

MINUTES
SEX OFFENDER RESIDENCE BOARD
Wednesday, October 8, 2014
City Hall, Room 310
2:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dean Gerondale, Ben Heiman, Renee Keehan

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Heidi Michel, Kathy De Cremer

ALSO PRESENT: Alderman Tom De Wane and Alderman David Nennig

The meeting was called to order by Dean Gerondale.

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion made by Renee Keehan to approve the September 10, 2014 Minutes, seconded by Ben Heiman. All in favor. Motion carried.

2. APPEALS

- (a) Appeal of Barry Watters, Jr. requesting to move to 511 Newtols Street

Barry Watters, Jr. failed to appear.

A motion to DENY the appeal of Barry Watters, Jr. was made by Dean Gerondale, seconded by Ben Heiman. All in favor. Motion carried.

- (b) Appeal of Eric B. DeWitt requesting to move to 1954 Packerland Drive

Eric appeared in person. Dean Gerondale advised Eric of his right to discuss treatment issues in closed session and informed him not to use the names of the victims.

Eric stated that at the time of the offense, he was both homeless and jobless. In order to make a little money, he would give rides to people. This included two girls who lived next door to a friend of his. On one occasion, they began drinking and ended up at the victim's house. The victim invited him to her bedroom where they had inappropriate sex. Eric realized what they were doing was wrong, so he left the room. A week later, he received a call from a detective. Later he decided to turn himself in. Eric was 22 years of age at the time and did not know the age of the victim.

Eric received five years probation and served 90 days in jail. He was released on August 26, 2014 and is currently staying with his mom at this address. His probation officer told him he needed to come before the board.

Eric is employed through Seek and works part time at Saputo Cheese. He recently received a call regarding full time employment working second shift.

Renee Keehan asked about his 200 hours of community service. Eric indicated he is volunteering at Paul's Pantry. In his free time, Eric enjoys weight lifting, going to friends' houses and spending time with his dad.

Eric would like to live with his mom and his younger brother.

Dean indicated that Eric's evaluation report states he has a "low risk" of reoffending; however, he should enroll in a treatment program. Eric stated his probation officer has placed him on the waiting list for sex offender treatment. Renee indicated he was also advised to attend drug and alcohol treatment.

Don De Witt, 1363 Mesa Drive (Eric's father), appeared on Eric's behalf. Don stated Eric made a very bad choice in 2013. He did something that was unacceptable but the events of the situation do not characterize him as a child predator. Two professional interviews support this belief. The misuse of alcohol and Facebook were contributing factors and these have been addressed in his probation. Since being released from jail six weeks ago, Eric has obtained a full time job, started his volunteer hours, helps the elderly lady next door with yard work and has reconnected with friends and family. Don feels allowing Eric to reside on Packerland Drive will not hurt anyone, but a decision to prevent him living there would not help anyone. Don asked that the board consider the individual circumstances in Eric's case rather than the umbrella term of a registered sex offender.

Eric stated he feels things are now going in the right direction.

A motion to APPROVE the appeal of Eric DeWitt, address specific, for a period of 90 days, was made by Renee Keehan, seconded by Ben Heiman. All in favor. Motion carried.

At the January meeting, Eric is to provide the board with alcohol and drug treatment documentation.

(c) Appeal of Terry L. Blevons requesting to move to 1011 Alpine Drive

Terry appeared in person. Dean Gerondale advised Terry of his right to discuss treatment issues in closed session and informed him not to use the names of the victims.

Terry stated that on the day of the offense, he and his fiancé had been drinking at the county fair. While driving the babysitter home, they had inappropriate conversations which led to inappropriate sexual activities. After about ten minutes, Terry realized it was wrong and drove her home.

Terry took total responsibility for what happened. He pled guilty in order to spare the victim from testifying. It was already an embarrassment for their families. Terry was about 37 years of age at the time.

Terry married his best friend, Ruth, eight months ago. Her job has relocated her from Sheboygan to Green Bay. Ruth's dad needs help and Terry would like to be here to help. This would be a temporary situation until they can find and afford their own apartment.

Terry is on disability. After being released from prison, he had a full time job for seven years. He lost his job due to a mental illness issue. Terry has a letter of support from Patricia Davis, Financial Manager of Embers Apartments, regarding his performance as the on-site manager the past seven years.

Renee Keehan asked Terry why he felt it was okay to have this inappropriate conversation with the babysitter. Terry stated he was like a father figure to her and she wanted his advice regarding things her boyfriend said. Through treatment, Terry now realizes he was probably going back to the days of his youth. He didn't initiate the conversation, but went along with it. They did not have sexual intercourse.

Terry believes his treatment programs were each nine months long. The goal was to identify your triggers. It teaches empathy for the victims. Alcohol played a big part in what happened that night and this was also discussed. He now only drinks occasionally.

Terry's children live in Sheboygan and he has contact with them. His daughter has two children and very much wants Terry in their lives. His younger brother also supports him and they contact each other from time to time.

Ruth Leonardo, 1011 Alpine Drive, is present to support Terry. She is Terry's wife. She has been with him for ten years. Terry is a very supportive and caring person. He is also a very aware person. He knows his boundaries and how to lead a good, decent life. Her job has relocated her to Green Bay and her father has physical needs. She needs to be close to him.

Bernard Schmitt, 1011 Alpine Drive, is present to support Terry. Terry is his son-in-law. Bernard owns this home and has lived here 25 years. Bernard is having surgery on October 20 and will need help at home. Ruth and Terry have made it easier for him and would have no problem with them living with him. Bernard feels Terry needs another chance, as he's had a lot of negative things over the years. Bernard believes in being a good Samaritan.

