Judgment rendered November 18, 2026.
Application for rehearing may be filed
within the delay allowed by Art. 2166,
La. C.C.P.

No. 57,151-CA

COURT OF APPEAL
SECOND CIRCUIT
STATE OF LOUISIANA

* * * * *

QUINTON DANIELS — Plaintiff-Appellant

versus

CADDO PARISH ANIMAL SERVICES AND MOSQUITO CONTROL (OR CADDO PARISH COMMISSION) — Defendant-Appellee

* * * * *

Appealed from the
First Judicial District Court for the
Parish of Caddo, Louisiana
Trial Court No. 657,642

Honorable Ramon Lafitte, Judge

* * * * *

YOCOM LAW FIRM, LLC — Counsel for Appellant
By: Jimmy "Jimbo" Yocom, Jr.
Stuart W. McMahen

DONNA Y. FRAZIER — Counsel for Appellee
Parish Attorney

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* * * * *

Before THOMPSON, ROBINSON, and HUNTER, JJ.

THOMPSON, J.

The Caddo Parish Animal Services and Mosquito Control classified a dog as a "dangerous dog" after it bit a human at the dog park. Such a classification subjects the dog to strict quarantine and safety protocols as well as neutering under the applicable Caddo Parish Ordinances.[1] The owner pursued administrative appeals, first to the Animal Service Board, then to the Caddo Parish Commission, and after that to the First Judicial District Court, all of which upheld the "dangerous dog" classification. The owner now appeals to this court after the two-day evidentiary hearing and *de novo* district court review proceeding, arguing that the trial court failed to rule in accordance with the specific language of the applicable Caddo ordinance requiring the attack by the dog be proven to have been unprovoked. Finding the record to reflect the court below appropriately considered the applicable ordinance, evidence, and testimony, and for the reasons more fully detailed below, we affirm the decision of the trial court in favor of Caddo Parish Animal Services.

FACTS AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

While at the City of Shreveport Dog Park on March 30, 2025, Devon Salvaterra ("Salvaterra") was bitten on the hand by a pitbull ("Ezekiel") owned by Quinton Daniels ("Daniels"). Salvaterra claims Ezekiel was unprovoked when he bit him while he was trying to shield his girlfriend's dog from attack. Officers with Caddo Parish Animal Services and Mosquito Control ("CPAS") are authorized by Caddo Parish Ordinance to investigate

[1] Caddo Parish Code of Ordinances Article I, Section 8-2 and Article II, Section 8-67.

reported animal bites. The Director of CPAS is empowered to make an initial administrative determination, and CPAS Director Travis Clark classified Ezekiel as a "dangerous" dog. Article I, Section 8-2 of the Caddo Parish Ordinance provides:

> Dangerous Dog means any dog that when unprovoked, shall be deemed a dangerous dog if it:
>
> 1. Bites, injures, or inflicts a bite on a human being or domestic animal either upon public property or those areas of private property that are unfenced and normally accessible to the public.
>
> 2. Chases or approaches a person upon the streets, sidewalks or public grounds in a terrorizing or menacing fashion or apparent attitude of attack.
>
> 3. Bites or injures animals or persons authorized to enter upon the owner's premises such as letter carriers, meter readers, trash collectors, repair persons, delivery persons or business customers provided that the persons authorized to enter upon the owner's premises shall not include unauthorized intruders such as burglars or trespassers in the owner's business, house or apartment or within a fenced area on the premises not normally accessible to the public. The director and/or his agents shall make all determinations that a dog is a dangerous dog.

Once a dog is classified as dangerous, CPAS is authorized to enforce strict ongoing compliance conditions,[2] including:

- Mandatory dangerous dog collar and microchip implantation
- Confinement in an approved, locked physical enclosure
- Display of warning signs at all property entrance points
- Four-foot leash and muzzle requirements when off premises
- Discretionary/mandatory spaying or neutering, and

[2] Caddo Parish Ordinance Article II, Section 8-67(a)(3).

- Ongoing property inspections and hold-harmless/indemnification agreements.

Daniels asserts that the initial classification by the CPAS Director and subsequent affirmations of that classification have incorrectly strayed from the wording of the ordinance and relied on some threshold number of other biting incidents, and points out the ordinance contains no such considerations.

