


Federal lawsuit involving Geist the dog can proceed, judge rules

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Pat Reavy

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SALT LAKE CITY — A federal judge has ruled the civil case involving Geist the

dog and the Salt Lake City Police Department will continue.

In December, Salt Lake City asked a federal judge to make Sean Kendall, the owner of a dog shot and killed by police, take a \$10,000 settlement that the city claims he originally agreed to but later rejected.

But on Tuesday, U.S. District Judge Robert Shelby ruled there was never an agreement in writing, and that Kendall is not bound to the verbal agreement the city claims he made.

"Nothing about the agreement, the parties' correspondence or their actions demonstrates an intent to be bound by an oral agreement. The evidence does not indicate there was a meeting of the minds, and in fact indicates the opposite: it suggests that neither party believed itself bound by the \$10,000 oral agreement nor wished to be bound by the agreement," the judge ruled.

Because of that, Kendall's \$2 million lawsuit against the city and the police department will proceed.

In June of 2014, Salt Lake police were looking for a missing 3-year-old boy. Officer Brett Olsen went into a fenced backyard at 2465 S. 1500 East while conducting a yard-to-yard search. There, he was confronted by Geist. The confrontation resulted in Olsen shooting and killing the dog.

The shooting sparked outrage from residents and animal advocates across the nation.

A civilian review board cleared Olsen of any wrongdoing. Kendall filed a civil rights lawsuit, contending that Olsen and other officers were negligent in their search by failing to thoroughly check the 3-year-old boy's home, where he was later found asleep in the basement.

The city admits that Olsen entered the yard and shot Geist but denies many of the other allegations made in Kendall's suit.

A hearing is scheduled for next week on Kendall's motion for summary judgment.