

Minutes of Meeting – July 23, 2019; meeting called to order at 3:30pm. Present: Dave Roche; Ed Lane; Marybeth Mitts. Absent: Warren Archey; Neal Maxymillian.

Sandy Spinney and John Burns, 22 Maple Street, appeared before the Board to discuss their issues with the barking dogs owned by Christopher and Veronica Fenton, 38 Taconic Avenue. Police Chief Stephen O'Brien and Animal Control Officer Michael Sullivan were also in attendance. EL asked that everyone stay civil and to limit their statement to five minutes. However, he also stated that he wants to make sure that everyone has plenty of time to speak, but that the same comments don't get stated over and over again.

Sandy Spinney stated that it has been over three years that she has complained about the barking dogs. She feels that this situation is taking away her right to enjoy her property and for peace and quiet. She cited Chapter XVII, Section 4 of the Town Bylaw, and is looking for a resolution to the problem.

Veronica Fenton stated that she sees the issue as a balance of quiet vs. noise. She went on to explain the daily routine of her dogs and the reasonableness of the situation. She stated that no one else in the neighborhood is complaining about her dogs barking, and that she does her best to send them to day care during the day and by bringing them in if they are barking.

Police Chief O'Brien stated that since 2013, there have been twelve entries in the police log, nine of which referenced the Fenton's dogs. Upon arrival of either himself or an officer, no barking dogs were found, and when they checked with the neighbors, no one had any complaints.

Animal Control Officer Michael Sullivan stated that in order to consider this a "nuisance situation" many neighbors would need to be complaining, which they aren't. In addition, he wouldn't even know how to enforce the Section 4 barking bylaw with ticketing.

MM stated that she believes that the Fenton's are trying to do everything they can to keep the dogs from being outside unattended and barking. She suggested that the dogs be introduced to the couple so that they know who they are and not bark at them. DR stated that he has a concern that all the complaints are coming from them only and not from any other neighbors. Michael Sullivan suggested getting a list of neighbors that are upset about the barking. EL stated that additional documentation is needed in order to try to take any type of action. MM believes that there is no intent on the part of the Fenton's to allow their dogs to bark, which is the language included in the Section 4 bylaw.

To wrap up the meeting, EL stated that the Town really has no power to do anything. He suggested that Sandy or John text the Fenton's whenever the barking becomes excessive and request that the dogs be brought in. This had previously happened between them and worked to some extent. DR would like to have the Animal Control Officer speak with the other neighbors to determine how large of a problem this may be. MM stated that the Board would take this under advisement at this time.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35pm

Minutes Taken By: _____	Minutes Accepted By: _____
Mary Ellen Deming	Clerk
Director of Administrative Services	Board of Selectmen