Daniels is correct in noting the record contains discussion of other bites by the dog. While investigating this incident, CPAS established from its records that Ezekiel had been involved in two prior bite incidents involving humans. The record shows that, in total, Ezekiel was involved in three separate biting incidents reported by CPAS:

1. In May of 2024, at Daniels' residence, Ezekiel bit an insurance adjuster.

2. In November of 2024, at Daniels' business, Ezekiel bit a customer of the business.

3. On March 30, 2025, at the City of Shreveport Dog Park, Ezekiel bit Devon Salvaterra on his hand while he was protecting his girlfriend's dog from Ezekiel.

The initial CPAS classification of Ezekiel as a dangerous dog appears to emphasize these incidents in reaching its conclusion. CPAS notes that in each of the three incidents, Ezekiel bit a human. The record shows that the first biting incident resulted in Daniels being permitted to conduct a veterinary quarantine of Ezekiel outside of CPAS's custody without further restriction. After the second biting incident, which occurred at Daniels' business, CPAS interviewed the victim who identified Ezekiel as the dog who bit him and gathered corroborating evidence, including hospital medical

records and a photograph of the victim's injury. The record also shows that Daniels was not cooperative with Animal Control during the second bite investigation and was ultimately cited for hindering an investigation. In the current attack on Salvaterra, CPAS was unable to contact Daniels, necessitating the warrant to search his home for Ezekiel. On April 4, 2025, CPAS executed a warrant at Daniels' residence to impound Ezekiel. On April 15, 2025, CPAS issued formal written notification designating Ezekiel as a "Dangerous Dog" relying in large part on the fact there had been three bites within a twelve-month period and recommended full enforcement of the dangerous dog provisions.

Daniels requested an administrative appeal of the classification by CPAS before the hearing officer/Animal Services Board, which occurred on April 22, 2025. Attending that hearing were Daniels, the victim, Salvaterra, and animal control officers. The Animal Services Board voted to uphold CPAS's initial finding and maintained Ezekiel's designation as a "Dangerous Dog."

Daniels then appealed the Animal Services Board's ruling to the full Caddo Parish Commission (sitting in its administrative appellate capacity). On May 8, 2025, the Caddo Commission heard Daniels' appeal of CPAS's decision to impound Ezekiel and declare him a dangerous dog, pursuant to Caddo Parish Ordinance Article I, Section 8-2. The record contains an excerpt from the Caddo Commission's minutes on that day which provide the following facts: Animal Services Director, Travis Clark, testified before the Caddo Commission and stated that the Animal Services Board deemed Ezekiel dangerous, in accordance with Section 8-2. Clark stated the dog bite

occurred at the Shreveport dog park, and the bite was confirmed after making contact with the bite victim. Clark stated that Ezekiel's owner, Daniels, was not able to provide current rabies vaccination information, so the animal was seized and quarantined at the animal shelter. Clark stated that the animal was vaccinated while in custody. Clark stated that this was the third alleged bite by Ezekiel in one year's time.

The record reflects in addition to discussion about prior bites that there was in fact direct inquiry as to whether the dog was provoked. During the hearing, Commissioner John Paul Young specifically questioned whether there was any evidence that Ezekiel was provoked. This inquiry is notable as it addresses the threshold consideration of provocation, as required by Section 8-2 of the Caddo Parish Ordinance. Commissioner Young also noted that the previous dog bites were irrelevant to the current matter.

The victim, Devon Salvaterra, testified at the hearing. Salvaterra stated that Ezekiel attempted to bite his girlfriend's dog, Gizmo, with no provocation. Salvaterra inserted himself between the two dogs, and when he did, Ezekiel bit him. Commissioner Young stated that to deem a dog dangerous, it does not have to bite, it only has to attack. Based on the testimonies provided, the Commission upheld the Animal Service Board's decision to deem Ezekiel dangerous.

Daniels then appealed Caddo Commission's determination that Ezekiel was a dangerous dog to the Caddo Parish District Court. A two-day hearing took place on November 17 and 18, 2025. Several witnesses appeared at the hearing including Daniels; Rebecca Reno, Daniels' girlfriend; the victim, Salvaterra; Casey Thompson and Colin Neville with

the Shreveport Police Department; Germanius Thomas and Ramone Washington with CPAS Animal Control; and Jordan Young, an eyewitness.

At the trial court, Salvaterra, the bite victim, testified that Ezekiel ran to the area in the dog park where he was playing with his girlfriend's dog, Gizmo, and some other dogs who were also present chasing a Frisbee. Salvaterra testified Ezekiel initially tried to bite Gizmo. Salvaterra inserted himself between the two dogs, and Ezekiel lunged at him, trying to bite his inner thigh. Salvaterra testified that he used his right hand to try to block the dog's head, and realizing the dog was trying to bite him in a sensitive area, grabbed the collar of the dog to gain control. Salvaterra testified that while that happened, Ezekiel managed to bite him on the right hand over his thumb. Salvaterra testified that Ezekiel's owner was not nearby during the incident and approached him after the attack had occurred. Salvaterra was treated at the scene for the bite to his hand, and spoke with Shreveport Police Department officers, as well as Animal Control officers.

