



## Cat owner agreeable to deal in dog death

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The owner of a cat that was killed by the Joplin mayor's dogs earlier this week said Friday he is agreeable to working a deal that would avert prosecution of the mayor on a charge of keeping vicious dogs.

Mark Parrish, 3730 Hawthorne Drive, said he has agreed that Mayor Jon Tupper's dogs could be returned if Tupper builds a pen that is six feet tall with an electronic wire around the top to try to keep the dogs from getting out.

Parrish had signed a complaint against Tupper on Tuesday after Tupper's two Siberian huskies got loose from a pen at the Tupper house and killed the Parrish pet. Parrish lives three blocks from Tupper.

Parrish said that a witness told him that the two dogs took his cat off his porch.

The case was referred to the Newton County prosecutor's officer because it would be a conflict of interest for Joplin to prosecute, the city attorney had said.

Bill Dobbs, assistant Newton County prosecutor, said a charge has not been filed because his office had not yet received the full investigative report as of Friday from the city of Joplin. The city indicated the report would be forthcoming, presumably from its animal control department, he said.

Once the prosecutor's office receives that full report, it will decide how to proceed with the case, he said.

He also said that he understood the mayor's dogs were still at a private kennel and would remain there until the issue is resolved.

City ordinances allow impounded animals to be kept at a veterinary kennel of the owner's choice rather than the Joplin Humane Society pound if the owner desires, said Dan Pekarek, city health director.

Pekarek said it is not a violation of city ordinance for the Parrish cat to have been outside. Cats are not required to be confined like dogs, Pekarek said.

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