

Owner of dogs in deadly attack is jailed

Man arrested after failing to appear on related charges

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BY MISTI CRANE

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Shawn Wellen, the owner of two dogs implicated in a deadly attack on a neighbor's dog on March 21, was in jail today after his arrest in connection with criminal charges related to his pets.

Police arrested Wellen, 54, Wednesday at his home, 2727 Vanderberg Ave., on the Hilltop.

Earlier this week, the Columbus Board of Health ordered Wellen to euthanize or move two dogs that city authorities thought were part wolf, primarily because Wellen had said as much.

Others involved in wolf rescue have disputed that the dogs are hybrids based on their appearance and say they likely are German shepherd mixes.

Regardless, they are dangerous and must go, city officials have said.

The arrest came after Wellen failed to appear for his arraignment on separate criminal charges. He's facing six charges connected to the attack on Dotty, an 18-pound fox terrier mix that lived across the street, said assistant city prosecutor Robert Tobias.

The charges allege that Wellen hadn't properly registered the dogs and failed to confine them. He faces fines and jail time if convicted.

Wellen "should have been aware of the tendency of these animals given the repeat occurrences with them," Tobias said.

Columbus Public Health planned to give Wellen formal notice of the board's decision by Friday, spokesman Jose Rodriguez said. From the time of that order, he has 30 days to deal with the dogs.

Wellen has said he plans to move the dogs out of the county. If he does, he'll need to provide Columbus authorities with proof that he has the permission of authorities there.

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