this situation and admitted that she would do things differently now. She emphasized that she had tried to do the best that she could at the time. Leiler explained that she would ask for more help in the future and would not try to do everything by herself anymore.

In our opinion, Leiler likely needed additional help because of the sheer number of dogs at the facility, which was more than the facility was designed to handle. Indeed, Leiler's prior assistant expressed that before the Ling dogs' arrival, the facility would typically hold no more than three dogs at any one time. We credit Moffo and Leiler's own admission that Leiler received (and declined) offers from others to help with the dogs. Leiler told us that she had wanted to handle things by herself in the first instance. It is clear that Leiler did not seek additional help and, in our opinion, that she genuinely regrets not doing so.

e. Cheshire Police Department's Supervision of the Cheshire ACO Facility

Cheshire Animal Control is housed under CPD. ACOs have their own budget, which is reviewed and submitted to the Town by Dryfe. During most of the time that the Ling dogs were being housed at the Cheshire ACO facility, Miller was Leiler's immediate supervisor.

It is our understanding from our interviews of Dryfe, Miller, and Leiler that Dryfe did not often visit the facility while the Ling dogs were there. Miller said that he would visit the facility once or twice a week. Leiler explained that Miller did not come to the facility that often because he "never needed to." Because of the infrequency of their visits, Dryfe and Miller did not observe the dogs on a day-to-day basis or witness routine tasks like Leiler's cleaning practices.

Both Dryfe and Miller knew that the facility needed upgrades, such as the floors, but said that they could not move forward with improvements until custody of the Ling dogs was resolved.

It was clear from all three interviews that Dryfe and Miller relied on Leiler to let them know if she needed assistance or if there was a problem at the facility, and Leiler never did. Dryfe also said he received no complaints from anyone expressing concerns about the condition of the

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Ling dogs while they were at the facility until Wescovich met with him and Miller during the SACO investigation in August 2024.

Both Dryfe and Miller appeared to be defending Leiler during their interviews. Dryfe said he does not see what the State ACOs allege even in hindsight and that he does not believe that Leiler would intentionally or negligently allow the dogs to deteriorate. Dryfe sought to shift the blame to the State ACOs, whom he believed should have raised their concerns earlier. Dryfe suggested that the SACO personnel began reacting the way they did only when things became “high profile” and they were getting pressure from their bosses. On a similar note, Miller noted that he would not “vastly” change Leiler’s past positive performance reviews, even in hindsight.

In our opinion, the supervision of the Cheshire ACO facility was inadequate during the time the Ling dogs were present. The effort to blame the SACO for yielding to the public neglects the central fact that a neutral veterinarian—Anderson—not the public was the cause for the SACO to re-evaluate the facility in August 2024. In addition, Leiler could have asked for additional assistance to help with caring for the Ling dogs but did not do so for over two years.

f. Improvements Made Since the Consent Order

It is our understanding that improvements have been made to the facility since the consent order was signed. Dryfe explained to us that after he met with Wescovich, he went over to the facility. He took immediate steps to correct any problems that Wescovich pointed out. He claims they purchased racks and sealable food containers to store the food, and that Public Works fixed the covers on the troughs in one day. Dryfe told us that they have also received quotes for fixing the floors and fencing, and the renovation plan has recently been approved. Dryfe said they have started the process of renovating the floors because the Ling dogs are gone. Both Leiler and Miller corroborated that these improvements have been/are being made and told us that the facility has been de-cluttered.

It appears that Leiler and CPD have made policy changes as well as a result of the consent order. As evidenced by the Cheshire Animal Control Progress Report, dated December 30, 2024, both Miller and Leiler took an online class, NACA ACO1, as mandated by the State. *See* Exhibit I. Further, Leiler explained to us that Miller visits the facility more frequently. During his interview, Dryfe told us that CPD has recently updated its internal policies pertaining to the ACOs, *see* Exhibit J, which were last updated in 1998.

Our own visit to the facility on May 23, 2025, revealed shelving units for food and bedding, but the facility appeared to be outdated. The facility smelled strongly of urine and the floors at that time still had peeling paint. One of the trough covers appeared to be broken and multiple runs had “out of order” signs. There were no animals in the kennel during our visit, and we did not notice any sign of vermin or any open food containers.

Conclusion

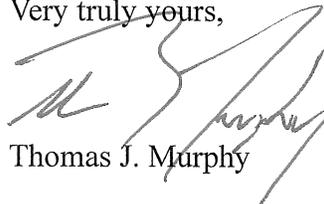
We appreciate the opportunity to have performed this investigation. Please let us know if you have any questions about the opinions expressed herein or if you need us to take any further

COWDERY, MURPHY & HEALY, LLC

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steps beyond those reflected here.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas J. Murphy', written over a printed name.

Thomas J. Murphy

TJM:lm

Enclosures

cc: Shivangi Bhatia, Esq.

EXHIBIT A

CIULLA & DONOFRIO, LLP

127 WASHINGTON AVENUE

P. O. BOX 219

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RICHARD F. CONNORS

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DIRECT DIAL: (203) 239-9829

LOUIS J. DAGOSTINE
DIRECT DIAL: (203) 234-2699

JENNIFER N. COPPOLA
DIRECT DIAL: (203) 239-3642

February 7, 2025

Via Electronic Mail
tmurphy@cmandh.com

Thomas J. Murphy, Esq.
Cowdery, Murphy & Healy, LLC
280 Trumbull Street, 22nd Floor
Hartford, CT 06103-3599

Re: Town of Cheshire, CT Animal Control Facility

Dear Attorney Murphy:

This letter serves to document and confirm that I, in my capacity as Town Attorney for the Town of Cheshire, and on the Town's behalf, have hereby engaged Cowdery, Murphy & Healy, LLC ("CMH") for its investigative services, as more fully described below. Specifically, the Town, acting through me as its counsel, has engaged CMH to investigate allegations concerning operations at the Town of Cheshire's Animal Control Facility between October 2022-December 2024. The Town seized 28 dogs in October 2022. Two of the dogs were pregnant at the time of seizure and gave birth to a total of 3 puppies. The Town has received allegations concerning the care given to the seized dogs and the conditions at the Animal Control Facility. The allegations include claims that the current Town Animal Control Officer, April Leiler, has failed to perform her job responsibilities. However, there was also an Assistant Animal Control Officer employed by the Town for approximately one year of the period at issue so the investigation should include a review of the operations at the facility and the circumstances/issues that necessitated the animals' lengthy stay in the facility. The investigation will consist of, among other things, certain investigative and legal tasks, interviews, gathering documents, research (including, if necessary, legal research), analysis (including legal analysis), and the like, as authorized and requested by the undersigned concerning this matter. Your work will also include analyzing the facts you gather under applicable law and providing a report to me and appropriate Town officials regarding your opinions of facts and law.

It is my understanding that CMH will charge for its services on an hourly basis and that your hourly rate is \$550; the hourly rate for James Healy is \$500; the hourly rate for Allison White is \$400; and the hourly rate for any necessary paralegal work is \$100. In

addition to payment at those hourly rates for services rendered, CMH will be reimbursed for reasonable costs and expenses that it incurs in performing this engagement. CMH will bill monthly in arrears and will submit its invoices to me, although the Town will pay CMH directly.

My engagement of CMH concerning this matter in my capacity as Town Attorney is intended to constitute an agency relationship. Accordingly, any information and records which may be delivered to CMH concerning this matter and its work product are intended to and will remain confidential and subject to the attorney-client privilege, and CMH is specifically directed not to disclose any information, whether oral or written, or otherwise, acquired or discovered concerning this matter to any person or party other than myself or someone else that I designate. In addition, CMH is not to deliver to anyone except employees within its office any information and documents acquired during its engagement concerning this matter. Finally, because CMH will be acting for me in my capacity as Town Attorney in my rendition of legal services and will itself be performing legal analysis, please note that any information it acquires while acting at my direction in this matter relating in any way to my representation of the Town of Cheshire shall not be disclosed at any time except to me or those who I might designate, as it will be and will remain subject to the attorney-client privilege and work product privilege unless and until waived. Should CMH have any questions or concerns about my intent to maintain privilege over the investigation please contact me promptly so that we can revise or modify the engagement to carry out that intent.

If CMH's understanding of our agreement deviates in any way from the content of this letter, please advise me right away. Otherwise, if this letter accurately reflects this engagement, and CMH is in agreement with the policies set forth below in paragraphs 1-12, please sign this engagement letter to indicate your agreement to abide by these policies and practices in the performance of the services CMH is to provide under this engagement letter and return the executed copy to me for my file.

CMH, by the signature below of its duly authorized representative, represents and agrees that it:

- (1) has no connection of any kind with any Town of Cheshire officials, including Ms. Leiler, the Animal Control Officer, and thus will be conducting this investigation with independence;
- (2) will not undertake during the course of this engagement any engagement that is in any way related to this matter without my prior consent;
- (3) will employ no illegal means in the performance of its services and will employ no deceitful means without first fully explaining the proposed means to me and obtaining my consent;

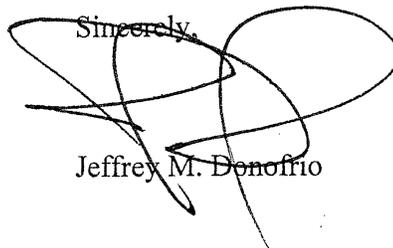
February 7, 2025

Page 3

- (4) will employ only such means as are consistent with the standards of professional conduct applicable to the legal profession;
- (5) will keep me informed of significant developments regarding the performance of the services for which I have engaged it;
- (6) will keep confidential the information that I or other Town officials provide it and that it otherwise learns in the course of rendering its services in this matter;
- (7) will not communicate with or disclose any information regarding this matter to the media without my prior consent;
- (8) will not contact any party whom it knows or believes is represented by a lawyer in regard to this matter without my prior consent;
- (9) will not accept instructions or payment from any other party or source regarding the services for which I have engaged it;
- (10) will promptly inform me if it is served with legal process regarding this matter;
- (11) will, at the conclusion of its engagement, deliver to me all confidential information that it has obtained from me, other Town officials, or any other source, and provide me with a report – in either oral or written form, at my direction -- analyzing facts and law; and
- (12) will immediately contact me if any questions arise regarding these policies.

I look forward to working with CMH concerning this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions concerning the content of this letter or the scope or intent of this engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey M. Denoffrio". The signature is stylized with large, overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

Jeffrey M. Denoffrio

JMD:st

EXHIBIT B



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

450 Columbus Blvd, Suite 701 | Hartford, Connecticut 06103 | 860.713.2500

www.CTGrown.gov

Office of the Commissioner

An Equal Opportunity Employer



**Consent Order between the Department of Agriculture
and the Town of Cheshire**

A. By virtue of the following facts which are detailed in the inspection reports attached hereto and made a part hereof, the Department of Agriculture alleges that the Respondent Town of Cheshire has violated the following statutory and regulatory requirements for the Cheshire Animal Control Facility located at 500 Highland Avenue, Cheshire, CT:

1. CT Reg § 22-336-17: Pens and Runs

Animals were placed in cages that did not meet the minimum size requirements while primary enclosures were cleaned.

2. CT Reg § 22-336-33: Dog Pound Structure Requirements

- a. Chain link on multiple kennels was broken.
- b. Eight of the trough covers were not installed properly to allow the dogs access to the troughs, and could potentially cause injury.
- c. Flooring surface coating is peeling and cracking and prevents is from being cleaned and sanitized properly.

3. CT Reg § 22-336-37: Animal Health

Food was stored inappropriately (including an open bag of prescription food sitting on the wet floor).

4. CT Reg § 22-336-38: Sanitation

Evidence of a mice infestation throughout the facility.

5. CT Reg § 22-336-40: Quarantined Animals; Isolation Areas

Lacked a properly set up isolation area.

6. Animal Welfare Violations Under CGS § 53-247

- a. Failing to groom animals as needed for health reasons.
- b. Failure to provide necessary veterinary care.
- c. Failure to protect animals from becoming wet or exposed to chemicals while enclosures were being cleaned and disinfected.
- d. Resting surfaces were not dried before allowing animals to use them.
- e. Failure to arrange proper holding of wildlife that needed to be transferred to a wildlife rehabilitation facility.

Items 1, 2a-2c, and 5 remain uncorrected, necessitating ongoing monitoring to ensure full compliance with applicable health and safety requirements.

- B. With the agreement of Respondent, the Commissioner of Agriculture, acting under §22-4c and §22-344 of the Connecticut General Statutes, orders Respondent as follows:

The Respondent, without contesting the sufficiency of the allegations outlined above, for purposes of this Consent Order, shall cause the following to occur:

1. Management and Oversight:

- a. The Respondent is to establish a management team to oversee, review and audit the operation of the animal control facility, this shall include a designated facility supervisor.
- b. The management team shall be responsible for the preparation and completion of any forms required by statutes, regulations and this Consent Order.
- c. Supervisor will verify daily operations via checklist and ensure that the following facility and operational conditions are met:
 - i) Animals will be removed from enclosures before cleaning.
 - ii) When animals are removed for cleaning, they must be placed in an enclosure that is appropriately sized,
 - iii) The cleaning process is to be done in a timely manner.
 - iv) Bedding is changed when soiled or wet.
 - v) Enclosures must be fully dried before returning the animals.
 - vi) Grooming and bathing will be done as necessary.
 - vii) ACO will provide the supervisor with a weekly wellness assessment of all animals with photographs.

2. Training:

- a. The Respondent will provide documented training, such as National Animal Care and Control Association (NACA) ACO I Training and Certification, to all staff and volunteers who have direct contact with any animals in the Town's care, control or custody.
- b. The training needs to include proper animal welfare and facility operations procedures. It should be at least 25 hours and happen within 45 days of the execution of this Consent Order.
- c. This training will be conducted at the Town's expense.
- d. Course syllabus shall be subject to the Commissioner's approval.

