



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For additional information contact:

Lisa LaPlante at (616) 632-7182 or Lisa.LaPlante@kentcountymi.gov

Update on Dogs Removed from Suspected Hoarding Situation

GRAND RAPIDS – The Kent County Animal Shelter received a judgment in Kent County Circuit Court this week, permanently taking 37 dogs from their previous owner. The dogs were being kept at a home in Grand Rapids since late 2013. Kimberly Savino, the previous owner of the dogs, is currently facing a felony charge animal cruelty/neglect. The civil court ruling means some the healthier, well-adjusted dogs will be made available for adoption to the general public, starting on Friday, August 22. Some will continue to be held and treated medically until healthy enough for adoption or transfer to other rescues/shelters. **It is very important for potential adopters to understand that these particular dogs will need ongoing medical care at the adopter's expense for concerns such as dental care and eye issues.**

“This was a lengthy investigation, with Animal Control Officers remaining diligent in their efforts to make sure these dogs were healthy physically and mentally,” said Adam London, Health Officer for the Kent County Health Department. “Once we could confirm that the situation had deteriorated, we requested a warrant, and found the dogs in various states of neglect and illness. Some were discolored from sitting in their own waste.” Two additional dogs taken from the home belong to the owners of the house; they continue to be held pending the outcome of criminal proceedings.

The Kent County Animal Shelter received a warrant in late June to enter the home to check the welfare of the dogs at the home on Oakwood NE in Grand Rapids. The dogs were taken to the Kent County Animal Shelter, where they were evaluated by the shelter veterinarian and each dog provided vaccinations. The findings of Animal Control Officers were sent to the Kent County Prosecutor's Office for review, which resulted in the felony charge. The dogs have been on hold pending the outcome of the case and review of a request by the shelter to forfeit the animals. Costs for boarding, feeding and medical care of the 37 dogs at KCAS are \$629 a day; the dogs have been at the shelter for 50 days as of today (total cost of over \$30,000). The order to turn the dogs over to KCAS does not indicate any judgment in the criminal charges against the defendant; the criminal case is still ongoing.

“Some of the dogs have severe behavioral and medical issues that require treatment,” said Kent County Animal Shelter Supervisor Carly Luttmann. “We are working with partner agencies to help transfer these dogs to places that can best meet their needs. As dogs are treated and deemed ready for adoption, they will be moved from KCAS on-hold status to adoption kennels.” The application to adopt from the Kent County Animal Shelter can be found at www.accesskent.com/KCAS. Dog adoption fees are only \$62, due to generous funding from the Bissell Pet Foundation. Spay/neuter and all age appropriate vaccinations are included in the adoption price and adopters are counseled on making an appointment at their personal veterinarian 2-3 weeks after adoption for a check-up and any needed vaccine boosters.

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KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and four satellite clinics located in Wyoming, Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.