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Puppy dies from reported dog attack at Bow Wow Beach

16 hours ago

by Kristin Casale

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Stow -- Bow Wow Beach will have a separate entrance to the small-dog area after police say a puppy was attacked and killed by a dog there this weekend.

A 4 1/2 month-old Maltese/poodle mix was killed June 7 after being attacked by a standard poodle, according to Stow Police.

Lt. Rick Myers said the department received a call from Stow resident Jane Gsellman, the Maltese/poodle's owner, June 9, and the incident was referred to animal control officer Ed Young.

According to the police records department, the incident report was not complete by press time. No charges had been filed at press time.

"I don't recall any [other] incidents where a dog has been killed at the park since it opened," said Myers.

Gsellman claims a standard poodle charged her from behind while she was holding her dog, Sophie, knocking the puppy out of her hands. She claims the standard poodle bit Sophie on the neck.

After unsuccessful attempts to separate the dogs, Gsellman said the dogs were finally separated and she took her dog to a veterinarian emergency room, where the dog died.

"The owner [of the standard poodle] came with me to the emergency room," said Gsellman. "The owner was very upset. We were both just totally devastated."

The standard poodle's owner could not be reached for comment by press time.

Gsellman said she was making her way to the small-dog area of the park during the incident, explaining that section of the facility cannot be accessed without first going through the large-dog section.

Stow Parks and Recreation Director Nick Wren said the parks department plans to install a separate entrance into the small-dog area that "would be adjacent to the small-dog area."

"You would have to go through the large-dog area for about 20 yards to get to it," he said. "It's about as close as we can get it."

The small-dog area, on the other side of the park's main entrance, allows dogs that are 35 pounds or less.

Wren called what happened to Gsellman's dog "an unfortunate incident."

"As seen on a daily basis at the dog park, many pet owners consider their dogs as integral members of the family," he said. "We understand that the loss of a pet is very devastating and we are very sorry for the owner's loss."

Wren urged individuals to follow the park's rules at all times, stating visitors use the park at their own risk and that dogs with a history of dangerous behavior are prohibited.

"Our goal has always been, and continues to be to provide a safe and wholesome recreational outlet for all pets and their owners that visit Bow Wow Beach," he said.

The park, a 7.5-acre fenced-in park with a 3-acre lake, includes a sandy beach and grassy areas for dogs to run.

The facility opened last summer in Silver Springs Park and recently had been named by "Dog Fancy" magazine as one of the top dog parks in the country.

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