3. Animal Care:

- a. Create an animal intake report as required by CT Reg § 22-336-41 and include photo documentation of animals. All animals impounded should have an intake report and records shall be maintained till this order is lifted.
- b. Perform medical assessment upon intake to determine if veterinary care is necessary and provide care.
- c. Animals kept longer than 30 days shall have a wellness exam performed by a veterinarian and documentation should be retained until this order is lifted.
- d. A veterinarian shall examine any animal that requires veterinary care in a timely manner, and Respondent shall implement all recommendations for care.

4. Reporting:

- a. Progress reports will be shared on or before the last day of each month following issuance of this Consent Order, and continuing until all actions required by this Consent Order have been completed as approved and to the Commissioner's satisfaction.
- b. The progress report shall include descriptions of the actions which Respondent has taken to date to comply with this Consent Order.

C. Full Compliance:

Respondent shall not be considered in full compliance with this consent order until all actions required by this consent order have been completed as approved and to the Commissioner's satisfaction. Respondent may request termination of the Consent Order after full compliance with the provisions of this Consent Order have been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Commissioner.

D. Approvals:

Respondent shall use best efforts to submit to the Commissioner all documents required by this consent order in a complete and approvable form. If the Commissioner notifies Respondent that any document or other action is deficient, and does not approve it with conditions or modifications, it is deemed disapproved, and Respondent shall correct the deficiencies and resubmit it within the time specified by the Commissioner or, if no time is specified by the Commissioner, within 30 days of the Commissioner's notice of deficiencies. In approving any document or other action under this consent order, the Commissioner may approve the document or other action as submitted or performed or with such conditions or modifications as the Commissioner deems necessary to carry out the purposes of this consent order. Nothing in this paragraph shall excuse noncompliance or delay.

E. Definitions:

As used in this consent order, "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture or a designated representative of the Commissioner.

F. Dates:

The date of "issuance" of this consent order is the date the consent order is deposited in the U.S. mail or personally delivered, whichever is earlier. The date of submission to the Commissioner of any document required by this consent order shall be the date such document is received by the Commissioner. The date of any notice by the Commissioner under this consent order, including but not limited to notice of approval or disapproval of any document or other action, shall be the date such notice is deposited in the U.S. mail or is personally delivered, whichever is earlier. Except as otherwise specified in this consent order, the word "day" as used in this consent order means calendar day. Any document or action which is required by this consent order to be submitted or performed by a date which falls on a Saturday, Sunday or a Connecticut or federal holiday shall be submitted or performed by the next day which is not a Saturday, Sunday or Connecticut or federal holiday.

G. Certification of Documents:

Any document, including but not limited to any notice, which is required to be submitted to the Commissioner under this consent order shall be signed by Respondent or, if Respondent is not an individual, by Respondent's chief elected official or a duly authorized representative of such officer, and by the individual(s) responsible for actually preparing such document, and each such individual shall certify in writing as follows:

"I have personally examined and am familiar with the information submitted in this document and all attachments thereto, and I certify, based on reasonable investigation, including my inquiry of those individuals responsible for obtaining the information, that the submitted information is true, accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that any false statement made in the submitted information may be punishable as a criminal offense under §53a-157b of the Connecticut General Statutes and any other applicable law."

H. Noncompliance:

This consent order is a final order of the Commissioner with respect to the matters addressed herein, and is nonappealable and immediately enforceable. Failure to comply with this consent order may subject Respondent to legal action, including but not limited to injunctive relief and civil penalties.

I. False Statements:

Any false statement in any information submitted pursuant to this consent order may be punishable as a criminal offense under §53a-157b of the Connecticut General Statutes and any other applicable law.

J. Notice of Transfer, Liability of Respondent:

Until Respondent has fully complied with this consent order, Respondent shall notify the Commissioner in writing no later than 15 days after transferring all or any portion of the facility, the operations, the site or the business which is the subject of this consent order or after obtaining a new mailing or location address. Respondent's obligations under this consent order shall not be affected by the passage of title to any property to any other person or municipality.

K. Commissioner's Powers:

Nothing in this consent order shall affect the Commissioner's authority to institute any proceeding or take any other action to prevent or abate violations of law, recover costs and natural resource damages, and to impose penalties for past, present, or future violations of law. If at any time the Commissioner determines that the actions taken by Respondent pursuant to this consent order have not successfully corrected all violations, the Commissioner may institute any proceeding to require Respondent to undertake further investigation or further action to prevent or abate violations.

L. Respondent's Obligations Under Law:

Nothing in this consent order shall relieve Respondent of other obligations under

applicable federal, state and local law.

M. No Assurance by Commissioner:

No provision of this consent order and no action or inaction by the Commissioner shall be construed to constitute an assurance by the Commissioner that the actions taken by Respondent pursuant to this consent order will result in compliance.

N. Access to Site:

Any representative of the Department of Agriculture may enter the facility without prior notice for the purposes of monitoring and enforcing the actions required or allowed by this consent order.

O. No Effect on Rights of Other Persons:

This consent order neither creates nor affects any rights of persons or municipalities that are not parties to this consent order.

P. Notice to Commissioner of Changes:

Within 15 days of the date Respondent becomes aware of a change in any information submitted to the Commissioner under this consent order, or that any such information was inaccurate or misleading or that any relevant information was omitted, Respondent shall submit the correct or omitted information to the Commissioner.

Q. Notification of Noncompliance:

In the event that Respondent becomes aware that it did not or may not comply, or did not or may not comply on time, with any requirement of this consent order or of any document required hereunder, Respondent shall immediately notify by telephone the individual identified in the next paragraph and shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that any noncompliance or delay is avoided or, if unavoidable, is minimized to the greatest extent possible. Within five (5) days of the initial notice, Respondent shall submit in writing the date, time, and duration of the noncompliance and the reasons for the noncompliance or delay and propose, for the review and written approval of the Commissioner, dates by which compliance will be achieved, and Respondent shall comply with any dates which may be approved in writing by the Commissioner. Notification by Respondent shall not excuse noncompliance or delay, and the Commissioner's approval of any compliance dates proposed shall not excuse noncompliance or delay unless specifically so stated by the Commissioner in writing.

R. Submission of Documents:

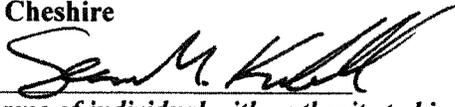
Any document required to be submitted to the Commissioner under this consent order shall, unless otherwise specified in this consent order or in writing by the Commissioner, be directed to:

Kelli Baker
Chief State Animal Control Officer
Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Regulatory Services

450 Columbus Blvd.
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
Email: Kelli.Baker@ct.gov

- S. Respondent consents to the issuance of this consent order without further notice. "The undersigned certifies that he/she is fully authorized to enter into this consent order and to legally bind the Respondent to the terms and conditions of the consent order."

Town of Cheshire

BY: 
(Insert name of individual with authority to bind Respondent to terms of consent order)
(Insert individual's title)

12/23/2024
Date

Issued as a final order of the Commissioner of Agriculture.



Bryan P. Hurlburt
Commissioner

12/24/2024
Date

Enclosures: Inspection Reports dated: August 6, 2024 and December 6, 2024



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ANIMAL CONTROL UNIT



TRADE NAME: DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE DATE/TIME: 08/06/2024 11:18
 LICENSEE: DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE STATE LICENSE # DPF.000025
 LOCATION: 496 HIGHLAND AVE TOWN: CHESHIRE

DOG POUND INSPECTION

WARNING NOTICE

You are hereby warned that this facility was found to be in violation of the laws and regulations listed below:

- 22-336-22 SANITATION: Facility clean and sanitary
- 22-336-24 STORAGE OF DOG FOOD: Metal or heavy duty plastic containers
- 22-336-26 ISOLATION AREA: One area per ten runs
- 22-336-19 HEAT AND VENTILATION: Thermostatically controlled clean and sanitary heat
- 22-336-27 QUARANTINED DOGS: One dog per run
- 22-336-18 FLOORS AND BASE OF RUNS: Smooth concrete, runs and troughs minimum pitch requirements

Additional Comments:

There is a significant amount of clutter in the front rooms facility which will make cleaning properly difficult. There is at least 1 cat being housed in these areas. Please remove clutter and store supplies appropriately. All unopened food must be stored off the ground, all open bags must be in metal or heavy duty plastic storage containers. Changes must be made immediately. There is a cat in the kennel area which should be moved into a quieter room of the facility to reduce stress due to barking from the large number of dogs currently being housed.

A re-inspection of this facility will be conducted on or about **10/17/2024**

Continued violations or failure to make corrections could subject you to fines and/or suspension or revocation of license. Dog pounds could be subject to closure. If you have any questions regarding this matter, you can contact the State Animal Control Unit at 860-713-2506.

Officer: Tanya Wescovich Owner / Agent: April Leiler



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ANIMAL CONTROL UNIT
DOG POUND INSPECTION



TRADE NAME: DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE

DATE/TIME: 08/06/2024 11:18

LICENSEE: DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE

STATE LICENSE #: DPF.000025

LOCATION: 496 HIGHLAND AVE

TOWN: CHESHIRE

	YES	NO	N/A
PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS, 22-336-16			
Maintained in good repair	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Interior / Exterior Walls:			
Concrete or cement block	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Minimum of 4 feet high	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
* Proper size & gauge fencing	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>

PENS AND RUNS, 22-336-17			
Indoor Runs:			
Not less than 40 square feet	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Minimum 4 feet wide	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Minimum 6 feet high	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Solid partitions 4 feet high	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Outdoor Runs:			
Minimum 4 feet wide	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
Minimum 8 feet long	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
Minimum 6 feet high	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
*Solid partitions 4 feet high	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
*Permanent roof over runs	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
*Barrier on top of runs	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
Indoor Pens:			
Minimum 4 feet square	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
Minimum 4 feet high	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
Covered (under 6 feet high)	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
Solid partitions 4 feet high	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>

FLOOR AND BASE OF RUNS, 22-336-18			
Outdoor Runs / Indoor Pens:			
Smooth concrete floors	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
Troughs / runs/ pens properly pitched	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
Troughs inaccessible to dogs	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
*Covered 6 inch drains	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
*Doorways offset for resting beds	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
Indoor Runs:			
Runs pitched toward trough	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Trough inaccessible to dogs	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
*Covered 6 inch drains	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Facility/proper sewage disposal system	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
*Grandfather clause applies to this facility	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>

	YES	NO
HEAT AND VENTILATION, 22-336-19		
Thermostatically controlled	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
Clean and sanitary	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
Proper temperature maintained	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
Mechanical ventilation	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>

WATER SUPPLY, 22-336-20		
Sufficient amount of hot water	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
Sufficient amount of potable water	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>

LIGHTING, 22-336-21		
Natural or artificial lighting provided for a minimum of 8 hours	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>

SANITATION, 22-336-22		
Facility clean and sanitary	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
Proper type of disinfectant	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
Control of vermin / insects / odors	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>

FOOD / WATER CONTAINERS, 22-336-23		
Galvanized or stainless-steel containers	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
Washed and disinfected	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>

STORAGE OF DOG FOOD, 22-336-24		
Metal or heavy-duty plastic containers	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
Unopened bags stored above the floor	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>

ISOLATION AREA, 22-336-26		
One area per ten runs	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>
One dog per isolation area	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>

ANIMAL CARE, 22-336-28		
Water provided at all times	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
Proper type and quantity of food	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
Sick or injured dog examined by a licensed veterinarian	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
Water impervious resting beds	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
One adult dog per run or pen	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>

THIS FACILITY IS USED AS A DOG POUND
For the Town(s) of: Cheshire

Type of Inspection: COMPLAINT INSPECTION

Approved/Not Approved: NOT-APPROVED [35]

Officer Name: Tanya Wescovich

Owner/Agent Name: April Leiler

Officer:

Owner/Agent:

Case View Screen update

Case	2024-491	Date Created	12/03/2024	Audit
Status	OPENED	Date Received	12/03/2024	Entry Items
Respondent ID	2335983	Receiving Board	ANIMAL CONTROL	Documents
Respondent	<u>DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE</u>	Receiving Profession	DOG POUND FACILITY	Notes
Credential	DPF.000025	Receiving Department	Animal Control Division	Master Cases
Address	Public Mail DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE 496 HIGHLAND AVE CHESHIRE, CT 06410	Received By	Tanya Wescovich	Participants
Complainant ID	2539271	Alleged Issues		<u>Add Master Case</u>
Complainant	<u>STATE ANIMAL CONTROL</u>	Complaint - Dog Pound		<u>Timeline History</u>
		Case Nature		Related Cases
		Failed Inspection		

Comments: Cheshire dog pound conditions caused failure of inspection, repairs needed.

- [Action Items](#)
- [Resolution](#)
- [Participants](#)
- [Respondent History](#)

Action Items add add group add series

Type	Assigned To	Activity	Track Time	Due	Effective	Completed	Order Signed	Created	User
Reviewed by Supervisor - comments attached	Animal Control Division, BakerK				12/09/2024	12/09/2024		12/09/2024	BakerK

Target: DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE, DPF.000025
Comments: Case narrative approved to date. Case not closed.

Notes	Animal Control Division, WescovichT				12/05/2024			12/05/2024	WescovichT
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Target: DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE, DPF.000025
Comments: On 8/6/24 myself and SACO DePietro responded to the Cheshire animal control facility to conduct an inspection after a complaint pertaining to the health and wellbeing of the dogs was made by a veterinarian at Meriden Animal Hospital.

The inspection was conducted, and multiple violations were found resulting in the facility not being approved. Overall, the pound did not appear to be clean/sanitary. Upon entering the facility at the front door, approximately 30 or so feet from the kennel area, there was an odor of urine. The hallway that let down to the kennel area was lined with clutter that appeared to be a mix of bedding and food, both canned and bagged. The laundry room was piled high with soiled bedding, the kitchen area was also cluttered.

