Charge announced in dog attack that killed 8-year-old boy in January

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Today, the State Attorney for Florida's 18th Judicial Circuit charged Amanda Franco for the attack by her dangerous dog that killed 8-year-old Michael Millett on Jan. 13 near DeLand.

Franco's dog, Kronos, was one of two that attacked Michael in January while he was riding his bike with a friend inside the gated Berry's Ridge subdivision. The dogs had frequently escaped a nearby property on Airport Road where Franco lived with a housemate, the other dog's owner. Both dogs were impounded and euthanized by Volusia County Animal Services after the fatal attack.

Franco's charge under Florida Statute 767.136 is a second-degree misdemeanor punishable by up to 60 days in jail and a fine of up to $500.

State Attorney Will Scheiner joined Sheriff Chitwood in Volusia County today for a news conference announcing and explaining the charging decision. VSO detectives investigated the case, which was reassigned to Scheiner's office for a charging decision due to a conflict of interest cited by our local State Attorney's Office.

Both Scheiner and Sheriff Chitwood stated the 2nd degree misdemeanor charge was inadequate in seeking justice for Michael, but that the law did not support a charge of felony manslaughter, which requires proof beyond a reasonable doubt of culpable negligence.

"My role as a state attorney and as a prosecutor is not to make new law; it is to enforce the laws that are present," Scheiner told reporters at the news conference. "I don't get to interpret them. I have to enforce them, and unfortunately my hands are tied in this scenario, and that's the only charge that can be filed."

"If you have a heartbeat, you have to say this isn't right," Sheriff Chitwood said. "But the law has to catch up, and the way the law catches up is in Tallahassee. And again, I would implore people: Contact your representatives, contact your senators, and say this has to change. Because it's going to happen again."

Scheiner met with Michael's family on Tuesday in Viera to inform them of the charging decision. He said "probably the hardest conversation I've had in my career was talking to that family yesterday."

Update: 8/15/25

CASE UPDATE: The owners of the 2 dogs involved in the January attack that killed 8-year-old Michael Millett near DeLand are now each facing an additional charge of tampering with evidence, a third-degree felony.

Brandy Lee Hodil, 40, DeLand, was arrested Thursday night at her residence. Amanda Franco, who has

also been charged under Florida’s dangerous dogs statute, has not been taken into custody yet as of this post.

The new felony charges were the result of a thorough VSO investigation and coordination with the State Attorney’s Office for the 18th Judicial Circuit, which announced the initial charge earlier this week.

Detectives found that during their investigation, Franco deleted her Facebook account, which contained messages between her and a neighbor about her dogs’ violent tendencies. Franco later created a new account in April, while she was still under investigation. Hodil, Franco’s roommate and owner of the second dog, deleted specific messages between her and the neighbor about the dogs being loose the night of the incident. Through execution of a search warrant, detectives also discovered Hodil searched how to deactivate her account and messenger.

Hodil posted $7,500 bond and was released from jail Friday morning. Efforts to locate and arrest Franco are continuing.

Original posting was posted at the below VSO web link

https://www.volusiasheriff.gov/news/volusia-county-sheriff/charge-announced-in-dog-attack-that-killed-8-year-old-boy-in-january.stml