Corporal Casey Thompson and Sergeant Colin Neville with the Shreveport Police Department testified regarding their response to the incident. Both testified that they spoke to Salvaterra and Daniels at the dog park after the bite and observed the injuries Salvaterra sustained to his hand. Body camera footage of Ezekiel from Corporal Thompson and Sergeant Neville was introduced into evidence and played for the trial court.

Germanius Thomas, an Animal Control officer, testified that he responded to the dog park following the bite incident. Thomas testified that Daniels and Ezekiel were no longer present at the dog park when he arrived. Thomas testified that he spoke with the Shreveport Police officers who had

responded the scene. Thomas testified that he obtained information on the dog who bit Salvaterra from the police officers, who identified the dog as Ezekiel and the dog's owner as Quinton Daniels. Thomas testified that when he entered the dog's information into the centralized software database used by CPAS, Pet Point System, he noticed that the Ezekiel, as identified by the police officers, had two previous reported dog bites.

Ramone Washington, an Animal Control officer, testified that he was Thomas's supervisor at Animal Control. Washington testified that the day after the March 30, 2025 bite incident, he went to Daniels' business and attempted to make contact with him, to no avail. As part of the investigation, Washington also ran a search of Daniels and Ezekiel through the Pet Point System. Washington testified that he saw two prior bite incidents in the system, from May of 2024 and November of 2024, involving Ezekiel. Washington testified that he investigated the November 2024 bite incident himself, recalling that an individual who was at Daniels' business was bit by Ezekiel in the leg and required treatment at the emergency room. Washington confirmed that after investigating multiple bites, including the March 30, 2025 incident at the dog park, the Animal Services Board Director determined Ezekiel was a dangerous dog.

Daniels' girlfriend, Rebecca Reno, was at the dog park on the date of the bite. Reno testified and admitted she was looking down, eating crawfish during most of the incident. She admitted to looking up only after she heard commotion from the dogs. Reno testified that Ezekiel did not bite Salvaterra, but another dog in the group bit him. An eyewitness, Jordan Young, who was called by Daniels to testify, stated that she did not

personally witness the moment Salvaterra was bitten by a dog, but observed Salvaterra holding Ezekiel up by his collar.

Daniels testified and denied the bite allegations against Ezekiel from March 30, 2025. Daniels admits that he was not close enough to the incident in the dog park to observe exactly what occurred. Daniels testified that he did not see Ezekiel bite Salvaterra. Daniels admitted that he and Salvaterra had a heated confrontation after Salvaterra was bit, and he admitted to observing the bite injury to Salvaterra's hand. Daniels testified that he left the scene with Ezekiel before the Animal Control officer arrived.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the trial court issued an oral ruling, affirming the decision of the Caddo Parish Commission and Caddo Parish Animal Services Board that Ezekiel is a dangerous dog, pursuant to Caddo Ordinance Section 8-2. The trial judge stated: "The Court is prepared to make its ruling based on the evidence that has been submitted. The Court did listen carefully to all of the witnesses and weighed their credibility, and in some cases, the lack thereof." During his ruling, the trial judge spoke regarding the March 30, 2025, bite incident at issue:

> Third incident which we are here concerning was in […] March of 2025 which occurred at the dog park here in Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Louisiana whereby Mr. Salvaterra […] was bitten by a dog. Ms. Reno indicated that when she heard the commotion between several dogs and looked up, Mr. Salvaterra had picked Ezekiel up by the collar. She indicated that she did not see Ezekiel bite Mr. Ezekiel. It's her testimony that another dog bit Mr. Salvaterra.
>
> Mr. Daniels indicated at the park, first he indicated he did not see a bite, then he stated or told the Board, Animal Services Board, that he did not see the bite and stated he did not know what dog bit Mr. Salvaterra. When I questioned him he

> indicated his dog, Ezekiel, did not bite Mr. Salvaterra and that he did not take his eye off his dog. I find that pretty hard to believe that you're sitting under a pavilion eating with your girlfriend and watching your dog 100 percent of the time.
>
> I do believe Ezekiel was involved in all three of these incidents, three incidents occurred in a span of ten months. This is less than a year. I concur with the Commission that Ezekiel is in fact a dangerous dog having bit someone, in the Court's opinion, three times in the span of ten months. As such the Court does confirm the decision of the Commission.

