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December 11, 2020

Town of Pelham
20 Pelham Town Square
P.O. Box 400
Fonthill ON
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Dear Valued Town Councillors, Clerks, and Administrative Staff,

My name is Jennifer Irwin and I have been directed to you by Halee Braun, as to how we can navigate the appeal process with the Town of Pelham.

In June of 2018 we brought home our second beloved golden doodle by which we had hand chosen for temperament. We chose her based on a set of criteria in hopes that she would become a Diabetic Alert Dog for our daughter Katherine who had been recently, two months prior, been diagnosed with Type One Diabetes. Our daughter, who was ten at the time, took her to training, and has been her main handler. Together, they completed the first round of training with Dave Mc Mahon and their bond is special.

We have many letters of support from our large circle of friends, neighbours and family who have grown to love Oakley through the two and a half years she has been with us. These testimonies also speak to our character as animal owners, and include letters from our long time neighbours who have not ever seen her cross the invisible fence line.

On Monday December 7th, a man showed up in our driveway and initiated a heated conversation with my husband explaining that our Oakley had crossed the electric fence line, and attacked his Jack Russell dog that his wife was walking. We were immediately responsive to the situation and very concerned because she has not crossed the line before in the two and a half years that we have had her and she has not ever been aggressive to people, kids, babies, or animals. Moreover, previously to Oakley, we had another Golden Doodle who never crossed the line, for the five years we had the fence. We asked this man if there was a vet bill, or any way to rectify the situation and the man threatened our dog, and explained that there was no wound on his jack russel because the dog was wearing a sweater jacket. When we asked our son, who was in the driveway when the alleged happened, our nine year son explained that a woman had yelled at him aggressively while he was playing hockey about our dog. When the attack happened, our son would have been 20 meters from where this happened. His fault,

which he has been spoken to regarding, was that he did not come and get a parent. Alternately, I wonder why the woman wouldn't seek an adult also.

When this was brought to our attention, we immediately came in and purchased a new fence and collar to mitigate any faults that the current one might have developed. On Thursday evening, the SPCA showed up with a Muzzle Order which prohibits our beloved Oakleys freedom and labels her a vicious dog. **Specifically, we were presented with the By-Law No. 97-2010 and are requested to complete orders 1,3,4,6 by December 17, 2020 at 9 am. Orders 2 and 5 are to be completed by December 27th 2020 at 9am.** We would like to appeal this order as we feel that the evidence compiled against us is lacking. There was no vet bill, or damage to the animal. We have many letters from the community that speak to our dog's character and our family dog handling skills. We feel that if Oakley was aggressive and attacked, our son would have noticed, sought help and reacted, as this is out of character for our dog. On the off chance the fence was defective, we have taken measures to correct this and will ensure that it does not happen again. Ever. We are struggling with condemning her for a vicious attack that left no marks and has no witnesses other than the woman who was walking the dog. We are requesting a formal appeal, to ensure that a resolution can be met that will enable Oakley to have a quality of life and some freedom.

Please let me know what is needed from this point on to see this important process through.

Warm Regards,

Jennifer Irwin, Paul Irwin, Katie Irwin and Andrew Irwin