At the time of this inspection, all the runs in the kennel were full, most with multiple dogs in a run. All but one of the dogs are the facility are dogs being held for a single case.

In the kennel area it was noted that the floor of the kennel has a significant peeling of the paint which prevents the ability for proper cleaning/sanitizing. Multiple kennel doors have damaged chain-link which could cause injury and require repair.

The chain-link of the kennels require upgrading before the deadline of January 2029 in order to be in compliance with the newly updated regulations. The wire on the kennels are the correct gauge, but the width of the holes are too large. The upgrades would also need to include the perimeter/play yard fencing.

The troughs for drainage run along the backside of the kennels, and a metal cover, if installed properly, would block the troughs from the dogs accessing them. However, at the time of this inspection, eight trough covers were not installed properly, allowing access to the troughs and possible injury on the covers themselves.

At the time of this inspection, it was noted that the floors of the runs were soaking wet, the dogs where in the runs also appeared to be very wet. The dogs appeared to be in need of grooming, with one of them having obvious hair loss and red skin.

There was obvious signs of vermin in the storage room and the storage cabinet that is located in the kennel area. ACO Leiler admitted that there was a mouse issue and that she has been attempting to eradicate.

The unopened bags of feed, as stated previously, were all over the facility with a large amount piled up in the hallway area. In the kennel area I observed one open bag of food prescription food that was sitting on the wet floor. None of the open food observed were in the required storage containers.

This facility does not have any properly set up quarantine area. A facility is required to have one quarantine area per ten kennel runs. This facility has 16 kennels, therefore it is required to have one quarantine run. ACO Leiler reported that previously when holding a dog for quarantine, she would put at least one empty kennel between dogs. However, due to the large number of dogs currently being housed in the facility, it is not possible to leave any runs empty, therefore, there is no appropriate way to quarantine an animal at this facility currently.

During this inspection, two cats were observed. One cat was loose in the front area of the pound, and it was reported that the cat is a permanent resident. I also observed a cat that was being housed in the kennel area inside a stainless steal cage. The cage was appropriate for the size of the cat, however the cat appeared scared and stressed. I requested that the cat be relocated outside of the kennel area as the volume of barking from the dogs may be causing the cat undo stress.

The issues found during this inspection were discussed with ACO Leiler. ACO Leiler attempted to make a lot of excuses about the condition of the facility. I explained that she would need to make arrangements for the repairs to be done and that the cleanliness of the facility would need to be addressed immediately. I offered to return on a future date and assist with the cleanup and organization of the pound, but ACO Leiler refused my offer. We also discussed the upgrades that are necessary due to the recently changed legislation and informed her of the January 2029 deadline to make the upgrades.

On 8/12/24 myself and SACO DePietro met with Chief Dryfe and Lt. Miller of the Cheshire Police Department. We advised them of the status of the pound and advised them that the conditions needed to be improved immediately.

case pending

EXHIBIT C

Case View Screen [update](#)



Case	2024-302	Date Created	08/05/2024	Audit Entry Items Documents Notes Master Cases Participants Add Master Case Timeline History Related Cases
Status	CLOSED	Date Received	08/05/2024	
Respondent ID	1432617	Receiving Board	ANIMAL CONTROL	
Respondent	APRIL LEILER	Receiving Profession	ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER	
Credential	ACO.0334	Receiving Department	Animal Control Division	
Address	Public Mail APRIL LEILER 39 ANTHONY TER DURHAM, CT 06422-2800	Received By	Tanya Wescovich	
Complainant ID	1928229	Alleged Issues	Animal Cruelty	
Complainant	MERIDEN ANIMAL HOSPITAL	Case Nature	Investigation	

Comments: Vet hospital reporting concerns about the care and condition of a dog brought in for Euthanasia. The dog had been under the care of the Cheshire ACO for aprox. 2 years.

Resolution

Action Items

Participants

Respondent History

Investigation Info

Action Items [add](#) [add group](#) [add series](#)

Type	Assigned To	Activity	Track Time	Due	Effective	Completed	Order Signed	Created	User
Reviewed by Supervisor & Closed	Animal Control Division, BakerK				01/28/2025	01/28/2025		01/28/2025	BakerK
Target:	APRIL LEILER, ACO.0334								
Case Status:	Status Changed To: CLOSED								
Notes	Animal Control Division, BakerK				01/28/2025			01/28/2025	BakerK
Target:	APRIL LEILER, ACO.0334								
Comments:	The Department of Agriculture and the Town of Cheshire entered into an agreement on 12/23/24 regarding the care of the animals at the Town of Cheshire's Animal Control Facility. This case is closed. Details of the agreement can be found in case #2024-491								
Reviewed by Supervisor - comments attached	Animal Control Division, BakerK				12/09/2024	12/09/2024		12/09/2024	BakerK
Target:	APRIL LEILER, ACO.0334								
Comments:	Case reviewed and approved. Case not closed pending possible civil action. -KB								
Ready for Supervisor Review	Animal Control Division, BakerK				11/25/2024			11/25/2024	WescovichT
Target:	APRIL LEILER, ACO.0334								
Comments:	please review and close								
Notes	Animal Control Division, WescovichT				11/25/2024			11/25/2024	WescovichT
Target:	APRIL LEILER, ACO.0334								
Comments:	On 10-30-24 I received the warrant back from the prosecutor's office with some feedback on revisions needed and follow up questions.								
	On 11-14-24 I resubmitted the warrant for review with the corrections.								
	On 11-22-24 I received an email from Deputy States Attorney Hannafin containing an attached letter								

stating that they would not be issuing the warrant.

The Department of Agriculture may take action against licensing/credential status, but no further action is required by this officer.

end of narrative.

case closed.

 Notes	Animal Control	11/13/2024	11/13/2024	WescovichT
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Division, WescovichT

Target: APRIL LEILER, ACO.0334

Comments: On 11/13/24 SACO Santagata and I responded to the Cheshire pound for a follow up visit.

I was informed by Lt. Miller that a hearing on the Lin case was supposed to have been done on this day. He stated he would give me an update when he heard anything.

We did a walk thorough of the pound. It was approximately 945 am, the pound had not been cleaned yet, but ACO Leiler was just getting started. All the dogs appeared bright and alert.

ACO Leiler reported that recently 5 of the dogs had gone to the vet for exams prior to returning to the owner, and 2 had gone to the vet after the last grooming session, one had an ear infection and one had tooth issues. Beemus, the dog with the tooth infection, got a dental with extractions.

end of narrative.

 Notes	Animal Control	10/03/2024	10/03/2024	WescovichT
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Division, WescovichT

Target: APRIL LEILER, ACO.0334

Comments: On 9-11-24, I met with Lt. Miller at the Cheshire Police Department. He provided me with a file containing the case reports for the dogs and a which included photographs that he had obtained from ACO Leiler and photographs that they had taken for evidence pictures after the last grooming session. On this date, Lt. Miller took me into the pound for a walk through. The dogs at this time were dry and the kennels appeared to have already been cleaned for that day. The supplied photographs were uploaded to the SharePoint file for this report.

On 10-2-24, a meeting was conducted for an update on this case. In attendance was Director Duffy, Chief Baker, SACO DePietro and I. During this meeting, SACO DePietro and I articulated, that due to the investigation, there is enough probable cause to move forward with an arrest for animal cruelty and revocation of her license. Director Duffy will have a meeting with the Commissioner to inform him of the details of the case, after which a decision will be made on what next step will be taken. I was requested to find out if any dogs from other towns that are covered by ACO Leiler were housed at the Cheshire Pound.

On 10-3-24, I responded to the Chesire Animal Control facility for a unscheduled visit to check on the dogs.

Upon my arrival, I met ACO Leiler in the driveway. She brought me into the facility. I inquired if an assistant had been hired yet and she stated that they had received 12 applications, but no interviews had been done yet. I also inquired if any dogs from the other towns she works for, Haddam and Durham, house dogs at the Cheshire pound. ACO Leiler stated that they did not; the dogs from those towns were housed at Larkins Run which is a commercial kennel. I also asked for an update on the dog's case and if anything had moved forward with getting them signed over. ACO Leiler reported that the agreement has been signed for the owner to get three dogs back and the owner's son to get one dog and for all the others to be signed over. She stated that there is a hearing on 10-10-24. She is not sure what will happen at the hearing or how fast dogs can start getting adopted.

On this date, it appeared that the kennels had been cleaned but were wet and in the process of drying. All the dogs were in the small cages or crates, many of them doubled up in the small crates. All the dogs looked healthy and were dry. I inquired how long the dogs were left in the small cages routinely and was told by ACO Leiler that they are in the small cages for approximately 3 hours. I voiced concern that the size of the crates was too small to keep two dogs together for that long and suggested to clean and dry one or two kennels at a time and put those dogs back in the kennels before moving on. ACO Leiler seemed to believe that that procedure would take her even longer to do.

ACO Leiler inquired when I would inform her of the outcome of this investigation, I responded by saying I was unsure and that it was with my superiors to make that decision.

On 10/23/24 I submitted my case file and an arrest warrant to the prosecutor's office for review.

end of narrative. case pending.



Notes

Animal Control
Division, WescovichT

08/27/2024

08/27/2024

WescovichT

Target:
Comments:

APRIL LEILER, ACO.0334

On 8-24-24, I sent Dr. Anderson an email with some follow-up generalized questions about urine scald, dry eye and her interactions with Cheshire Animal Control.

On 8-26-24, SACO DePietro and I responded to the Cheshire Animal Control facility for a check in and to ask ACO Leiler some follow up questions to identify some dogs.

Upon our arrival, ACO Leiler was outside. She acknowledged our presence but then disappeared into the pound. We entered the pound and found ACO Leiler in the kennel area. I asked why she ran off and she stated that she wanted to call her supervisor as well as do something. She stated that Lt. Miller was going to come down. At the time of arrival, all the dogs were in crates, and it was apparent that the kennel runs were in the process of being cleaned at the time. The crates were small, approximately 1ftx2ft and there were two dogs in most of the crates.

I spoke with Lt. Miller privately and, again, asked him to provide me with any of the case reports that pertained to of the dogs, including photographs of them at any time while in custody, inventory lists and identification paperwork, or any narratives pertaining to anything that happened medically or otherwise while in custody. I also requested specifically that Lt. Miller provide me with the necropsy results for "Lily" the dog that was euthanized in June of 2023. Lt. Miller stated that he would do so. I asked Lt. Miller what was happening with protocol concerning ACO Leiler cleaning the pound, as the last conversation we had involved her having supervision during cleaning to make sure the pound was cleaned appropriately. He stated that he has been coming down a few times during the cleaning and that he was checking it after it was done. Lt. Miller stated he had been checking the pound at least once when it was done even on the weekends, except that he was out of state on the Saturday that just past. Lt. Miller did not reference any other individual who was responsible to check the pound on the days he was out of town.

When speaking with ACO Leiler I asked her to view two photographs of a tan and white Shi Tzu with red/raw skin and a large amount of missing hair. The photograph showed to her was a photograph that was supplied by Krzyzanowski from when she groomed them. ACO Leiler was not able to positively identify this dog, she stated that it was one of the puppies that were born in custody. She stated that she calls the puppies "spot" and "no spot".

I asked ACO Leiler to provide me with the name of the dog that was found to have a nail growing through its paw pad. ACO Leiler stated that she did not know the dog's name. I asked her to provide me with medical records showing that it had been treated by a vet, she was unable to produce them but stated that the dog was brought to Central Hospital for Veterinary Medicine.

ACO Leiler was asked to provide contact information for her friend who she reported had assisted her with grooming some of the dogs previous to when the professional groomers came in. She did provide me with a contact, Sharron Diganero 860-305-4208. I asked her what the name of the dog that was cut when Diganero was grooming and what vet he was taken to. ACO Leiler stated that the dog's name was "TJ" but that he was never taken to the vet for his injury, that she put bacitracin on it and the cut healed. ACO Leiler also stated that her friend did not groom the animals, but just assisted her when she herself shaved them. This statement is contradictory to what ACO Leiler had told us previously when she stated that she brought her friend in to groom the animals here and there. When asked, ACO Leiler stated that she did not take any photographs of the injury.

I again asked ACO Leiler for the case number associated with the dogs and at this time she was able to provide the case number 22-31243.

On 8-28-24, I inquired with Connecticut State Veterinarian, Dr Masur, about urine scald and dry eye. Her email response has been uploaded and saved in the SharePoint file for this report. Dr. Masur stated that urine scald can take days to weeks to occur. She stated that if left untreated, urine scald will have visible progression each day. She confirmed that urine scald can be treated unless it progresses to the point where the skin becomes septic. Dr. Masur informed me that dry eye is mild to moderately painful and if treated the pain typically resolves.

On 8-29-24, I received an email from Dr. Anderson with her responses to the questions that I had emailed her on 8-24-24. The email was uploaded and saved in the SharePoint file for this report. In this email, Dr. Anderson informed me that while urine scald can occur in just a few days, she felt that with

the appearance of "Tiny" she felt it had transpired over several weeks. Dr. Anderson indicated that if urine scald was treated and kept dry, it would resolve or at minimal, improve. She stated that the rate urine scald progresses, if left untreated, depends on the amount of urine saturation and other care conditions and said that unless the skin bed has become necrotic urine scald can be successfully treated. In response to the question if it was possible for a mobile dog to get urine scald by intermittently laying on a urine-soaked towel, she responded that if the skin was able to dry between laying in the urine, it would be much less damage.

In response to questions about dry eye, Dr. Anderson stated that the lid of the eye scratches against the surface of the cornea much like a windshield wiper running when it is not raining which in "Tiny's" case caused an ulcer. She stated that with treatment, the eye is much more comfortable, resolving the pain because the medication allows the animal to produce their own tears. She also responded that the longer the eye is left untreated the lower the chance of a full resolution and a higher chance of impairment of the vision.

