

## **Timeline**

**October 4, 2021:** Leif Goldberg and Erin Rosenthal had Miranda Davison's huskies in their chicken yard. The dogs killed twenty-six meat birds. My understanding is that the neighbors wrote Leif and Erin a check for \$220. According to them, having the dogs tied up if they were outside was part of the agreement. The animal control officer at the time, Dean Mercier, dealt with this and Officer Gagnon was the one who spoke with them.

**November 16, 2021:** 8 of our layers were killed. There were paw prints all over the chicken yard, but I didn't see it happen or see the dog. However, Ms. Davison posted on Facebook on the same day that her dog, Daisy, a husky, was missing. (See photos in the email of the chickens and screenshots of Facebook from that day. I included more screenshots of when she posted on Facebook that her dogs have been running in the neighborhood.)

**November 14, 2022:** Daisy was in our front yard. I did not want her to go out back and kill chickens, so I brought her into the house, where she stayed for three hours before I could walk her home. The neighbors hadn't noticed she was gone. She was wearing the electric fence collar and had a tag with her name but no license tag. While she was in the house, I called the town to find out who the animal control officer was and was given Larry Hamel's number. He said there was nothing he could do. He couldn't enforce anything, and he wasn't in town anyway. I am attaching a picture of Daisy in our house.

**December 27, 2022:** The other husky, Dante, was in our yard in the afternoon. He was only wearing the electric fence collar, no tags. I brought him in, got a rope, and walked him home. Ms. Davison came out to get him and said his collar batteries must be dead. I told her we have chickens and I don't want her dogs at my house, and she said she understood.

I went back home and found five dead chickens in their chicken yard. Two more were missing; two were alive in the coop rafters. So seven were killed that day.

I called Larry Hamel. He said, again, that there was nothing he could do and that I should call the police. He said he was rewriting his job description and couldn't enforce or do anything. So I called the police and spoke with Officer Mitchell.

After speaking with Officer Mitchell, I walked back to the neighbors' house to let them know I had called the ACO and the police. Ms. Davison's daughter apologized and asked if Dante was back at my house. They didn't know where he was; they had let him back out again. The dogs are usually loose in the yard.

Walking back home, I saw Dante running up Linda Kinney's driveway with one of our dead chickens. Ms. Davison's daughter drove up while I was calling to the dog. She was out looking for him, and she said another family member was on a snow machine looking for him. When I asked if they had replaced the batteries on the collar when I left the first time, she said they had, the collar was working, but they didn't know where the dog was. The dog was behind Dave Gauthier's house at this point.

At home, I returned a call from Officer Mitchell. He had read the dog ordinance and wanted a price for the chickens. At the time, I said I didn't care about the money; I just wanted the dogs to stop killing. (Please see the email for a picture of Dante in my house that day, some of the dead chickens, and the dog prints.)

### **Value**

If the dogs are allowed to keep killing, at the very least, there should be adequate compensation. After that, however, there should be a better solution to the problem.

Since last November, when a dog killed eight of our fourteen layers, and a friend gave us six pullets, we have spent:

\$336 in organic grain from the Small Farm Guild in E. Hardwick. The flock quit laying at the end of October and would have begun again in February.

At six eggs/day that we will no longer be getting between February and November, and the price of organic eggs at the store, \$6/dozen, buying eggs would be another \$840.

To replace the lost birds with chicks (that will not be laying until next year) would be roughly \$52.

The total for the chickens, including feed, lost eggs, and replacement chicks, is \$1228.

This total does not include the time spent caring for them or that one of them was a special pet, let alone the amount of time spent writing this and making phone calls.

### **Ordinance + Job Description for Animal Control Officer**

According to the animal control officer job description, the focus is to enforce the Town Dog Ordinance and ensure dogs are not causing problems. Essential duties include "Transport and secure any dogs that are lost or running free in the Town of Hardwick" and "Ongoing communication with animal owners."

The ordinance includes the animal control officer in the definition of "Enforcement Officer" and says the designee shall issue tickets.

Section 4 says no owner shall allow a dog to become or remain a public nuisance. A public nuisance includes running at large and harassing or attacking other domestic animals. Running and attacking fits the definition in the ordinance of a "Vicious Dog."

Section 6 says dogs must wear a collar with a current license, and those not found to be wearing them shall be impounded. Neither of these dogs was wearing a license at my house.

Section 8 says the Enforcement Officer is authorized to confine or impound any dog found in violation.