



March 23, 2008 Cookeville, Tennessee

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**NEWS**

**Legal action expected from police dog bite victim**

**Mary Jo Denton**

Herald-Citizen Staff  
Friday, Mar 21, 2008

COOKEVILLE -- A man who was bitten by a Cookeville Police dog last week is reportedly still being treated for the wounds he suffered in that unprovoked attack.

He also now has a lawyer, and Cookeville officials say they expect a claim to be filed.

But Ryan Moody, a college student who is an employee of The Library bar on S. Jefferson Ave., has not yet filed a lawsuit, city officials said yesterday.

Meanwhile, Melo, the police dog which bit him has been taken out of service and is being evaluated, Cookeville Police Chief Bob Terry said.

Moody was attacked by the dog around 3 a.m. Friday, March 14, while he was putting trash into a garbage bin behind the bar.

The dog, which was being handled by Officer Chase Mathis, ran to the bar's back lot from a nearby area where Officer Mathis had stopped and let the dog out to relieve itself.

Police officers say they believe the dog was "spooked" upon hearing noise coming from the area of the garbage bins.

Officer Mathis ran to the area and tried to call the dog off, but he was unable to prevent the attack.

When Officer Mathis radioed for another officer to come to the scene, a Putnam Sheriff's deputy who was not far away went to his aid and put the dog into his squad car.

Ryan Moody was taken to the hospital emergency room and is still out of work due to his injuries, according to acquaintances of his.

The Herald-Citizen has made repeated efforts to contact Moody, but has been unable to reach him.

Cookeville's attorney, Dan Rader, told the Herald-Citizen yesterday that Moody is represented by Knoxville attorney Brent Morris.

Rader said, "What happened in this case was an unfortunate accident, and the City is going to try to resolve a claim with Mr. Moody and his attorney."

Police Chief Terry said the dog is currently being kept in a kennel at the police station while a complete evaluation is conducted. A new official policy governing when the trained dogs in the Police Department's K-9 program will be kept on leashes is also being formulated, Chief Terry said.

"We are studying this incident carefully," he said.



A portrait of Cookeville Police Department police Dog Melo, who recently bit a bar employee in an unprovoked attack here.

Cookeville, TN - 6:53 AM  
**34°**  
Cloudy  
Humidity: 75%  
Wind: Calm



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Melo is certified by the United States Police Canine Association and is trained in tracking, searching, and various other police dog skills, officers say.

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