For the record, Dean Gerondale indicated he received a call from Alderman Nicholson who is opposed to allowing Terry to live here.

Ald. De Wane is present today because he is their alderman. He had concerns about Terry living here because another offender lives across the street. This could cause a problem for people trying to sell their homes. However, Ald. De Wane knows Mr. Schmitt (Terry's father-in-law) personally and trusts his judgment. There are a lot of schools in the area, but now knowing the details of the case and Terry's current situation, Ald. De Wane feels comfortable with him living here. The fact that Terry and his wife will be staying here temporarily until they can afford a place of their own eases his concern for the neighborhood.

Scott Vanidestine, president of the neighborhood association, is present at the meeting. He stated he did wonder why someone living in Sheboygan wanted to move to Green Bay. Now that he knows the situation, he is more comfortable with it.

Ruth, Terry's wife, wanted to clarify that the offense occurred 18 years ago and it was one incident.

A motion to APPROVE the appeal of Terry Blevens, address specific, was made by Renee Keehan, seconded by Ben Heiman.

Dean Gerondale stated he is opposed to the motion, although not from the short term standpoint. He does understand the situation and has empathy for it. However, despite knowing the person he's living with and the approval of the neighborhood, Dean does not believe everyone else would share that opinion. Dean would be more willing to vote yes for this if it was a temporary situation.

Two in favor, one against (Gerondale). Motion carried.

- (d) Appeal of Haisan Williams requesting to move to 957 Velp Avenue, Apt. 2

Haisan appeared in person. Dean Gerondale advised Haisan of his right to discuss treatment issues in closed session and informed him not to use the names of the victims.

Haisan stated the offense occurred in 1996. At the time, he did not know the victim's age, but knew she was a minor. The intent was to get something to eat after work and then take her home. They stopped at a spot by the water and ended up getting involved sexually. Haisan was 25 years old at the time. He received a five year sentence, but served 17 years because of other convictions. Haisan was released from prison in October 2013.

Haisan is currently on medical leave due to a shoulder injury. He is employed at Nakashima of Japan. Haisan will be living by himself.

A motion is made by Renee Keehan and seconded by Ben Heiman to move into closed session to discuss Haisan's treatment, pursuant to Section 146.82(1), Wis. Stats. All in favor. Motion carried. A motion is made by Renee Keehan and seconded by Ben Heiman to return to open session. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion to APPROVE the appeal of Haisan Williams, address specific, was made by Dean Gerondale, seconded by Ben Heiman. Renee Keehan stated she would like to see treatment documentation. Two in favor, one opposed (Keehan). Motion carried.

- (e) Appeal of Donald Peterson requesting to move to 1720 Western Avenue, Apt. 13

Donald appeared in person. Dean Gerondale advised Donald of his right to discuss treatment issues in closed session and informed him not to use the names of the victims.

Donald appeared before the board in August and was denied. Dean asked him what has changed since that time.

Donald stated he has been attending weekly group meetings at the ATTIC. He is learning more about what his problem was. He has attended 16 out of 50 sessions so far.

Donald needs to live with his wife, as he has no legs. He recently almost fell trying to get out of bed.

Dean Gerondale points out that Donald's September 4, 2014 Sex Offender Program Report shows "status unclear" in many areas. Donald stated Ms. Jordan didn't explain much to him at the time. He is currently seeing her.

Dean is glad the board finally has a report to refer to because previously they were drawing upon their own opinions. Dean is still not completely comfortable with the situation, but is more than he was previously. Dean wants to be sure Donald completes the program.

A motion to APPROVE the appeal of Donald Peterson, address specific, for a period of 120 days, was made by Dean Gerondale, seconded by Ben Heiman. All in favor. Motion carried.

At the February meeting, Donald is to provide the board with an updated treatment progress report.

- (f) Appeal of Jose J. Perez requesting to move to 230 Deleers Street

Mr. Perez called and asked that his appeal be withdrawn from the agenda.

- (g) Appeal of Brennan L. Dufrene requesting to move to 234 Deschane Place

Brennan appeared in person. Dean Gerondale advised Brennan of his right to discuss treatment issues in closed session and informed him not to use the names of the victims.

Brennan stated he was 17 and dating a girl age 14, almost 15. He is now 33 years old. They had a sexual phone conversation and the victim told him he should talk to her mother about it. Her mother came to the phone and only asked that they be gone when the victim's father came home. They got caught and three days later Brennan received a phone call from a detective. At the time, Brennan didn't know it was illegal because he was a minor and the victim was a minor. Now he can see how it would be illegal because he has a 14 year old daughter.

They waited until he was 18 to try him. He was found guilty and got a five year suspended sentence and five years active probation.

Most of Brennan's work is in Green Bay. He works for his landlord. During the winter months, they do a lot of snowplowing. Brennan will live with a friend.

Brennan is from Louisiana and that is why there is no one here to speak on his behalf. Since age 17, his life has been difficult because of this charge. It's difficult to get a good job because it has to be listed on his application. Brennan now feels he has a new lease on life.

A motion to APPROVE the appeal of Brennan Dufrene, address specific, was made by Renee Keehan, seconded by Ben Heiman. All in favor. Motion carried.

3. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting date of November 12, 2014 was confirmed.

A motion to adjourn was made by Renee Keehan, seconded by Ben Heiman. All in favor. Motion carried.