

Print This Page

Publication: Hartford Courant; Date: May 22, 2015; Section: Connecticut; Page: B8

ENFIELD

7th Lawsuit Filed Over 2013 Arrest

Claim Involving Police Dog Attack Made Against Former Officer Matthew Worden, Town

By **MIKAELA PORTER**
and **DAVE ALTIMARI**
mmporter@courant.com

ENFIELD — A seventh person has filed a civil lawsuit against the town and police department regarding an arrest made in August 2013 and naming embattled former officer Matthew Worden, among others.

Zachary Trowbridge, 25, of Milo, Maine, alleges that his rights were violated when Worden's police dog bit him on Aug. 31, 2013, when Worden and at least three other officers attempted to serve arrest warrants to Trowbridge and his brother at the family's Somers home, according to the lawsuit.

Trowbridge was wanted for failure to appear in court, according to the lawsuit. Attorneys A. Paul Spinella and David

Jaffe are representing Trowbridge.

Spinella said Trowbridge's family members, who were home at the time, witnessed Worden release the dog on Trowbridge as he walked out of the home with his arms raised.

"On the face of it, there was no probable cause of any kind to make use of that force, let alone deadly force," Spinella said Thursday. "In order to validate the use of force, there needs to be a cause, especially this type of force. There were no charges brought against Mr. Trowbridge, not even interference with police officers."

Spinella said Trowbridge suffers from post-traumatic stress and has substantial scarring from the dog bites.

According to a police report, Worden's dog, Falco, bit Trowbridge on his lower right leg for "approximately 10 seconds"

and the dog was ordered to do so only because Trowbridge ran out the back of the house and did not stop after being told, Worden wrote in his report.

Worden's report indicated that Trowbridge's brother, Joshua, stopped when police told him.

Elliot Spector, the attorney representing Worden on behalf of the town's insurance company, said that in Trowbridge's case, "it doesn't appear there was any wrongdoing" by Worden, who has resigned from the police department.

"[Trowbridge] was trying to escape out the back door," Spector said.

Spector said Worden was the "kind of officer that would take on responsibility and get the job done."

Police officers photographed Trow-

bridge's injuries at the Enfield Police Department and after he was taken by ambulance to Johnson Memorial Hospital, where he was treated for dog bites, according to the lawsuit.

This is the seventh lawsuit against the police department regarding the actions of Worden, who was fired in October 2014 after an internal affairs investigation that found he used excessive force during an arrest in May 2014. In February, Worden's status with the town changed to that of a resigned town employee, and he received \$10,000 as part of a settlement with the town, police department and police union.

Police Chief Carl Sferazza declined to comment.

Trowbridge is seeking damages, attorneys' fees and costs.