

Sleepy Eye couple faces mistreating animal charges

Fritz Busch

SLEEPY EYE - Felony mistreat animal-torture and misdemeanor mistreat animal-deprive of food/shelter were filed against a Sleepy Eye couple Monday in Brown County District Court.

Remote zoom hearings for Aaron Scott Grubham Sr., 36; and Krista Michelle Grubham, 37 of Sleepy Eye were set for 8:30 a.m. March 19.

According to court documents, Sleepy Eye Police Officer Amber Meyer was working Jan. 15 when she was contacted by a witness who said he needed her to meet him at this Sleepy Eye rental property on the 100 block, Main Street.

The man said there was a water leak on the second floor of his rental property, he unable to contact the renters so he entered the property.

Officer Meyer noticed frozen water going down the front of the building, covering a glass window to a business below and frozen water covering the sidewalk. It appeared the leak came from the second floor due to the way the water froze and where it was frozen.

The outside air temperature was minus 10 degrees F. without windchill and was even lower the previous few days with wind-chills.

The property owner said he entered the rental unit and found a dog locked in a room, starved to death.

Officer Meyer entered the room and saw large amounts of feces on the floor, chewed up cardboard, clothing, garbage, chewed items and empty containers, many turned upside down.

Clearing a doorway, officer Meyer saw a medium-sized dog's body sprawled on a large piece of chewed cardboard. Officer Meyer reported seeing all of the bones in the dog's body.

Photographing the apartment, Sleepy Eye Police Investigator Shawn Bohnen noticed a full, sealed bag of dog food in the living room. The property owner told Investigator Bohnen a pipe froze because the apartment thermostat was turned off. He added that the water heater was turned off.

On Jan. 26, Investigator Bohnen received an email from the New Ulm Regional Vet Center that read that a surgical examination to determine why the dog died listed emaciation, dehydration and anemia and concluded emaciation (absence of body fat and muscle from malnutrition) had sufficient severity to have caused the death of the animal. An underlying disease process potentially resulting in the catastrophic nutritional state was not detected.