When asked about her general interactions with ACO Leiler, Dr. Anderson stated that a necropsy had not been discussed because ACO Leiler had stated that she wanted to bring "Tiny" in to be euthanized. ACO Leiler specifically told Dr. Anderson that she did not want a necropsy done on more than on occasion.

Dr. Anderson was asked if she felt that in her opinion, could "Tiny" have been treated and recover from the conditions which he presented with. Dr. Anderson responded that yes, all conditions could have been treated. She stated that she explained all the treatments that could have been done to ACO Leiler, but that ACO Leiler was certain she could get permission to euthanize instead of treating. Dr. Anderson said ACO Leiler did take 1 week work of pain medication and oral antibiotics, but did not take any ophthalmic ointment to treat the eye. Dr. Anderson also confirmed that at no time between when "Tiny" was seen at Central Hospital for Veterinary Medicine (when the dry eye was diagnosed) and when he was brought in to the Meriden Animal Hospital for euthanasia, had ACO Leiler called for medication to treat his dry eye.

end of narrative.

case pending



Notes

Animal Control
Division, WescovichT

08/26/2024

08/26/2024

WescovichT

Target:
Comments:

APRIL LEILER, ACO.0334

On 8-5-24, I was assigned to investigate a complaint of potential animal cruelty. The complaint was sent in by employees of the Meriden Animal Hospital, specifically, Dr. Amy Anderson VMD, Carlos Estevez, and Alexandra Dumas. All three complainants provided written statements and photographs via email indicating their concerns.

The complaint indicated that a 12-year-old male Shi Tzu named "Tiny" had been brought to the Meriden Animal Hospital due to skin issues. Dr. Anderson noted in her statement that the dog "had urine scalding, urine-stained fur, multiple mats, stool stuck to the hair by his anus, alopecia on his distal limbs, red, raw skin, Grade 4/4 dental disease, an infected mouth with a rotten dangling canine, chronic dry eye, and a moderately deep central corneal ulcer." She stated that she had received a veterinary exam report from Central CT Vet hospital dated 5-4-24 and based on that exam, the dog's condition had worsened considerably since then. Dr. Anderson stated that ACO Leiler told her that she had the dog in her care for two years because of a cruelty case. Leiler mentioned to her that he was in poor condition due to age and that he and two other dogs urinate on their bedding and lie in it, causing the urine scalding. She also mentioned that they have about thirty dogs and are severely understaffed, making it difficult to clean and wash them regularly.

On 8-6-24, SACO DePietro and I met with ACO Leiler at the Cheshire Animal Control Facility. When we arrived, the door to the pound was unlocked and we walked in. We found ACO Leiler in the kennel area with the hose in her hand. ACO Leiler stated she was in the middle of cleaning the pound. We advised her that there was a complaint and stated that we would conduct an inspection of the pound but that she could continue what she was doing while we did the inspection. At this time ACO Leiler asked, "am I going to get fired?" We again advised her of the nature of the complaint and informed her that we would do an inspection then discuss the complaint with her.

Upon walking into the kennel area, SACO DePietro and I noted that the floors and walls of the kennel were very wet and the dogs themselves appeared to be soaking wet. It was noted that majority of the dogs appeared to currently be in need of grooming at the time of the inspection, with hair falling over their eyes and the fur on their paws stained from being wet. SACO DePietro observed a dog which had missing hair on its chest and pointed it out to me. It was also noted that although ACO Leiler stated

she was in the middle of cleaning and we had witnessed her with a hose in her hand, all of the dogs were still in the kennels. On this occasion most of the kennels housed two or three small dogs. There was also a husky who was housed singly, a large brown rabbit who had his own kennel, and a cat that was in the kennel area, but in a metal cage.

The results of the inspection concluded that the pound was not approved. There were multiple issues including evidence of a mice infestation, the chain link on multiple kennels was broken, food was stored inappropriately (including an open bag of prescription food sitting on the wet floor), and lacked a properly set up quarantine run. At the time of this inspection, eight of the trough covers were not installed properly which either gave the dogs access to the trough or could potentially cause injury. In multiple areas of the pound mice feces were noted and the ACO informed us that she has been attempting to trap/kill the mice because she knows there is a problem. Overall, the pound did not appear to be cleaned or sanitary in any area and was not in good repair as to prevent injuries or able to be cleaned/sanitized properly.

Once the inspection was concluded, ACO Leiler was nowhere in the building. I went outside to look for her and found her coming into the building. We informed ACO Leiler that a complaint was made about the condition and care of "Tiny". While discussing the complaint, ACO Leiler explained that "Tiny" had been groomed in May. She stated that although she and a friend had been doing the grooming since intake, they decided that the dogs should have professional haircuts since they would soon be leaving to be adopted. The groomer they hired, Melissa Kryzanowski who is also an ACO in Prospect, had advised her at the time of grooming that he should go to the vet due to his skin being red. ACO Leiler stated that at the vet he was given antibiotics for a skin infection, and he had recovered. SACO DePietro asked ACO Leiler if she had any photographs of the dogs from when they were seized or from any time since then, ACO Leiler stated that she did not.

ACO Leiler then continued to explain about "Tiny", stating that one day a few weeks previous to the date of his euthanasia, her assistant, Rob Erickson, told her that "Tiny" wasn't acting right. She stated that she called Meriden Vet Hospital and made an appointment but that they could not see him right away, so she put him in a crate in her office until the day of the appointment. When asked, she stated that "Tiny" was eating and drinking normally.

ACO Leiler recalled that at the 7-26-24 appointment for "Tiny", Dr. Anderson told her that he had an abscess in his jaw and an abscess in his eye and that he needed to be euthanized. ACO Leiler stated that she told Dr. Anderson that she needed to get permission from the lawyer to do so since "Tiny" was part of a seizure case. ACO Leiler stated that "Tiny" was sent home on pain meds and antibiotics to get her through until she could receive permission to euthanize. She then stated that she received permission from the town attorney to have him euthanized but that he advised her to request a letter from the vet dictating the necessity of euthanasia and stating that it was not her wrongdoing that caused the condition of the dog. ACO Leiler stated that she did not receive the requested letter from the veterinarian.

ACO Leiler explained to us that "Tiny" was ambulatory, but that he was less active once she removed him from the kennel, she said that once she had permission from the lawyer to have him euthanized, she brought him back to Meriden Animal Hospital to do so on 7-31-24.

SACO DePietro asked ACO Leiler to explain her normal procedure for cleaning the kennel. She stated that the dogs are removed from the kennel and put into a stack of crates that are in the aisle way of the kennel room, then she sprays down the kennel, scrubs with bleach, rinses, then put the dogs back in. I asked if she dried the kennels with towels or used a squeegee to remove excess water. She replied that she did. When SACO DePietro asked why it appeared that the dogs were soaking wet, she stated that it didn't matter what she does, the kennels are always wet and the dogs pee on their bedding. When asked if there were any other dogs with issues at this time ACO Leiler explained that there is a dog named "Circles" who has neurological issues and is on prescription food for urinary crystals.

We explained to ACO Leiler that the concern was that the dog "Tiny" was in such bad condition when she took it to Meriden Vet hospital and why did she not bring him to the vet sooner. ACO Leiler stated that "when you have dogs in a wet environment that you will get some skin issues" and that "she knows that she has done nothing wrong." She stated that she called for an appointment as soon as she was informed by ACO Ericson that something was wrong with him, but that she couldn't get an appointment right away. When asked if any of the other dogs were having any of the same issues, she stated that she didn't think so. SACO DePietro mentioned to her about the dog with the missing hair on her chest and advised her that the dog should be checked by a veterinarian, ACO Leiler stated that she would look at her and she could put her in a crate in the office.

SACO DiPietro requested any photographs of the dogs previous to the grooming as well as after,

specifically photographs of "Tiny". ACO Leiler stated that she did not have any. SACO DePietro then asked again if she had any photographs of any of the dogs from anytime since they had been in her care, and she stated that she did not. The case number for the dogs was requested and ACO Leiler stated she did not know it and would need to look it up.

We requested that ACO Leiler to call both Central Hospital for Veterinary Medicine and Meriden Vet Hospital and release the vet records to us. She did so while we were sitting with her.

When asked about the details of the case these dogs are involved in, ACO Leiler informed us that the dogs have been in the Cheshire pound since October 2022, when they were taken into custody due to cruelty charges that were pending on the owner's adult son who lived in the same house. She stated that it should "be done soon" which was why the dogs got haircuts from a professional groomer "so they would look more like their breed." When asked what constituted "soon" she stated that she did not know and it would probably be a while because even though they have an agreement in place, the owner keeps pushing things off and wanting to change the agreement.

After leaving the pound, we responded to the police station and asked to speak with the supervisor who was in charge of animal control. We met with Lt. Miller and explained the basis of the complaint. We requested from him the case number and report for the dogs which he stated he could email to me. We advised him that an investigation would be occurring, and we would advise him of the outcome. Lt. Miller stated that it would take him a while to get the documents together and he was given my email address to send them to.

On 8-6-24, we responded to the Meriden Vet Hospital and retrieved the deceased body of "Tiny", which had been left by ACO Leiler for group cremation. I requested from the veterinary office that they email me any phone recordings that had involving Cheshire Animal Control and that I would be following up with Dr. Anderson in the near future.

On 8-7-24, I submitted the deceased body for necropsy at UConn's Connecticut Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory.

On 8-7-24, SACO DePietro and I spoke with ACO Robert Erickson, the assistant ACO for Cheshire, about "Tiny". ACO Erickson stated that he had noted the poor condition of the dogs and had mentioned to ACO Leiler on multiple occasions that the dogs needed to be groomed. He stated that in May he noted that one of the dogs was very matted and had poop stuck to his rear end. ACO Erickson brought this to the attention of ACO Leiler and got permission to contact Kryzanowski to groom the one he had noted. ACO Erickson stated that Kryzanowski came and groomed the one dog, but when she saw the condition of the other dogs, she groomed two others that day as well. One of the dogs she groomed was "Tiny". While being groomed, the poor condition of "Tiny's" skin was noted and ACO Erickson stated that he sent ACO Leiler a text informing her of their findings. ACO Erickson stated that he was told to put "Tiny" in a crate in the office and that she would look at it the following day. ACO Erickson stated that Kryzanowski was not happy with that response and contacted ACO Leiler herself informing her that the dog required immediate veterinary care. ACO Leiler then instructed ACO Erickson to take the dog to Central Hospital for Veterinary Medicine, which is an emergency care facility that is used by the agency when Meriden Animal Hospital is not available.

ACO Erickson reported that on 5-4-24 he brought "Tiny" to the Central Hospital for Veterinary Medicine for treatment. Medical records from the Hospital indicate that he had a body condition score of 5/9 and not having any lameness issues. They diagnosed him with severe dental disease, keratoconjunctivitis sicca (dry eye), and described his skin in the following way: "hind paws mildly swollen, skin is erythematous and moist, fur on paws stained, skin grossly soiled." At the hospital, "Tiny" was given a medicated bath and an antibiotic injection. The discharge instructions were to follow up with the regular veterinarian to obtain medication to treat the dry eye, wear an Elizabethan Collar at all times to prevent licking and chewing at the affected area, and to contact the regular veterinarian or their hospital if the condition does not improve or gets worse.

ACO Erickson then informed us that roughly two weeks before "Tiny" was euthanized, he came into the pound and noted that "Tiny" was acting weird, he stated that his eyes were crusted shut with discharge and when he tried cleaning out his eyes, the fur was coming off. He stated that he informed ACO Leiler, who again told him to put "Tiny" in a crate in the office for her to observe on the following day. He said about a week later, "Tiny" was brought to Meriden Vet hospital by ACO Leiler. He stated that ACO Leiler told him "Tiny" had "an abscess in his eye, an abscess on his jaw, the skin issues, a pancreatic issue and that the vet said he should be euthanized." ACO Erickson noted that after a few days, he felt that "Tiny" was doing better and stated that he informed ACO Leiler of that, and also informed her that he felt "Tiny" could not eat dry food and that he was eating wet food very well. ACO Erickson supplied me, via email with a video of "Tiny" eating wet food that he had taken the weekend

before "Tiny" was euthanized. ACO Ericson informed us that even though he had told ACO Leiler that "Tiny" needed wet food, he never saw evidence that she had given him any, but that she kept giving him dry food, which he noted always appeared untouched.

ACO Ericson reported that in the year that he has worked for Cheshire Animal Control, the dogs have only been professionally groomed the one time in May, he stated that occasionally ACO Leiler's friend would come groom one or two dogs but nothing routine.

When asked what he felt was that biggest issues involving the dogs care he stated that the kennels are always wet, that there are chemicals on the floor not properly rinsed, and that the bedding is always wet because of it. ACO Ericson stated that when cleaning the kennels, ACO Leiler never removes them from the kennel and sprays the water and bleach while the dogs are in them.

When asked about his impressions of ACO Leiler during the year that he worked with her, ACO Ericson stated that there was a clear lack of care, she did not pay attention to the dogs or their needs and there was a lack of compassion for the animals.

ACO Ericson informed us that he had accepted a position in another town and his last day was scheduled for 8-16-24. He stated that he was concerned about the animals once there was no one else to see what was going on. He stated that the volunteers are afraid of ACO Leiler and therefore they would never question anything.

On 7/9/24, I met with Kryzanowski. Kryzanowski stated that she routinely works with the Cheshire Animal Control because Prospect does not have their own pound. She used to bring dogs there for holding, but she stated that she had not been happy with the level of care and had stopped unless she had no other option and then it would only be very short term.