After the trial court issued his oral ruling, counsel for Daniels stated: "I know Mr. Daniels' big concern is the neuter, and he would like to follow this as far as it can go in terms of appeals because he does not believe that is healthy for the dog to be neutered[.]" Counsel for Daniels also stated that his client was prepared to pay continued boarding fees to comply with every other aspect of the dangerous dog determination, except for the required neuter. The trial court took the neuter issue under advisement to discuss with all counsel at a later date.

On February 2, 2026, the trial judge issued a signed judgment classifying Ezekiel as dangerous, pursuant to Caddo Parish Ordinance Article I, Section 8-2. The written judgment also referred to requirements, pursuant to Caddo Parish Ordinance Article II, Section 8-67(a)(3), for properly identifying and securing Ezekiel as a dangerous dog. One of those requirements provided: "The animal control center, in its discretion, may require a dangerous dog to be spayed or neutered."

Daniels filed for a suspensive appeal but failed to timely pay the required appeal bond. On May 18, 2026, the trial court heard Caddo Parish's motion to vacate the appeal or alternatively convert the suspensive

appeal for failure to post the required security. At the hearing, counsel for Daniels informed the trial court that he had elected to neuter Ezekiel and had paid half of the boarding fees, as Ezekiel had remained in Animal Control's custody for over a year while this matter was pending. The trial court converted the suspensive appeal to a timely devolutive appeal. Daniels now devolutively appeals Ezekiel's classification as a dangerous dog, asserting four assignments of error, which all relate to the interpretation of Caddo Parish Ordinance Section 8-2.

DISCUSSION

Assignment of Error No. 1: The district court committed legal error by affirming a dangerous dog classification based on a two or more bites or three bites within 10 months criterion that does not appear in Caddo Parish Code of Ordinances section 8-2.

Assignment of Error No. 2: The district court committed legal error by confirming the classification without determining whether Ezekiel engaged in qualifying conduct when unprovoked, an express element common to every prong of Section 8-2.

Assignment of Error No. 3: The district court committed legal error by treating the number of alleged incidents as dispositive instead of identifying and applying a specific Section 8-2 prong to each incident relied upon.

Assignment of Error No. 4: Because the wrong legal standard materially interdicted the factfinding process and the judgment contains no finding on the omitted element, the judgment must be vacated and the case remanded for adjudication under the correct standard.

Daniels argues that this matter turns on the text of the applicable Caddo Parish Ordinance, Section 8-2, which defines a dangerous dog through three enumerated forms of conduct occurring when unprovoked. Daniels argues that there is not a requirement that two reports, three incidents, or any other specific number of bites automatically produces a dangerous-dog classification. Daniels argues that provocation was disputed

in the March 2025 dog park incident, and the record contains differing accounts of whether the contact occurred before or while Salvaterra was holding Ezekiel's collar.

Daniels argues that Ezekiel's classification as a dangerous dog and resulting seizure occurred because of a "two-bite trigger" that is not contained in the pertinent ordinance. Daniels urges that the applicable ordinance does not have a numerical requirement, but rather requires a determination on provocation, which could not be established in these incidents. Daniels also argues that the trial court did not determine which enumerated prong of Section 8-2 each incident met. Daniels also argues that Section 8-67 prohibits Animals Services and the district court from applying a "two or more bites" standard to Ezekiel, since it is not contained in the text of Section 8-2.

In response to Daniels' arguments, the Parish of Caddo asserts that the determination by the district court that Ezekiel is a dangerous dog should be affirmed. Caddo Parish notes that the district court held a two-day, *de novo* evidentiary hearing on the matter, listened carefully to multiple witnesses, and weighed their credibility. The trial court specifically noted that it made its determination pursuant to the relevant Caddo Parish Ordinance, Article I, Section 8-2. Caddo Parish argues that the trial court's conclusion that Ezekiel bit on three separate occasions, in violation of Section 8-2, drew the necessary inference that the dog's behavior was unprovoked in each instance. Caddo Parish notes that the ordinance does not require two or more unprovoked bites, or merely two or more bites, to warrant a dangerous dog classification. Only one unprovoked bite under any of the three

circumstances provided in Section 8-2 authorizes the Animal Services Director to deem a dog dangerous. Caddo Parish asserts that Salvaterra's testimony alone established that Ezekiel bit him, and the bite was unprovoked. The two additional incidents in which Ezekiel was accused of biting other people so close in time to this third incident helped resolve any ambiguity regarding Ezekiel's dangerous behavior.

