

Town council denies Osbourne's request to be reimbursed fine, defense fees

By ROBERT PIERCE and LARRY PHILLIPS • Leader & Times The Hooker, Okla., City Superintendent arrested for shooting and killing two stray dogs last December in the small Texas County town had his day in court.

Texas County Court Clerk M. Renee Ellis said Forest "Frosty" Osbourne made an initial court appearance in Guymon, Okla., on March 8. On that date, he also posted a cash bond of \$2,500 prior to sentencing and was released.

Ellis said Osbourne returned to court on March 14 for arraignment and sentencing. She said the city superintendent entered a plea of "no contest" on two counts of outraging public decency and was fined \$500 on each count. In a move that surprised many Hooker residents, Osbourne then put in a request to the Hooker Town Council to be reimbursed a little more than \$1,600, which would cover his fine, court costs and attorney's fees.

At the town council meeting last week, the council denied his request, according to a staffer at the city clerk's office.

Osbourne's troubles began when he shot and killed two stray dogs on Dec. 10, 2012, in the small Oklahoma Panhandle town, and a few days afterward, many in the community were outraged.

The public outcry immediately got Texas County Sheriff Rick Caddell involved with an investigation. Then, after three months, that investigation resulted in Osbourne's arrest March 8 on two misdemeanor counts.

Witnesses said Osbourne had also shot toward the school when he killed the dogs – thus jeopardizing children. However, investigator Texas County Deputy Matt Boley was unable to confirm those allegations.

Osbourne admitted killing the dogs in December 2012 and said in a written statement to the mayor and the town council he was helping acting chief of police Buddy Holbert to try and catch the dogs that day.

After several attempts to catch them or tranquilize them, Osbourne wrote, "I then determined that the only way to get the dogs was to dispose of them, which I did."

“At no time did Chief Holbert order me, tell me or ask me to make that decision.”

Deputy Boley made a statement in the Affidavit For Arrest saying, ‘Throughout this investigation, there has been a common opinion voiced from most of the individuals I have interviewed and that is ‘It could have been handled differently.’ There is no doubt Osborne’s actions have disrupted the community, causing outrage for those that were caring for the dogs and sadness for others in the way the situation was handled.”