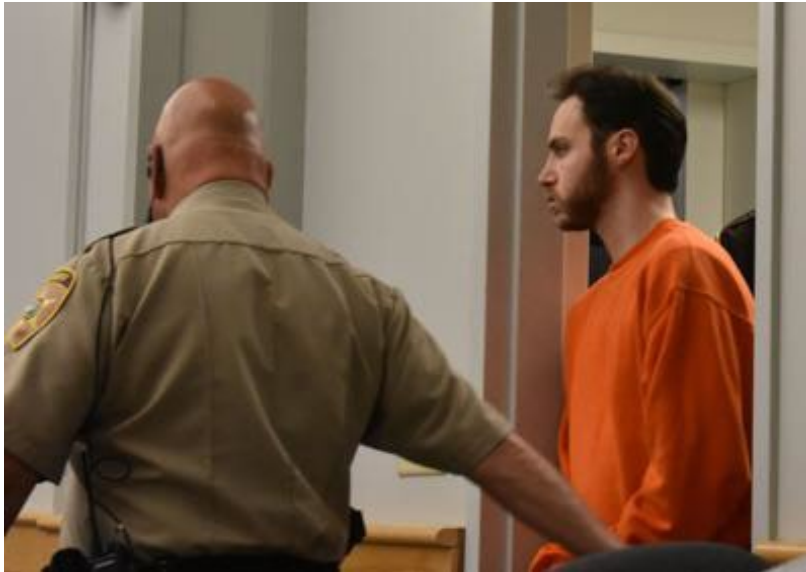


# Wolfeboro man sentenced up to 12 years for killing as many as a dozen cats

- [By John Koziol Union Leader Correspondent](#)
- May 9, 2024 Updated 12 hrs ago
- 



Brendan Elwell enters the Carroll County Superior Court courtroom of Judge Mark Attorri on Thursday where he later pleaded guilty to six counts of felony animal cruelty.

OSSIPEE — A Wolfeboro man who in 2020 killed as many as a dozen cats and kittens pleaded guilty Thursday to six counts of felony animal cruelty and was ordered to serve between 5 and 12 years in New Hampshire State Prison.

Brendan Elwell, 28, was sentenced by Carroll County Superior Court Judge Mark Attorri.

Assistant Carroll County Attorney Christopher Mignanelli said what Elwell did to the cats that he obtained online, with a promise to their former owners of giving them a “good home,” was nightmarish and unparalleled in his experience, and, possibly the history of New Hampshire.

He said it was “very tough in words” to describe what happened to the cats and kittens once they fell into Elwell’s grasp, but Mignanelli tried, saying it was “a pattern of torture of these animals” for months.

Elwell did what he did purposefully, Mignanelli noted, and “the exhibits (in the case) all speak for themselves.”

“I’ve never had a case like this,” Mignanelli told Attorri, adding “The State of New Hampshire has never had a case like this.”

Between 11 and 12 cats and kittens were “adopted, mutilated and tortured” by Elwell, said Mignanelli.

Forensic veterinarian Dr. Jerilee Zezula, who is co-chair of the Governor’s Commission on the Humane Treatment of Animals, gave an impact statement for the prosecution about the horrors the cats and kittens went through.

Cats are sentient beings, she said, and like human beings, can feel pain, hunger and thirst but also “fear, terror, panic and paralysis.”

Having viewed photos and video shot by Elwell of his abuse of the cats, Zezula said was Elwell “was a sadistic, malicious predator of these cats.”

Elwell who, according to court documents, had left cat remains on public trails in his hometown, came to the attention of Wolfeboro police, who were able to rescue two kittens and a cat and to arrest Elwell in June 2021.

Zezula asked Attorri to sentence Elwell to the maximum allowed by law and to monitor Elwell “for the rest of his life.”

Defense attorney Joseph Garrison said his client was helpful in the investigation against him and that Elwell has been remorseful, that he understands “what he did was wrong” and regrets doing it.

Rather than going to state prison, Garrison asked Attorri to sentence Elwell, who’d served 1,049 days of pre-sentencing confinement, to an additional 12 months in the Carroll County House of Corrections, noting that if Elwell doesn’t display good behavior while on probation, he risked going to prison “with a lot of time on his head” if the suspended sentences are imposed.

Elwell told Attorri that “I can’t find the words to express how sorry I am,” later adding that he wished he could “take back” what he’d done.

Attorri, who called Elwell’s actions “incomprehensible,” said he nonetheless felt Elwell was remorseful. Noting that there are “some very deep issues going on” in Elwell, Attorri said that state prison, because of the resources it can offer Elwell, is a better place for him to be than a county jail.