Kryzanowski stated that on 9-17-23, she was at the pound and noted that one of the dogs was bleeding. When assisting to inspect the dog, it was noted that her nail had grown through the paw pad and was bleeding. She stated she instructed ACO Leiler to take the dog to the vet immediately. The dog was taken to Central Hospital for Veterinary Medicine where she was diagnosed with an infected ingrown dewclaw. The veterinarian clipped and cleaned the area and prescribed antibiotics.

Kryzanowski stated that previous to her grooming in May 2024, she has witnessed ACO Leiler hosing the kennels down with the dogs in them, she saw her pour bleach in the cage and then hose it down again. Kryzanowski stated that she had told ACO Leiler not to do that and advised her on all the potential skin issues it would cause.

Kryzanowski stated that she was very distraught about the conditions of the animals. She stated that she reached out to the Cheshire town attorney informing him of the conditions but felt like she was being ignored. Kryzanowski stated that she felt the conditions of the dogs were so bad when she was there in May that it was at the level of cruelty and as an animal control officer, she had a duty to report it and she wanted to call the State Animal Control. She stated that she discussed the situation with her supervisor in Prospect but that he ordered her not to get involved.

I asked Kryzanowski if she had ever sent or received any photographs of the dogs to ACO Leiler and she stated that she had. She stated that there were several photographs that she had through text messages both sent and received from ACO Leiler. Kryzanowski stated that she had multiple photographs of several dogs before and after grooming as well as the dog with the overgrown nail. Kryzanowski provided multiple photographs via email.

Kryzanowski stated that after grooming the three dogs, she was hired by the town to groom the rest. After the first day of grooming, she realized that it was a huge job due to the poor condition of the dogs and was able to get a second person, Tisa-Lynn Wilson, who is also a professional groomer, to assist with the grooming. Kryzanowski stated that it took approximately one week to do all the dogs with both groomers working. Kryzanowski stated that the dogs were caked with matted fur, urine, and feces. She stated that she charged the town approximately half the cost of a regular price grooming. She stated that she used a cucumber melon shampoo on most but used oatmeal shampoo on the dogs with bad skin. Kryzanowski stated that she needed to use a #10 blade in order to get under the mats, but in some cases, she did need to use a #30 blade on their paws and faces because the matting was so tight. A #10 blade is a size blade that cuts the hair very short and is used routinely when maximum hair removal is desired. A #30 blade is not used for routine grooming but is used routinely when prepping an area for surgery, as it will shave very close to the skin and leave almost no hair at all. All dogs were shaved, bathed, and had their nails clipped. During this grooming she identified another dog whose skin was so raw she felt that the dog needed to go the vet immediately and she informed ACO Leiler of her opinion. Kryzanowski witnessed ACO Leiler making an appointment for that dog but said another

dog "Circles" was having issues and that the vet appointment was used for him instead of the dog with the raw skin. Kryzanowski stated that she is unsure if the dog with the raw skin ever went to the vet. Kryzanowski provided the contact information for Wilson.

Kryzanowski stated that she had offered on several occasions to come and assist in grooming the dogs previous to May 2024, but that that ACO Leiler never allowed her to do so. Kryzanowski stated that ACO Leiler had told her that "they are fine, we got it." Kryzanowski stated that she didn't know how much grooming was done but on at least one occasion, ACO Leiler texted her with a message stating that a dog had been cut while her friend was grooming it. Kryzanowski advised ACO Leiler to bring the dog to the vet, but she isn't sure if that was ever done.

I asked Kryzanowski if she could give me her opinion of "Tiny" as a professional groomer. Kryzanowski stated "neglected, horrible". She stated that there was just no reason for any dog to get to that condition but more so since she had offered to assist on grooming so many times. She also stated that his condition was worse than anything she has ever seen as a professional capacity as a groomer. She also stated that she would consider it a "medical groom" as opposed to a maintenance groom.

On 8-12-24, I responded to the Chesire pound and met with ACO Ericson. I asked him if any of the dogs had gone to the vet in the past week and he reported that they had not. I advised him that the one dog identified with missing hair on her chest needed to go. He said that he had an appointment on Wednesday for one of the other dogs to have their ears checked, I suggested that he bring the second dog with to get it checked as well. He stated that he would do so. I also asked ACO Ericson if a squeegee was used when cleaning the pound and he said yes, but that not before he began working there a year ago, he stated that he went out and bought squeegee himself, as he felt it would reduce the laundry load. ACO Ericson also informed me that he had noted that the same blankets that he had put into the kennel on 8-8-24, his last cleaning shift, were still in the kennels today, 8-12-24, several days later.

On 8-16-24, SACO DePietro and I met with Chesire Police Chief Dryfe and Lt Miller. We advised him of the evidence of cruelty and informed him that we were not confident that ACO Leiler was able to care for the animals properly without supervision during cleaning. I explain to them that the dogs should be removed from the kennel, the kennel rinsed, scrubbed with bleach, then thoroughly rinsed again, squeegee off the extra water and then dried with a towel. We discussed options for care of the dogs and Chief Dryfe stated that he would make some phone calls and see if he could get some other credentialed animal control officers to volunteer for paid shifts at the pound. It was also discussed with at the time, the overall uncleanliness of the pound and the details that had caused the pound to fail on the most recent inspection. Chief Dryfe stated that he would figure out a plan moving forward considering the situation.

On 8-19-24, I responded to the Cheshire pound to assist and was met by Lt. Miller who had been cleaning the pound with ACO Leiler. On this occasion, all the dogs appeared to be dry, the kennel floors also had appeared to be dry. Lt Miller stated the pound had been clean that morning as I had suggested. I also noted that the entire pound had been cleaned out and cleared of excess bedding/food/supplies that had previously lined the hallways at the time of the inspection. Both storage closets had been emptied and cleaned. Lt Miller stated that they would be purchasing shelving units to store the food on. I commented that the improvements were considerable, to which ACO Leiler stated that she had spent 14 hours doing it.

On 8-19-24, I spoke with ACO Ericson, and he informed me that both dogs had been seen by the vet on 8-14-21. "Tae-Tae" was given medication for double ear infections and "Kittys puppy" was given antibiotics for a skin infection. He stated that a recheck of both dogs was scheduled for 8-27-24. I mentioned to him that the pound had been cleaned out extensively, and he replied that he knew, as he was the one that cleaned it on the Thursday previous to my visit. He supplied me with photos to show that the pound was in that condition before his last day of employment.

On 8-19-24, I met with Tisa-Lynn Wilson, who had assisted in the grooming performed in May 2024. She stated that upon arrival she noted a smell and unsanitary conditions that concerned her. Wilson stated that the dogs she groomed were severely matted with long, curling nails and red/raw irritated skin. Wilson stated that as each dog was groomed, ACO Leiler was informed of the condition and advised to seek veterinary care. She reports that she noted dogs with ears that were extremely red and sensitive to touch.

Wilson stated that on one occasion, when retrieving a dog from the kennel to groom, she witnessed ACO Leiler spraying the kennel down with the hose to clean it, but the dogs were still in the kennel and noted that ACO Leiler showed little care that the dogs were being sprayed with the water. Wilson stated that while there, she was informed to be careful in the bathroom because there were two

cardboard boxes that contained wildlife, but Wilson noted that there were no air holes in the boxes. When ACO Ericson arrived, Wilson asked him to check the boxes, and they found a baby rabbit deceased in a box. Wilson stated that while getting a dog named "Circles" out of the kennel to be groomed, she observed blood in his cage and while grooming she noted that he also had skin issues and needed veterinary care. Wilson advised ACO Leiler of her observations.

When asked her professional opinion of the dogs, she stated that the building was dirty, dogs were in poor conditions, and the smell was overwhelming.

End of narrative.

Case pending necropsy report, follow up with the attending veterinarian and follow up interview of subject.

EXHIBIT D

Case View Screen [update](#)



Case	2023-74	Date Created	02/28/2023	Audit Entry Items Documents Notes Master Cases Participants Add Master Case Timeline History Related Cases
Status	CLOSED	Date Received	02/22/2023	
Respondent ID	2335983	How Received	SACO	
Respondent	DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE	Receiving Board	ANIMAL CONTROL	
Credential	DPF.000025	Receiving Profession	DOG POUND FACILITY	
Address	Public Mail DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE 496 HIGHLAND AVE CHESHIRE, CT 06410	Receiving Department	Animal Control Division	
Complainant ID	2330552	Received By	Kelli Baker	
Complainant	ANONYMOUS	Alleged Issues	Complaint - Dog Pound	
		Case Nature	Investigation	

Comments:

- [Resolution](#)
- [Action Items](#)
- [Participants](#)
- [Respondent History](#)
- [Investigation Info](#)

Action Items [add](#) [add group](#) [add series](#)

Type	Assigned To	Activity	Track Time	Due	Effective	Completed	Order Signed	Created ▼	User
Reviewed by Supervisor & Closed	Animal Control Division, DunnJ				03/08/2023	03/08/2023		03/08/2023	DunnJ
Target:	DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE, DPF.000025								
Case Status:	Status Changed To: CLOSED								
Ready for Supervisor Review	Animal Control Division, DunnJ				02/28/2023			02/28/2023	BakerK
Target:	DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE, DPF.000025								
Notes	Animal Control Division, BakerK				02/28/2023	02/28/2023		02/28/2023	BakerK
Target:	DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE, DPF.000025								
Comments:	<p>On 2/22/23, I received an anonymous complaint for Chief Animal Control Officer Jeremiah Dunn regarding a dog being injured at Cheshire Animal Control. I also received a brief 2 second video of a small white dog from State Animal Control Officer Charles Dellarocco. This video was forwarded to him anonymously. The video shows a small white dog sitting in a cage. It appears that the dog is sitting awkwardly.</p> <p>On 2/23/23, at approximately 11:00 am, I went to Cheshire Animal Control and met with Cheshire Municipal Animal Control Officer (MACO) April Leiler and Prospect MACO Melissa Kryzanoski. The Town of Prospect uses Cheshire's animal control facilities for boarding dogs. MACO Leiler stated that on the morning of 2/8/23, she head Lily, a small white maltese type dog crying in the kennel. MACO Leiler witnessed another dog in the same kennel standing over Lily. She went into the kennel and saw that Lily was walking "funny," favoring her left hind leg. MACO Leiler, who has been an MACO for 27 years, assessed the situation. Neither dog had obvious wounds on them. Because Lily did not appear to be in pain, she was placed in a crate in the office so that she could be observed further. MACO Leiler suspected that the dog's toe nails might be impeding her movement and made arrangements for MACO Kryzanoski to trim them and give Lily a haircut.</p> <p>On 2/9/23, MACO Kryzanoski trimmed Lily's nails and gave her a haircut. It did not appear that the toe nails were what was causing the Lily to have problems with her back leg.</p> <p>On 2/11/23, Lily was brought to Central Veterinary Hospital to be examined. A diagnosis was made of</p>								

progressive hind end paresis. And prescribed a steroid and pain meds to be administered if needed. MACO Leiler stated that the attending veterinarian told her that Lily does not appear to be in pain and the lameness can be caused by spinal cyst, spinal injury or other age related issues. It was recommended that a follow-up appointment be scheduled. MACO Leiler has scheduled that appointment for 3/1/23 at Meriden Animal Hospital.

While at Cheshire Animal Control on 2/23/23, I spent some time with Lily. She did not appear to be in pain and engaged in playful behavior. When running, I noticed that her back hind legs appeared to be bowing in. All dogs were clean and the enclosures were in the process of being cleaned when I arrived.

It is noted that Cheshire Animal Control is housing 31 small dogs from one case. Number of dogs located in each enclosure are as follows:

Enclosure A: Mother and 3 puppies

Enclosure B: Mother and 3 puppies

Enclosure C: Mother and 2 puppies

Enclosure D: Mother and 2 puppies

Enclosure E: One dog

Enclosure F: One dog

Enclosure G: Mother and puppy.

Enclosure H: Mother and puppy.

Enclosure I: Two dogs.

Enclosure J: Two dogs.

Enclosure K: Two dogs.

Enclosure L: Two dogs.

Enclosure M: Two dogs.

Office: One dog

Cheshire Animal Control has a total of 16 enclosures. The dogs were placed in runs together to prevent additional stress and separation anxiety. They are all from the same investigation and household and are either bonded together or mothers and offspring. The females and males are allowed to play together in segregated supervised playgroups. Cheshire Animal Control has the ability to separate the dogs into individual enclosures and crates but has the above dogs housed together for health and welfare reasons.

While at the facility, an inspection was performed. The facility did not pass inspections because of peeling paint on the kennel flooring. This was also noted on the last inspection and repairs had to be rescheduled due to the number of dogs in the kennel. It is also noted that dog pound regulations do not allow multiple dogs in enclosures except mothers and offspring. A written warning was issued for both and a reinspection will occur on or around 5/23/23. The inspection report and written warning are attached to this case report. Case closed.

eLicense Information



Inspector Name
Kelli Baker

Inspector Email
kelli.baker@ct.gov

Inspection Date & Time
02/23/2023 07:41

Credential

Formatted Credential
DPF.000025

Name
DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE

Address
496 HIGHLAND AVE

City
CHESHIRE

State
CT

Zip Code
06410

Inspection Type
COMPLAINT INSPECTION

County
New Haven

Credential Status
ACTIVE

Expiration Date

Classification List

Credential Comments

Case Number

Case Status

Case Received Type

Credential Type
DOG POUND FACILITY

Business Name
DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE

Email Address
aleiler@cheshirect.org

Phone
(203) 271-5590

Start DPF Inspection



Start DPF Inspection

Is the facility a Commercial Kennel (CKF)?

Yes

No

Is the facility a Grooming Facility (GRF)?

Yes

No

Is the facility a Training Facility (TRF)?

Yes

No

Is the facility a Dog Pound Facility (DPF)?

Yes

No

List Dog Pound Towns

Cheshire, Prospect

Does the facility provide animal daycare?

