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## Police officer tasers labrador retriever

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HOBART, Okla. - A police officer in Hobart tasered a dog several times, and some witnesses said the officer went too far. Part of the incident was caught on tape. It happened Tuesday night after Hobart Police received a call about a vicious yellow lab on the loose.

When the officer arrived, she tried to make contact with the owners, but they weren't home. She said as she was leaving, the dog lunged at her. That's when she tasered the animal. But, some witnesses said the dog was just barking at her and they believe the officer used excessive force. The police chief said he believes the officer was simply defending herself from a dangerous animal. The owner said the dog is friendly.

Video was captured by a neighbor's cell phone showing the frightening image of the yellow lab being tasered. "It took us about 10 minutes to find a phone before we actually got a chance to get down here and start recording. It was another 5 to 10 before Travis got here," said neighbor Nykona Thompson.

Travis is one of the owners of the dog, and was not at home when it all happened. He said when he arrived the officer still had the dog still connected to the device.

"She said it attacked me. I said did it bite you? Where did it bite you at? She just looked to the ground, she couldn't answer me," said Travis Ferguson.

Several neighbors and young children witnessed the incident. They said blood marks on the ground show just how long it went on.

Hobart Chief of Police, Rex Brown, said the officer was justified with her actions. "City ordinance and policy allows that lethal force can be used in a situation like that. She chose to take a less lethal method."

Janet Myers called police about the dog being loose. She says she was told by the owners just last week that the dog was vicious.

"John was at my house, the owner of the dog and he said that it was mean and it would bite. The animal is to be on a leash or behind a fence. It cannot just be running loose," said Myers.

Travis admits that his dog has been getting loose, but said she isn't a danger to anyone. "I've got people around here, friends all over the neighborhood. She comes right up to them and plays with the kids all the time," said Ferguson.

"The last thing she wanted to do was discharge her firearm or run the risk of a stray round or a ricochet hitting a child or someone that was outside," said Brown.

Travis told 7NEWS that since the incident the dog hasn't been the same. He said it is like she aged ten years overnight.

Chief Brown said the Animal Control Officer who usually handles these situations is not working

because of an injury. He also said the owner was cited for letting an animal run at large.



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