

May 10, 2016

Dallas City Manager A.C. Gonzalez released the following statement Tuesday evening:

Last night, Dallas resident Antoinette Brown died from brutal injuries she sustained after a number of owned loose dogs attacked her last week. On behalf of the City of Dallas, I'd like to extend our deepest sympathies to Ms. Brown's family.

The dogs we believe attacked Ms. Brown are now in DAS custody, but the loose dog problem continues in southern Dallas. We are determined to find out what happened in this tragic situation so that we can bring irresponsible owners to account for their animals, if ownership can be proven. We are also working to correct and improve City systems to help prevent vicious dog attacks in the future and protect our community from loose dogs. We are providing additional protection to the neighborhood in which the attack happened.

We are also conducting a review of our policies and procedures to learn from this tragedy, identify ways to improve our response and help protect the citizens of Dallas. I've been meeting with Dallas Police Department (DPD) and Dallas Animal Services (DAS) leadership to review this situation. We have identified **several communication gaps** as the events of the last week unfolded. DPD did not immediately notify DAS about the attack, which is why DAS responded over the next few days to subsequent calls for loose dogs as routine calls.

After DPD informed DAS managers about the attack Thursday evening, the two departments coordinated a response for Friday morning, at which time the suspected dogs were taken into custody, where they remain. In addition, we did not properly identify a pattern of behavior that was developing and would have given us an opportunity to bring DPD into the loop sooner to investigate for criminal activity. We are fixing these gaps by changing procedures so that first responders arriving to the scene of a dog attack will immediately notify DAS. Technology changes are also in process to further help with this communication.



Since DAS learned about the attack, we've saturated the area with patrols, traps and additional DPD and DAS resources. DAS and DPD are creating a process to identify and share escalated incidents and information about repeat offenders. I have also asked the Marshal's Office to review and prioritize criteria for serving warrants resulting from animal citations.

The safety of residents is our top priority. For the long-term, we are evaluating a variety of tools to help influence the human behavior that leads to dogs running loose in our streets. These areas include education, enhanced enforcement of existing ordinances and possible creation of new ordinances. In addition, we are seeking ways to criminalize irresponsible behavior. That will only be possible by changes to state laws. DPD will address the criminal investigation as more information becomes available. A recent update has been provided on dpdbeat.net.

Ken Kalthoff, "History of Complaints Prior to Fatal Dog Attack in Dallas," NBC Dallas-Ft. Worth, May 10, 2016 (www.nbcdfw.com)
<http://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/History-of-complaints-prior-to-fatal-dog-attack-378894401.html>