Yes

No

Is the facility a Pet Shop Facility (PSF)?

Yes

No

Physical Requirements 22-336-16

Physical Requirements 22-336-16

Was this facility built before June 28, 1993 and there for Grandfathered?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13983

Maintained in good repair ?

Yes

No

Description

Paint on kennel flooring is peeling. There are approximately 30 dogs at this facility because of an ongoing cruelty investigation. Repairs to the flooring cannot be scheduled until the case is resolved or dogs are moved to another facility.

Violation ID

13950

Interior/Exterior Walls:

Concrete or cement block?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13950

Minimum 4 feet high?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13950

Proper size and gauge fencing?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13951

Pens & Runs (Indoor Runs) 22-336-17

Pens & Runs (Indoor Runs) 22-336-17

Indoor Runs:

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13986

Not less than 40 square feet?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13986

Minimum 4 feet wide?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13986

Minimum 6 feet high?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13986

Solid partitions 4 feet high?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13986

Pens & Runs (Outdoor Runs) 22-336-17

Pens & Runs (Outdoor Runs) 22-336-17

Outdoor Runs:

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13987

Minimum 4 feet wide?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13987

Minimum 8 feet long?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13987

Minimum 6 feet high?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13987

Gate at the end of each run?

Yes

No

N/A

Violation ID

13991

Description

Solid partitions 4 feet high?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13987

Permanent roof over runs?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13988

Barrier on top of runs?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13988

Pens & Runs (Indoor Pens) 22-336-17

Pens & Runs (Indoor Pens) 22-336-17

Indoor Pens:

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13989

Minimum 4 feet square?

Yes

No

N/A

Violation ID

13989

Description

Minimum 4 feet high?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13989

Covered (under 6 feet high)?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13989

Solid partitions 4 feet high?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13989

Doorways offset for resting beds?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13985

Floor & Base of Runs (Outdoor Runs / Indoor Pens) 22-336-18

Floor & Base of Runs (Outdoor Runs / Indoor Pens)
22-336-18

Outdoor Runs/ Indoor Pens?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13955

Smooth concrete floors?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13955

Troughs / runs / pens properly pitched?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13959

Troughs inaccessible to dogs?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13959

Covered 6 inch drains?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID
13959

Floor & Base of Runs (Indoor Runs) 22-336-18

Floor & Base of Runs (Indoor Runs) 22-336-18

Indoor Runs?

- Yes
 No

Description

Violation ID
13958

Runs pitched toward trough:

- Yes
 No
 N/A

Description

Violation ID
13958

Trough inaccessible to dogs:

- Yes
 No
 N/A

Description

Violation ID
13959

Covered 6 inch drains:

- Yes
 No
 N/A

Description

Violation ID
13959

Facilities/proper sewage disposal system:

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13959

Heat & Ventilation 22-336-19

Heat & Ventilation 22-336-19

Thermostatically controlled?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13960

Clean and sanitary?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13960

Proper temperature maintained (Min temp 55 degrees/ Max temp 90 degrees)?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13963

Mechanical ventilation?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13960

Water Supply 22-336-20

Water Supply 22-336-20

Sufficient amount of hot water?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13964

Sufficient amount of potable water?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13964

Lighting 22-336-21

Lighting 22-336-21

Natural or artificial lighting provided for a minimum of 8 hours?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13965

Sanitation 22-336-22

Sanitation 22-336-22

Facility clean and sanitary?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13971

Proper type of disinfectant?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13970

Feces and other excreta removed daily?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13968

Control of vermin/ insects / odors?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13968

Food / Water Containers 22-336-23

Food / Water Containers 22-336-23

Galvanized or stainless steel containers?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13973

Washed and disinfected daily?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13973

Storage of Dog Food 22-336-24

Storage of Dog Food 22-336-24

Dog food in original packaging bags stored at least 12 inches above the floor?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13974

Open food in metal or heavy duty plastic containers at least 12 inches above the floor?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13974

Isolation Area 22-336-26

Isolation Area 22-336-26

One area per ten runs?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13976

One dog per isolation area?

Yes

No

N/A

Description

Violation ID

13976

Animal Care 22-336-28

Animal Care 22-336-28

Water provided at all times?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13978

Dogs under six months of age must be feed at least two times a day?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13979

Proper type and quantity of food?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13979

Sick or injured dog examined by a licensed veterinarian?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13980

Water impervious resting beds?

Yes

No

Description

Violation ID

13981

One adult dog per run or pen?

Yes

No

Description

There are approximately 30 dogs at this facility because of an ongoing cruelty investigation. There are a total of 16 runs. Dogs from this investigation are kept in runs together to prevent separation anxiety. There are portable dog crates available to separate dogs if necessary.

Violation ID

13977

Comments & Photos

Comments & Photos

Comments

Flooring repairs were scheduled for this winter but had to be put on hold because of an ongoing animal cruelty investigation.

Photos

Violations

Violations

ID	Statute	Description	Count
13950	22-336-16(b)	22-336-16 PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:	Interior & exterior
13977	22-336-27	22-336-27 QUARANTINED DOGS:	One dog per run

Selected Violation

Confirmation

Estimated Next Inspection Date

05/23/2023

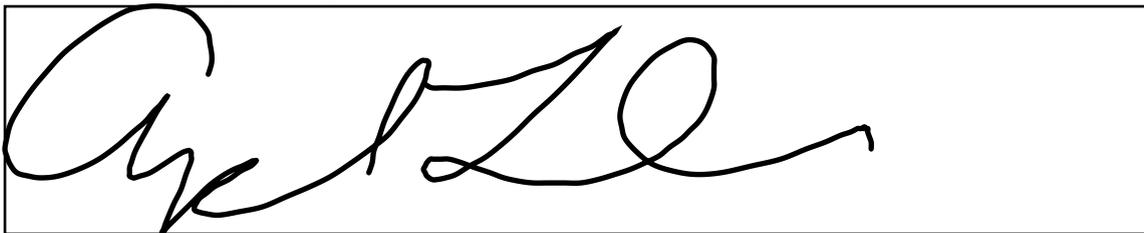
Signatures

Signatures

DPF Owner / Agent Name

April Leiler

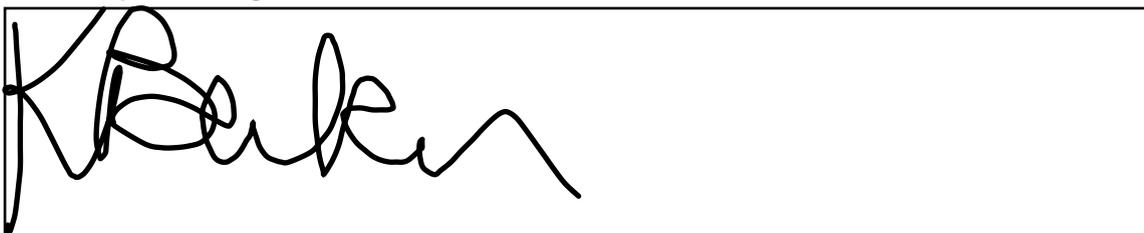
DPF Owner / Agent Signature



DPF Inspector Name

Kelli Baker

DPF Inspector Signature



Date
02/23/2023 12:59

Complete or Close Inspection

Resolutions

Resolutions

ID	Description
2259	Not Approved

Found Issues

Found Issues

ID	Description
2588	Violation(s) found - Action required

Rating	Rating ID (hidden)
NOT-APPROVED [35]	35



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
 DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
 ANIMAL CONTROL UNIT



TRADE NAME: DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE DATE/TIME: 02/23/2023 07:41
 LICENSEE: DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE STATE LICENSE # DPF.000025
 LOCATION: 496 HIGHLAND AVE TOWN: CHESHIRE

DOG POUND INSPECTION

WARNING NOTICE

You are hereby warned that this facility was found to be in violation of the laws and regulations listed below:
 22-336-16 PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS: Interior & exterior walls, concrete or cement block
 22-336-27 QUARANTINED DOGS: One dog per run

Additional Comments:

Flooring repairs were scheduled for this winter but had to be put on hold because of an ongoing animal cruelty investigation.

A re-inspection of this facility will be conducted on or about **05/23/2023**

Continued violations or failure to make corrections could subject you to fines and/or suspension or revocation of license. Dog pounds could be subject to closure. If you have any questions regarding this matter, you can contact the State Animal Control Unit at 860-713-2506.

Officer: Kelli Baker Owner /Agent: April Leiler



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ANIMAL CONTROL UNIT
DOG POUND INSPECTION



TRADE NAME: DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE

DATE/TIME: 02/23/2023 07:41

LICENSEE: DOG POUND FOR CHESHIRE

STATE LICENSE #: DPE.000025

LOCATION: 496 HIGHLAND AVE

TOWN: CHESHIRE

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS, 22-336-16
 Maintained in good repair _____ X _____
 Interior / Exterior Walls:
 Concrete or cement block _____ X _____
 Minimum of 4 feet high _____ X _____
 * Proper size & gauge fencing _____ X _____

PENS AND RUNS, 22-336-17
 Indoor Runs:
 Not less than 40 square feet _____ X _____
 Minimum 4 feet wide _____ X _____
 Minimum 6 feet high _____ X _____
 Solid partitions 4 feet high _____ X _____

Outdoor Runs:
 Minimum 4 feet wide _____ _____ X
 Minimum 8 feet long _____ _____ X
 Minimum 6 feet high _____ _____ X
 *Solid partitions 4 feet high _____ _____ X
 *Permanent roof over runs _____ _____ X
 *Barrier on top of runs _____ _____ X

Indoor Pens:
 Minimum 4 feet square _____ X _____
 Minimum 4 feet high _____ X _____
 Covered (under 6 feet high) _____ X _____
 Solid partitions 4 feet high _____ X _____

FLOOR AND BASE OF RUNS, 22-336-18
 Outdoor Runs / Indoor Pens:
 Smooth concrete floors _____ _____ X
 Troughs / runs/ pens properly pitched _____ _____ X
 Troughs inaccessible to dogs _____ _____ X
 *Covered 6 inch drains _____ _____ X
 *Doorways offset for resting beds _____ _____ X

Indoor Runs:
 Runs pitched toward trough _____ X _____
 Trough inaccessible to dogs _____ X _____
 *Covered 6 inch drains _____ X _____
 Facility/proper sewage disposal system _____ X _____

*Grandfather clause applies to this facility _____ X _____

HEAT AND VENTILATION, 22-336-19
 Thermostatically controlled _____ X _____
 Clean and sanitary _____ X _____
 Proper temperature maintained _____ X _____
 Mechanical ventilation _____ X _____

WATER SUPPLY, 22-336-20
 Sufficient amount of hot water _____ X _____
 Sufficient amount of potable water _____ X _____

LIGHTING, 22-336-21
 Natural or artificial lighting provided for a minimum of 8 hours _____ X _____

SANITATION, 22-336-22
 Facility clean and sanitary _____ X _____
 Proper type of disinfectant _____ X _____
 Control of vermin / insects / odors _____ X _____

FOOD / WATER CONTAINERS, 22-336-23
 Galvanized or stainless-steel containers _____ X _____
 Washed and disinfected _____ X _____

STORAGE OF DOG FOOD, 22-336-24
 Metal or heavy-duty plastic containers _____ X _____
 Unopened bags stored above the floor _____ X _____

ISOLATION AREA, 22-336-26
 One area per ten runs _____ X _____
 One dog per isolation area _____ X _____

ANIMAL CARE, 22-336-28
 Water provided at all times _____ X _____
 Proper type and quantity of food _____ X _____
 Sick or injured dog examined by a licensed veterinarian _____ X _____
 Water impervious resting beds _____ X _____
 One adult dog per run or pen _____ _____ X

THIS FACILITY IS USED AS A DOG POUND
 For the Town(s) of: Cheshire, Prospect

Type of Inspection: COMPLAINT INSPECTION

Approved/Not Approved: NOT-APPROVED [35]

Officer Name: Kelli Baker

Owner/Agent Name: April Leiler

Officer: *K Baker*

Owner/Agent: *April Leiler*

EXHIBIT E



EXHIBIT F



EXHIBIT G



**MERIDEN ANIMAL
HOSPITAL**

607 East Main St.
Meriden, CT 06450
203-235-1131

This report concerns "Tiny," a 12-year-old male Shih Tzu under Cheshire Animal Control's care following a seizure of multiple animals and a pending cruelty case. He has been in their care for nearly two years and was seen at Meriden Animal Hospital on 7/26/24. The officer, April Leiler, mentioned he was in poor condition due to age and that he and two other dogs urinate on their bedding and lie in it, causing urine scalding. She noted they have about thirty dogs and are severely understaffed, making it difficult to clean and wash them regularly.

"Tiny" had urine scalding, urine-stained fur, multiple mats, stool stuck to the hair by his anus, alopecia on his distal limbs, red, raw skin, Grade 4/4 dental disease, an infected mouth with a rotten dangling canine, chronic dry eye, and a moderately deep central corneal ulcer. He also had an arched spine and an irregular gait, likely due to arthritis. We advised the ACO that he needed extensive care to improve his condition. The officer took an oral antibiotic and anti-inflammatory for one week while awaiting authorization for euthanasia from town authorities. A few days later, she scheduled euthanasia for "Tiny." The ACO requested a letter clearing her of any wrongdoing in his care, but we declined as we did not know the case's history or progression.

"Tiny" was euthanized on 7/31/24, in much the same condition as his previous visit, with wet fur and a foul odor from his mouth. The ACO expressed concern about potential legal repercussions from the owner stating, "she's going to sue me for having the dog euthanized" as well as relaying that her assistant also resigned. We humanely euthanized "Tiny."

