

22 June 2017

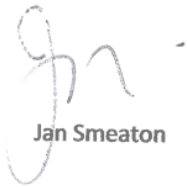
Dear Marty

Please find here my submission for an appeal to the Menacing classification.

Can you please acknowledge receipt by return email at smeatonjan@gmail.com

I had hoped to include a statement from Liz Cubley, Koru Ridge Kennels, but she is currently away. I will forward it to you by email as soon as it is to hand.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jan Smeaton', written in a cursive style.

Jan Smeaton

Sahara



Jan Smeaton



Taupo

20 June 2017

Compliance Team
Taupo District Council
Private Bag 2005
Taupo Mail Centre

To whom it may concern

I am replying to the unsigned letter dated 14 June regarding:

Notice of Classification of Dog as a Menacing Dog, Your Reference 08105 Dog Description: 161669, Sahara, Cattle, Australian/Cross Tan Female spayed.

I wish to lodge my objection to this classification on the following basis:

1. *It is unduly harsh.*
2. *It provides no opportunity or incentive for rehabilitation and training*
3. *It removes the ongoing enjoyment of the dog to me and my family*

In support of my objection I enclose statements and opinions from the following:

1. *MaryAnne Joyce, Dog Behaviourist, Paws n Han*
2. *Howard Jones, Dog Trainer, Taupo Dog Club*

3. *Rebecca Newth, BVSc, MVM, VetOra, Taupo*
4. *Liz Cubley, Owner, Koru Ridge Kennels¹*

Background

During the past 7 years, I have fostered more than 20 dogs for periods between 3 days and 6 weeks for the SPCA Taupo, Taupo City Council Dog Pound and CARE.

In March 2015, I fostered Sahara from the SPCA for a period of 2 weeks. She had come to be at the SPCA from the Pound. I was told that she would need some training and behavior modification while with me. I set about this diligently as I had with all of the dogs in my care. When she returned to the SPCA, I believed that she was ready to be rehomed.

At the time, my husband and I returned frequently to Australia for business reasons. We left after Sahara returned to the SPCA and returned to Taupo four weeks later. Sahara was still at the SPCA. I offered to foster her again. However, the small issues she had had returned so I set about re-training her.

It was during this time that I became aware of a dog being held at the pound. Maia, a bull-mastiff had been surrendered to the pound pregnant and remained there until she gave birth to 8 puppies and completed weaning. I spoke to Amanda Lou about Maia coming to stay with me for a period until she was adopted to give her a "Post-pregnancy health spa" experience. Maia and Sahara had a wonderful

¹ Ms Cubley is currently away and will submit her statement on 27 June 2017.

time together, running with me and swimming in these wonderful surroundings.

However, I found myself in the middle of a political stoush and the SPCA demanded that I return Sahara immediately. It seemed that I was not to be involved with both organisations at the same time.

I was aware that Sahara needed more time and was concerned about her return to the SPCA so believed that the only option was for me to adopt her.

While this was a wonderful solution for Sahara it came with some significant logistical obstacles. Travelling backward and forward to Australia on a regular basis meant that Sahara needed to be boarded while we were away. I found a wonderful place for her but that ended when the health of the person she was staying with deteriorated. This meant that Sahara spent about 4 weeks in Koru Ridge Kennel.

It was after that long stay that I noticed she had developed some Anxious Attachment tendencies, particularly around other dogs. Sahara subsequently attended Dog Obedience at the Taupo Dog Club and graduated from her beginners course. She then attended a term of Canine Good Citizen and was making fairly good progress.

In October 2016, Sahara underwent Cruciate Ligament surgery. This required her to be crated for a period of six weeks. Following this, she was on very limited movement for another 12 weeks. This meant that she was unable to continue with her training and socialization.

In March of this year, I engaged the services of MaryAnne Joyce, Paws n Hand, to assist me with my training of Sahara. We had returned to Dog Obedience but I noticed that she was unsettled in this environment and I needed additional support.

The work with MaryAnne was progressing well and her behavior around other dogs had improved markedly. However, as I had still been commuting between Australia and Taupo she still showed signs of Anxious Attachment.

It is my belief, which is supported by the enclosed statements, that now that we are to be in Taupo full time, that Sahara would benefit greatly from continued training and socialization both in one-on-one sessions with a trainer and in a group setting at the Taupo Dog Club.

If Sahara is permanently classified as a Menacing Dog, training in those settings will be difficult if not impossible. I believe that being classified as a Menacing Dog would remove all incentive for me to continue with her training and socialization as being muzzled all of the time in a public setting would render such training as wasted.

Summary

Sahara is much loved family pet who enjoys spending time with her family, playing with her mates, swimming and sleeping in the sun. As a rescue dog, she has had a mixed start to life and had developed an anxious attachment. Her training and socialization have been interrupted by a lengthy recovery from cruciate ligament surgery. However, the commitment to providing Sahara with ongoing training

and socialization is very strong. I am well supported in my efforts to achieve an appropriate outcome.

I am proposing that Sahara have a temporary classification for a specified period in order for me to undertake significant training. After this period, Sahara could be reassessed to determine whether such a classification should continue.

I hope this appeal and the statements attached are given favourable consideration.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'J' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Jan Smeaton