

# Dog Park Exploratory Committee Meeting Minutes

**PROJECT:** Dog Park

**MEETING MINUTES**

**RECORDED BY:** Melonie Trang

**MEETING PURPOSE:** Discuss the development of a Dog Park

**MEETING DATE:** October 7, 2008 at the Billings Community Center

**DOG PARK COMMITTEE:**

**CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVES:** Suzanne (Sue) Bressler, Marcia Clausing, Kay Haire, Warren Osik, Ellie Whitney

**PRC BOARD REPRESENTATIVES:** Rachael Cox, James Strecker

**PRPL STAFF:** Mike Whitaker, Mark Jarvis, Melonie Trang

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Sue Bressler called the meeting to order at 7:35 am.

**1) Roll Call:**

All members were present except for PRPL Director Mike Whitaker, PRC Board Representative James Strecker, committee members Warren Osik and Ellie Whitney. Special guests include Veterinarian Doctor Ed Jordan.

**2) Approval of Minutes:**

Committee members reviewed the September 9<sup>th</sup> minutes and it was noted under heading *High Sierra* it should read “a gentleman from *Douglas County*” instead of “*Franklin County*”.

Marcia Clausing made a motion to accept the minutes with the correction. Rachel Cox seconded. All were in favor and motion carried.

**3) Additions to the Agenda:**

No additions were made to the agenda.

**4) High Sierra Park Update:**

- **Cost Estimate:**

Mark Jarvis passed around a working copy summarizing estimated costs from local vendors for irrigation, fencing, drinking water, benches, shade structures and hard surfaces for the High Sierra Dog Park. He said costs would be around \$137,000 with the greatest cost coming from irrigation. He explained that the cost is primarily for parts/materials and does not include labor costs.

Mr. Jarvis said he spoke with Dean Sjolseth Park Supervisor on doing some of the grading and filling in house. This would be cost efficient in filling in some of the lower lying areas in park.

Mr. Jarvis went over line items needed for the park on the summarized cost list. Those are as follows:

- Should have maintenance gates for mowing and etc. They will be secured.
- A concrete ADA sidewalk from the parking lot to the entrance and then the entrance area would be concrete. This would give everyone accessibility to the park.
- Possible fabric shelters since they are less expensive than a fixed structure.
- Benches- probably start with 5 benches scattered throughout the dog park.

Comments and ideas during the line items discussion are as follows:

- A suggestion was made to put the shade structure by the entrance.
- Another suggestion was to have a shade structure that straddled the fence to serve both large areas.
- Considering using farm hydrants for drinking water and put them in each area. They are also inexpensive.
- Have two separate drinking fountains. One would be for humans and a lower one for dogs.

• **High Sierra Master Plan Update:**

Mr. Jarvis said he is doing some research on whether High Sierra residents have signed a waiver of protest. Waivers that have been signed by residents cannot protest against any development of the park; if waivers are not signed then the residents could protest the development of the dog park. He hopes to have an answer by the next meeting.

Mr. Jarvis said he would like to have a plan in place for the construction and maintenance of the Dog Park before going to city residents for their comments. He said once the plan has been created and presented to the public it will go before the Park and Recreation Board for a recommendation; following the PRC Board it would to a Council Work Session for review and then to the Council for a final vote of approval.

**5) Fundraising:**

The Committee agreed to start discussing fundraising along with putting together a brochure of information about the dog parks at the November meeting.

**6) Additional Comments, Questions and Information Discussed at the Meeting:**

- **Riverfront Park Update:** It was asked if the Corps of Engineers would be willing to do a wetland study in house. Mr. Jarvis said he has discussed that with them and they said that type of work was done by private consultants. Mr. Jarvis said he does have the list of consultants who could be called upon and asked to do the study as a possible tax right off/donation. Several committee members requested to look over the list and make calls before the next meeting to see if any were willing to do that. An update will be given at the next meeting.
- Committee members discussed having a stake holders meeting inviting area veterinarians, groomers, trainers, and various businesses for a presentation on the dog parks in hopes to get their support and/or comments.
- Mr. Jarvis gave some statistics out of the Parks and Recreation Business regarding dog parks. He said that everything the committee has been talking about regarding the park is in there. He said there is no current standardization for dog parks right now but he believes there will be in the future.
- A committee member commented how important it is to have plenty of funds for maintenance of these parks.
- A comment was made that we shouldn't tax surrounding residents of the dog parks for their maintenance but instead either tax all city residents as a whole through fees attached to licenses or look into other funding sources.
- Mr. Jarvis brought up that he has spoken with Dave Kline from the Billings Animal Shelter regarding adding a fee to licenses and Mr. Kline informed him that there is only about 20% of city residents' who actually license their animals. A suggestion made to do annual licensing clinics as a way to encourage people license their animal.
- Other suggestions for maintenance funding were to have donation boxes available or to look into using the lottery system and have a portion of the sales go towards dog parks.

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:50 am**