We received a copy of an ER visit to Central Hospital on 5/4/24, noting his dental disease, dry eye (no ulcer mentioned), and skin irritation from urine scalding. This visit was following a grooming appointment where the groomer raised concerns. He received a two-week antibiotic injection and was advised to use medicated shampoo for his skin condition.

Based on the ER report, "Tiny's" condition worsened significantly in less than two months. His skin, oral health, and dry eye (now with an ulcer), were not fully addressed during that period. We are concerned about possible overcrowding and understaffing at the facility and the health of the other animals, especially the two kept with "Tiny." The condition of these pets, taken from a cruelty situation to a supposedly safer place, remains unknown.

Respectfully,

Amy Anderson, VMD

EXHIBIT H

TO: AACO Robert Ericson

FM: ACO Leiler

RE: Concerns

DT: 10/4/23

I am meeting with you to address some concerns I have over some things that have occurred over the last several weeks and reiterate the expectations of the job you have been hired to do.

The volunteers asked you not to throw their things away without speaking to them first after you cleaned and organized the people kitchen. Three weeks later you threw out all their things from the grooming room. While the clutter did need to be addressed you should have put their things aside and let them decide what needed to be kept. [You have demonstrated a general disrespect for the volunteers since you started and have upset them greatly.] It is common courtesy to announce you are leaving for a call or to greet them when they arrive.

On Friday I instructed you to put beds in the dog runs when you arrived. It has come to my attention that when Diane pointed out to you that the dogs still needed beds at 5:30 pm you instructed HER to put beds in the runs. We have discussed several times that we are responsible for the care and cleaning of the dogs, not the volunteers.

Before you leave at night I am expecting that you will do a quick check and pick up of the runs before you go. Also, please only turn out half the lights when you leave. While you are here in the evenings, please keep the washer and dryer going.

Please do not go through or organize the paperwork on the desk.

Please record calls and voice mails in the notebook on the desk, not separately in your own notebook.

When I noticed the gutter covers were on backwards I corrected them and was perplexed to find them on backwards again. I then advised you that the gutter cover openings go in front thinking you would correct them. Please correct them the next time you clean. The pins that have fallen out are on the half wall above the center drains.

After I told you we don't pick up dead animals on private property unless the person is elderly or handicapped you picked up a dead raccoon in someone's yard.

I also need to reiterate that when you go looking for lost dogs either in our town or elsewhere on your own time that you are not representing Cheshire Animal Control when doing so.

I will provide you with a written list of things needing to be done if you like.

never told her to go she said I said you want to

Appologized

Why?

~~scribbled out text~~

EXHIBIT I

Cheshire Animal Control Progress Report

12/30/2024

Submitted by LT Donald Miller, Town of Cheshire Police Department

In compliance with the 12/24/24 Consent Order between the Department of Agriculture and the Town of Cheshire, the following is the Town's December 2024 progress report.

1. Management and oversight.

The management team consists of Chief Dryfe and LT Miller. LT Miller is designated as the facility supervisor for the MACO facility. LT Miller has created the following forms: Daily Operations Checklist, MACO Impound/Intake Checklist, and the MACO Weekly Wellness Checklist. These forms, along with a brief instructional sheet, will be attached to the Town's monthly progress reports and will be implemented immediately barring any changes requested by the State ACO.

2. Training.

At this point, MACO Leiler is the only staff member who has direct contact with animals in the MACO facility. LT Miller enrolled himself and MACO Leiler into the NACA ACO1 course via Justice Clearing House Academy on December 23, 2024. This course was preapproved by State ACO Baker on December 20, 2024 as satisfying the listed criteria in the Consent Order. Both Miller and Leiler should have the course completed by the end of January 2025. An assistant ACO is currently finishing the background investigation portion of the hiring process and will be enrolled in the proper training as she is onboarded.

3. Animal Care

LT Miller created the MACO Impound/Intake Checklist (attached) and has advised MACO Leiler to begin using it immediately. Currently there are no impounded animals. The intake form should address points (a,b,c, and d) of this section. We will also be utilizing the CPD NEXGEN system as a digital form for entering and tracking the care of animals impounded.

4. Reporting

This report and attached items.

Additionally, we have been reviewing and considering policy language for the MACO facility. LT Miller is utilizing past draft policies, as well as other Departments' policy language, in crafting a Cheshire Animal Control Policy. We expect to have draft policies for review by January 31, 2025.

Since our initial meeting in August 2024 with SACO Wescovich, some of the items listed in the Consent Order have been remedied. Clutter has been addressed in the kennel area, particularly with the two side storage rooms in the kennel. These rooms were emptied and cleaned. Metal shelving systems

were purchased and placed in the rooms, along with several rubber-maid style storage units. The room to the left holds unopened food, and the room to the right holds clean bedding. These changes were implemented in September and have been in use since then. LT Miller will continue to work on decluttering the remaining rooms to include the front lobby/desk, the office area, and the bathing/grooming area.

Regarding the daily cleaning of the runs. At the time of this report, there are no longer any dogs in the kennel. Since the early visit by SACO Wescovich, ACO Leiler had been using a donated blower to assist with the process of drying the kennel runs prior to returning dogs to the kennels. As runs are/were cleaned; soiled or wet bedding was changed out for clean and dry bedding. Going forward without as many dogs in the MACO facility, any impounded animals will be moved to a separate, clean and dry kennel while theirs is being cleaned. The metal trough covers at the back of the individual kennels have also been fixed prior to the consent order. With no animals in the kennel, the last kennel on the left will be utilized as an Isolation/Quarantine kennel. The kennel next to the isolation/quarantine kennel will not be used to house any animals.

Public Works officials have been consulted on the larger building issues. They are currently soliciting bids to procure the necessary services to address the flooring issues, as well as the indoor and outdoor fencing issues. They have been apprised of the new requirements from the state regarding Animal Control facilities and will be working to bring the building into compliance. This includes addressing the HVAC system at the facility. As plans become available for upgrades, LT Miller will forward them to State ACO Baker. PW will also be bringing in contracted exterminators to check the facility for vermin and act appropriately. It should be noted that since cleaning out the closets and moving food to the metal shelving units, I (LT Miller) have not seen signs of mice in the building.

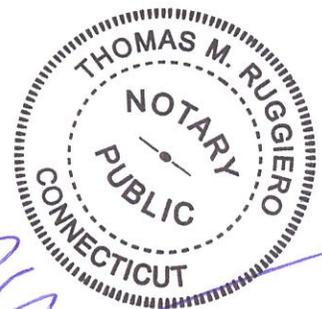
"I have personally examined and am familiar with the information submitted in this document and all attachments thereto, and I certify, based on reasonable investigation, including my inquiry of those individuals responsible for obtaining the information, that the submitted information is true, accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that any false statement made in the submitted information may be punishable as a criminal offense under §53a-157b of the Connecticut General Statutes and any other applicable law."

Submitted by LT Miller

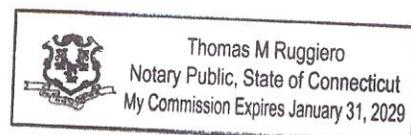
LT. Miller 059

Signature

Sworn to before me this 30th day of December, 2024



Notary Public



Instructions for the Cheshire Police Department MACO Impound/Intake Checklist

This form shall be filled out completely whenever an animal is brought to the pound, it is to be signed by the ACO doing the intake, it is to be retained in a folder at the pound for as long as the animal is in the care of the MACO, and it is to be updated weekly for as long as the animal is in the care of the MACO. Once the animal is no longer in the care of the MACO, the form should be retained for two years following the release of the animal. (All records will be retained regardless of timeframe while the consent order is still in effect).

Intake Information.

Note the date and time of the capture, the location of the capture, and the misc. information (i.e. roaming dog, nuisance animal, pd case etc). All animals that come into the MACO facility will also be entered into the NEXGEN animal tab, will be assigned a number, and will be photographed.

Owner Information.

Fill in completely if owner information is known.

Release Information.

Fill in completely upon the animal's release. Ensure dog license status is up to date or list temporary license number if applicable. Enter the final disposition upon release of the animal, for example, redeemed by owner, adopted, euthanized, etc.

Animal Information.

Fill in as completely as possible, pack the record. Many animals that we deal with are return customers, having a full record may help in the future. MACO's should do a medical assessment upon the intake of any animals and take photographs. If veterinary care is deemed necessary, then it should be scheduled immediately. Note the name of the vet, and the date of the care; all vet records pertaining to an animal shall be retained in the animal's folder. Any animal kept longer than thirty days shall have a wellness exam performed by a veterinarian. Note the date of the exam (this should be as close to thirty days after intake as is possible), and the veterinarian's name; the vet records pertaining to this wellness exam shall be retained in the animal's folder. A separate WEEKLY WELLNESS ASSESSMENT form will be completed and photographs taken and submitted to the Support Services LT, this information will be signed and retained in the animal's folder.

Weekly Wellness Checklist Instructions

For any animal kept in the care of the Cheshire MACO past seven days, a weekly wellness checklist will be completed, signed, and retained in the animal's folder in the MACO facility. Photos will be taken of the animal and will be attached to the weekly wellness checklist. Any issues or problems with the animal, or additional care/meds given should be noted on the checklist. Any steps taken to locate/contact the animal's owner, or any steps taken to advertise/adopt the animal should be noted on the checklist.

Daily Operations Checklist

This checklist will be completed by the Support Services LT (or designee if unavailable) to ensure that proper procedures are being used daily at the MACO facility. Daily checklists will be compiled and kept in the SS LT office, and will be sent along with monthly progress reports to the STATE ACO. Issues should be noted on the form, along with corrective measures taken/planned.



Cheshire Animal Control

Daily Operations Checklist

Date: _____

Supervisor: _____

Signature: _____

Complete Daily			
<i>KENNEL/ANIMALS</i>	<i>Record answers on this side.</i>		
Number of animals currently impounded.			
Animals removed from enclosures prior to cleaning?	YES	NO	N/A
Removed animals placed in full-sized enclosure during cleaning?	YES	NO	N/A
Cleaning process start time?			
Cleaning process completion?			
Bedding changed?	YES	NO	N/A
Enclosures fully dried prior to returning animals?	YES	NO	N/A
Is grooming/bathing necessary?	YES	NO	N/A
Note any grooming/bathing performed.			
Weekly wellness assessments completed, due for all animals by Friday.	YES	NO	N/A
<i>BUILDING/FACILITY</i>			
Open food containers stored in heavy duty plastic containers?	YES	NO	N/A
Extra food stored in storage closet off the ground?	YES	NO	N/A
Facility clean and sanitary?	YES	NO	N/A
<i>Note any issues and immediate/long term corrective actions.</i>			
<i>Van/Equipment</i>			
Is the MACO van clean and ready for use?	YES	NO	
Are clean cages stored neatly?	YES	NO	
Is the Firearm secured in the safe or van lockbox?	YES	NO	



Cheshire Animal Control

Weekly Wellness Checklist

Date: _____

ACO: _____

ACO Signature: _____

To be completed weekly for every animal in the care of the MACO

<i>INTAKE INFORMATION</i>	<i>ANIMAL INFORMATION</i>
Date of Intake: _____	Name if known: _____
NEXGEN number: _____	Breed: _____
Photos taken: YES NO	Sex: _____
Date of weekly wellness assessment: _____	
ACO providing the assessment: _____	
Photographs taken: _____	YES NO
Is the animal eating: _____	YES NO
Is the animal well groomed: _____	YES NO
Does the animal require medication: _____	YES NO
If yes, list medication: _____	
Does the animal require veterinary care: _____	YES NO
If yes, detail the care needed/given: _____	
Is the animal's enclosure kept clean? _____	YES NO
Is the enclosure dry upon the animal's return? _____	YES NO
Is bedding clean/dry? _____	YES NO
Misc. Info: _____	
Redemption/Adoption steps taken: _____	
MACO Signature: _____	
LT Signature: _____	

EXHIBIT J



CHESHIRE POLICE DEPARTMENT

SECTION: DRAFT

ANIMAL CONTROL

SUBJECT: ANIMAL CONTROL		
Issue Date:	Effective Date:	Distribution: All Personnel
Amends/Rescinds GO:		Review Date: / /
Per Order of:  Neil Dryfe, Chief of Police		Accreditation Standards: POSTC:
<i>This General Order is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceedings. This General Order should not be construed as creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this General Order will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting</i>		

I. PURPOSE:

This policy sets forth the Department's program for the organization and management of the Department's Municipal Animal Control Division. This policy set forth the Department's program for the handling of matters relating to animal control in the Town of Cheshire.

II. POLICY:

The Cheshire Police Department in conjunction with the Municipal Animal Control Officer(s) will administer and enforce the laws of the State of Connecticut and the ordinances of the Town of Cheshire as they pertain to dogs and other domestic animals. Such enforcement action will be executed in a manner to protect the safety and well-being of the general public, their pets, and the Department personnel involved. Will not engage in the business of controlling nuisance wildlife except where the situation requires immediate action to prevent injury or death to a person or domestic animal. In such instances, Department personnel shall act to resolve the problem in the most humane way consistent with the safety of the persons at risk. (This restriction is necessary, as the Cheshire Police Department does not maintain a license as required by CGS Section 26-47(b) to routinely take action with respect to nuisance wildlife.)

III. DEFINITIONS:

- A. Municipal Animal Control Officer (MACO)- an official named as a municipal animal control officer (to include the assistant MACO) as defined by CGS 22-331.
- B. Animal- any brute creature, including, but not limited to dogs, cats, monkeys, guinea pigs, hamsters, rabbits, birds, and reptiles.
- C. Companion Animal- any animal (including exotic animals) being sheltered, fed, and cared for by a person and considered by that person a service animal or a pet in the normal meaning of that word.
- D. Service Animal- as any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks to benefit a person with a disability, as defined in federal law, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.
- E. Livestock/Domestic Animals- include, but are not limited to, any sheep, goats, horses, hogs, cattle and other hoofed animals, poultry, and domestic rabbits kept in enclosures sufficient to keep them from roaming. The terms "domestic animals" and "livestock" include animals kept for commercial purposes.
- F. Poultry- any species of domestic fowl, including, but not limited to chickens, turkeys, ostriches, emus, rheas, cassowaries, waterfowl, and game birds raised for food production, breeding, exhibition, or sale.
- G. Feral Animal- a free-roaming companion or domestic animal that is not owned and routinely sheltered in one location.
- H. Wildlife/Wild Animal- any animal that is "wild by nature" and that does not fall under the definition of a companion or domestic animal.

