

# Some of seized pit bulls might be adoptable

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A Chicago dog trainer and animal behaviorist believes many of the 37 pit bulls seized from a South Holland home last month can be rehabilitated and even adopted.

But pending the outcome of a forfeiture hearing, the fate of the dogs may rest with the animal shelters where they are housed.

Curtis Scott, the owner of Chicago-based Canis Familiaris, has worked with several of the pit bulls found at Kevin Taylor's home during the July 13 raid by the Cook County Sheriff's Department.

Scott said some the older pit bulls could be put down.

"Those are the ones in great danger," he said, adding the pit bulls range in age from 9 months to 3 years old and the puppies could be adoptable.

Cook County Judge Camille Willis is expected to rule Tuesday whether Taylor should keep the dogs, which have been staying at four Chicagoland animal shelters.

Citing animal cruelty, including knowingly isolating the dogs and limiting access to food and water -- among other allegations -- the Cook County state's attorney's office has sought to take the dogs from Taylor.

Taylor, arrested the morning of the raid, remains jailed on a \$100,000 bond

and is charged with two felonies and 39 misdemeanors after authorities turned up 37 pit bulls and two other breeds of dogs, in addition to paraphernalia for breeding and training fighting dogs during the raid of his home, at 15909 S. Cottage Grove Ave.

Scott, who has 15 years of experience as a certified professional dog trainer and behavior counselor, worked with 17 of the pit bulls taken to the Chicago Animal Care and Control shelter on Western Avenue.

Sixteen of those dogs were friendly toward people, yet remained wary, he said.

"One of the females was fearful," Scott said. "It took me a while to coax her out of the cage and once outside her whole body posture was submissive."

But the dogs didn't show aggression towards people or towards other dogs, Scott said.

"Most were beat up mentally. The dogs from South Holland will need a little more work, but I can see they want the closeness with people," he said.

"They'll need some training. They'll need to learn trust.

"They do deserve a first chance because they never got it."

If Willis rules in Taylor's favor, the state could petition for the dogs to remain as evidence in shelters until an outcome is reached in a criminal trial, Cook County state's attorney's office spokeswoman Tandra Simonton said.

If the judge rules in favor of the state, the shelters could open up an adoption screening process.