Under the manifest error standard of review, a factual finding cannot be set aside unless the appellate court finds that it is manifestly erroneous or clearly wrong. *State v. OptumRx, Inc.*, 25-00911, p. 2 (La. 11/12/25), 422 So. 3d 754, 757, *reh'g denied*, 25-00911 (La. 2/3/26), 425 So. 3d 837. In order to reverse a factfinder's determination, an appellate court must review the record in its entirety and (1) find that a reasonable factual basis does not exist for the finding, and (2) further determine that the record establishes that the factfinder is clearly wrong or manifestly erroneous. The appellate court must not reweigh the evidence or substitute its own factual findings because it would have decided the case differently. *Id*. The issue to be decided by the reviewing court is not whether the trier of fact was right or wrong, but whether the factfinder's conclusion was a reasonable one.

Where there are two permissible views of the evidence, the factfinder's choice between them cannot be manifestly erroneous or clearly wrong. Where the factfinder's conclusions are based on determinations regarding the credibility of witnesses, the manifest error standard demands great deference to the trier of fact, because only the trier of fact can be aware of the variations in demeanor and tone of voice that bear so heavily on the listener's understanding and belief in what is said. *Id*. Where there is

conflicting testimony, reasonable inferences of fact should not be disturbed on review. *Temple v. Ballard*, 56,407 (La. App. 2 Cir. 11/19/25), 425 So. 3d 206, *reh'g denied* (1/8/26), *writ denied*, 26-00144 (La. 4/9/26), 429 So. 3d 726; *Rosell v. ESCO*, 549 So. 2d 840 (La. 1989).

As noted above, Caddo Parish Code of Ordinances Section 8-2 provides that a dog may be deemed dangerous, when unprovoked, if it:

1. Bites or injures a human being or domestic animal on public property or on unfenced private property normally accessible to the public;
2. Chases or approaches a person on streets, sidewalks, or public grounds in a terrorizing or menacing fashion or apparent attitude of attack; or
3. Bites or injures specified persons authorized to enter the owner's premises, excluding unauthorized intruders.

For the March 30, 2025 bite of Salvaterra, our inquiry includes reviewing the trial court and confirming if there was: (1) either an approach in a menacing fashion or a bite on public property by the dog; and (2) a determination of if the dog was unprovoked. We find the trial court did not commit manifest error in declaring Ezekiel a dangerous dog. The trial court was not clearly wrong in determining that Ezekiel's actions on March 30, 2025 satisfied the elements contained in the plain language of Caddo Ordinance Section 8-2. The trial court heard live testimony, assessed witness credibility, reviewed documentary, photographic, and video evidence; his factual findings are entitled to great deference by this Court. While the trial judge did not specifically mention the term "unprovoked" in issuing his ruling, his determination that Ezekiel's behavior satisfied the

requirements of Section 8-2 is supported by the record. The trial judge had the benefit of the testimony of the victim that he did not provoke the dog and that the dog charged right at him, contrasted by the testimony of Daniels that the dog was provoked. The trial judge was presented with two descriptions of the events in determining if the dog was provoked or not and clearly concluded the dog was unprovoked.

Daniels correctly notes and directs the attention of this court to the discussions below of how many bites were attributed to the dog within a twelve-month period as having played in a factor in classifying the dog as dangerous. However, embedded in the analysis of every appellate review of the original CPAS classification of the dog as dangerous has also been consideration of whether the dog's actions were unprovoked. The Animal Services Board heard the testimony of the victim and his description of the events on the day he was attacked and bitten. The appeal to the Caddo Parish Commission included specific inquiries as to the issue of provocation. The First Judicial District Court had the benefit of the record and the live testimony over two days, including that of the victim, detailing the events leading to the attack and how the attack was unprovoked.

Caddo Parish points out that an appeal is from the judgment, not the reasons for judgment. *Union Federal Credit Union v. Thornton*, 49,529 (La. App. 2 Cir. 1/28/15), 162 So. 3d 414, *writ denied*, 15-0404 (La. 5/1/15), 119 So. 3d 375. Furthermore, as noted above, the testimony of the victim alone supports the elements of a dangerous dog determination in this case – the unprovoked bite on public property. The trial court found Salvaterra to be

credible. Accordingly, we find that Daniels' assignments of error are without merit.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth above, the judgment of the trial court judge is affirmed. Costs are assessed to the appellant, Quinton Daniels.

AFFIRMED.