IV. PROCEDURES:**A. Organization:**

- i. The Municipal Animal Control Officer (MACO) shall be the person primarily responsible for handling all matters relating to animal control in Cheshire.
- ii. The MACO shall report to the Support Services Lieutenant.
- iii. In the absence of the MACO, sworn officers of the Department shall carry out the duties of the MACO related to animal control as outlined herein.

B. Municipal Animal Control Officer's Qualification and Training Requirements:

- i. Newly Appointed MACO's: As specified in CGS 22-328(c) a person newly appointed as a MACO must;
 - 1. Have completed a training program that meets the requirements of CGS 22-328(d) and received a certificate of such completion from the Commission of the Department of Agriculture pursuant to CGS 22-328(d) or
After appointment, submit an affidavit to the Commissioner agreeing to complete such training program not later than one year after beginning such position.
- ii. **Assigned MACOs:**
 - 1. As specified in CGS 22-328(f) each animal control officer shall complete a minimum of six hours of continuing education related to the duties of an animal control officer in each calendar year. The commissioner shall adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, concerning the implementation of such continuing education requirement.

C. Responsibilities of the Municipal Animal Control Officer:

- i. As an employee of the Department operating within the chain of command and under the authority conferred by CGS 22-331, the MACO shall:
 - 1. Administer and enforce the laws of the State of Connecticut and the ordinances of the Town of Cheshire relating to dogs and other domestic animals and assist State and Department officers in enforcing the laws involving other animals.
 - 2. Take action as appropriate on all animal complaints received by the Department.
 - 3. Take into custody and impound roaming, neglected, cruelly treated or injured companion animals if the owner cannot be located or if the owner cannot or is unwilling to take control of the animal, or as is necessary to provide veterinary care to animals in exigent need.
 - 4. Supervise the adoption of impounded companion animals.
 - 5. Supervise the euthanizing and disposition of companion animals according to the protocol established by the Town of Cheshire. Normally the destruction or euthanizing of any companion or domestic animal shall be carried out only by a licensed veterinarian. An obvious exception to this exists in situations where action is required to protect the safety of a

person or the officer and as discussed below in paragraph IV Sections D4, E3, F4d, G2, and I7.

6. Be accountable for and maintain the equipment (including the vehicle) assigned to the MACO.
7. Maintain records and make reports as required by the State of Connecticut, the Town of Cheshire, and the Department.
8. Assist in educating the citizens of Cheshire in the proper care and treatment of domestic animals and in the responsibilities attendant to ownership.

D. General Operating Procedures:

- i. The MACO shall carry out his/her assigned duties in as humane a manner as practicable and, with due consideration of the owners of the animals involved, adjust his/her techniques to fit the specific circumstances of the event. Certain types of animal-related situations, however, have the potential for high risk to the officer, other humans, the animal, and the image of the Department. In these cases, unless special circumstances dictate otherwise, the procedures listed below shall be followed.
 1. If an officer in the field encounters an animal-related situation of a nature that requires immediate intervention, he/she shall notify dispatch and take appropriate action to stabilize the situation.
 2. When an animal complaint is received in the Department from any source, the receiving officer or dispatcher shall determine if a referral or an immediate dispatch is necessary. In instances where the MACO or an Officer is dispatched a CAD case number will be established. In instances where an immediate dispatch is not necessary, the complaint will be referred to the MACO by voicemail or email.
 3. If the complaint is received after normal working hours, or if the MACO is otherwise unavailable, and the dispatcher determines that the complaint requires immediate attention, then the dispatcher shall dispatch a patrol unit to the call. If the nature of the complaint is such that the response can safely be delayed, then the dispatcher shall gather the pertinent information and refer the complaint to the MACO (or a patrol unit if the MACO will be unavailable for an extended period) for follow up the next working day.
 4. The officer responding to an animal complaint shall take action as dictated by the situation. Such action in the case

of the involved citizen might range from gathering information and providing counseling, advice, or verbal warning, or through a written warning, an infraction, or a misdemeanor summons, to custodial arrest as appropriate. Action against the animal might range from simply returning the animal to its owner, impoundment, or destruction.

5. When the owner cannot be contacted, the responding officer shall leave a voicemail, note, or email with the citizen, to contact the MACO.
6. The MACO shall utilize the Department's standard procedures for issuing infractions and or summons, and will be assisted by an uniformed police officer for a custodial arrest.

E. Stray/Roaming Dogs and Other Companion and Domestic Animals:

- i. The following policy and guidance is directed specifically at the control of dogs, but the procedures discussed below, modified as required by the situation, shall apply to any other companion or domestic animal found roaming or as a stray in Cheshire.
 1. The MACO shall capture, by the most humane method practicable, any stray or roaming dog found within the Town of Cheshire.
 2. If the dog appears well, is licensed, and has a current rabies vaccination, the dog may be secured on the owner's property if the owner has been notified. In all other cases, the MACO shall impound the dog within the Cheshire Animal Control Facility.
 3. If the animal is injured or appears to be sick, the MACO shall notify the owner, if known, to take responsibility for the animal. If the dog's owner is unknown or cannot be contacted, then the MACO shall transport the animal to a veterinarian for immediate care and recommendation for treatment. An officer encountering an apparently sick or exceedingly aggressive animal, shall assume that the animal may have rabies and take appropriate precautions including destroying the animal if necessary, to safeguard humans or other animals.

F. Animal Impoundment and Release:

1. An officer impounding a dog shall ensure that it is placed in an individual kennel and that it is provided fresh food and water.

2. The MACO shall complete a CPD Intake/Impound checklist, and complete and file a State of Connecticut, Department of Agriculture, Form A26, Impound of Animals, in the case of each impounded dog. At the beginning of each month, the MACO shall forward a copy of the reports for the previous month to the Support Services Lieutenant.
3. The MACO shall notify the owner or keeper of an impounded dog, if known, of its impoundment. If the owner or keeper is not known, the MACO shall advertise a description of the dog along with other identifying factors utilizing local news outlets and/or local forums on social media outlets.
4. Disposition of Impounded Dogs and Applicable Release Fees:
 - a. The owner or keeper of an impounded dog may redeem the dog within twenty-four hours of its impoundment after paying the current redemption fee and the cost of advertisements if applicable.
 - b. If an owner or keeper of an impounded dog fails to redeem such dog within twenty-four hours of notification, or, if owner/keeper is unknown, within twenty-four hours of advertisement/publication, owner/keeper, when identified shall be responsible for the redemption fee, advertising fee, and, after the first twenty-four hours, the full cost of detention and care of the animal for each day, or part thereof, until the dog is redeemed.
 - c. If an impounded dog is not claimed by and released to an owner/keeper within seven calendar days after the date of notification or publication of the advertisement the MACO, upon assessing the temperament of the dog and finding it to be suitable for adoption as well as finding the dog to be in satisfactory health, may sell the dog as a pet to anyone who satisfies the MACO that they are purchasing the dog as a pet and will provide it a good home. The MACO should require potential owners to complete a CPD Dog Adoption Application, as a basis for making a decision regarding the placement of the animal. All dogs released from the facility must have a current dog license and rabies tag or a temporary dog license.

- d. The MACO may cause any dog to be euthanized by a licensed veterinarian if the dog remains unclaimed or is not sold as a pet within fourteen calendar days after the date of notification or publication of the advertisement. This provision shall be suspended if the dog is being housed in a shelter that accepts responsibility for the care and feeding of the animal.

G. Animal Bite or Attack and Quarantine:

- i. When any person reports being bitten or shows visible evidence of attack by any dog, cat or other animal, the officer responding to the incident shall:
 1. Advise the injured person to seek appropriate medical attention.
 2. Place the animal under quarantine, pursuant to the provisions of CGS 22-359, for a period of ten days from the date of biting. If the animal shows obvious signs of illness and it has not otherwise been destroyed, the officer shall transport the animal to a licensed veterinarian for assessment.
 3. Complete a State of Connecticut, Department of Agriculture, Animal Bite/Attack Report, four-part A-36 form, giving the green and blue copies to the owner/keeper, respectively, and providing the white and yellow copies of the form to the MACO for further distribution.
 4. Issue to the owner/keeper an on-property or off-property State of Connecticut Quarantine Order, as appropriate, pursuant to CGS 22-359. The officer shall review with the owner/keeper the several provisions of the quarantine order to ensure that the owner/keeper fully understands the instructions and the consequences of a failure to comply.
 5. If not the MACO, the officer responding to the animal complaint shall provide the MACO a copy of the quarantine order so that it may be sent to the proper authorities.
 6. The MACO shall give notice of the quarantine order to the person bitten by the dog, cat, or other animal within twenty-four hours of that action.
 7. Quarantine Specifics
 - a. The procedures to be followed for an on or off-property quarantine shall comply with the detailed instructions contained in the State of Connecticut Quarantine Order, per CG 22-359 as applicable.

H. Injured or Sick Animals:

1. In the case of an animal complaint involving an injured or sick companion or domestic animal, when the animal's owner/keeper is unknown or unable to act, the MACO shall transport the animal to a veterinarian for treatment or disposal. If, after treatment, the veterinarian releases the animal and the owner is still unknown, it may be impounded by the MACO.
2. Depending upon the injuries sustained and the situation, an injured wild animal, e.g., deer, fox, raccoon, skunk, may be destroyed by an officer. The officer may destroy deer and in circumstances where an animal may cause further hazard by entering a roadway etc. they may destroy smaller animals such as a fox, raccoon, or skunk using the Department issued rifle with .22 caliber ammunition if it can be done safely and with the shift commander's approval. As an alternative course in cases involving lesser injuries, any injured non-Rabies vector species may be turned over to a state-licensed wildlife rehabilitator. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection can be called twenty-four hours a day should questions arise.
3. In cases where a deer has been killed by a motor vehicle or destroyed by an officer, the responding officer shall complete a deer kill incident report form EPW-8 as directed by CGS 26-86. The MACO shall forward copies of form EPW-8 to the DEEP district headquarters.
4. Once the deer kill incident form is completed, the officer may release the animal to an interested citizen in accordance with the Deer Kill Contact list, located in Dispatch. The deer kill contact list is compiled of residents wishing to remove deer for consumption.

I. Nuisance Wildlife:

1. The Cheshire Police Department is not authorized to control nuisance wildlife and will refer such complaints to the proper agencies, i.e.,
 - a. The DEEP Wildlife Division
2. Situations may arise when a citizen is unable to solve a wildlife-related problem due to a lack of resources or ability and requests police assistance. In keeping with the Department's policy of Service to the Community, the MACO shall investigate those cases where wildlife poses a hazard

or potential hazard to the safety and well being of the general public.

J. Livestock Damage or Kills:

- i. When a complaint is received regarding killed or injured livestock and it is suspected the damage has been caused by a dog or dogs:
 1. Dispatch shall send the MACO, if available, otherwise a patrol officer to the scene.
 2. The officer shall make an inventory of the damage and complete an incident report, including pictures and as much detail as possible.
 3. If the investigating officer is not the MACO, then he/she shall provide a copy of the incident report to the MACO for follow-up. If the damage claim is \$100 or less then it shall be investigated by the MACO, if it is more than \$100 then it shall be referred to State Animal Control.
 4. If it is known or suspected that the kills or damage has been done by a dog or dogs, then the responding officer shall instruct the livestock owner:
 - a. To leave the scene as found until the MACO or State Animal Control can observe and investigate the incident.
 - b. That disturbing the scene or disposal of carcasses before the MACO or the State Animal Control Officer has completed the investigation may result in the State Animal Control denying the claim and failure to approve reimbursement to the livestock owner for damages.
 5. If unusual circumstances require the disposal of carcasses, the responding officer shall take detailed pictures to document the damage.
 6. Time Limitations to Reporting Damage: CGS 22-355 specifies that
 - a. The livestock owner/agent must report damage within twenty-four hours from the time the damage was sustained.
 - b. The Department must report the damage to State Animal Control within twenty-four hours of being notified by the livestock owner or on the next succeeding business day if an intervening Sunday or holiday prevents earlier reporting.

- c. As specified in CGS 22-358, the owner or the agent of any owner of domestic animals or poultry, a State Animal Control Officer, the Animal Control Officer, or a Police Officer (as agent of the animal owner) may kill any dog which is observed actively pursuing or worrying any such domestic animal or poultry. The dog must be pursuing or worrying the animal or fowl at the time it is killed; it is not sufficient justification that it has done so in the past.

V. REPORTS AND FORMS (ATTACHED):

- A. State of Connecticut, Department of Agriculture, Form A26, Impound of Animals(this will refer to the TOC impound/intake form)
- B. State of Connecticut, Department of Agriculture, Form A36, Animal Bite/Attack Report(this will refer to the TOC Animal Bite/Attack form)
- C. Connecticut State Quarantine Order, On Property
- D. Connecticut State Quarantine Order, Off Property
- E. State of Connecticut, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Form EPW-8, Deer Kill Incident Report
- F. CPD MACO Dog Adoption Application
- G. CPD MACO Impound/Intake Checklist

VI. REFERENCES:

- A. Connecticut General Statutes 22-329, 22-331, 22-355, 22-358, and 22-359
- B. Connecticut General Statutes 26-47(b), and 26-86
- C. Town of Cheshire Code and Ordinances