

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: August 5, 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

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, Citizen Representatives Warren Osik and Ellie Whitney. Special guests include Veterinarian Doctor Ed Jorden.

2) Approval of Minutes:

Kay Haire made a verbal motion to accept the July 8th, 2008 minutes. Rachel Cox seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

3) Additions to the Agenda:

No additions were made to the agenda.

4) Site Selection-Site Update:

Riverfront:

PRPL Park Planner Mark Jarvis informed the committee that there has been a delay in moving forward on the Riverfront Park location. The army Corps of Engineers, who has jurisdiction within the flood plain of the Yellowstone River, requires a permit for any work that is proposed in the 100 year flood plain. Part of the permitting process is a determination of wetlands in the area. Mr. Jarvis said he has spoken with PRPL Director Mike Whitaker to see if any funding was available to do a wetland study. Mr. Whitaker said at this time there are no funds available to do the study. Mr. Jarvis said he would look into the cost to have the study done and possibly funding could be identified later.

A question was asked on whether the north side of the Riverfront would be out of the flood plain area and could be used as a site location for the dog park. Mr. Jarvis said

he believes 99% of the park is under the 100-year flood plain. The only part not in the flood plain area is north of the main entrance and road that goes into the back of the park. He indicated there isn't enough land available.

A question was asked about construction activity within the 100 year flood plain. If you plan to do anything within the flood plain you must have a permit and that permit requires you to determine if there are any wetlands within the proposed work site. Mr. Jarvis said if there are no wetlands or only small areas we would be able to work around them to construct the dog park in a fairly short time and for a reasonable cost. Also if we don't do any earth moving or filling of low areas there will be fewer complications in obtaining a permit.

Mr. Jarvis confirmed that the revised Master Plan for Riverfront Park, which includes the two possible site locations for the dog park, will be moving forward and presented to the City Council work session on September 12th. Once they have had a chance to review it , the plan will be put on the City Council agenda for a final vote of approval or disapproval. If the plan is approved, a dog park in Riverfront Park will also be approved.

High Sierra Park Site:

Mr. Jarvis informed the committee the department would be moving forward on 2nd site location, High Sierra. A map outlining the park and various options for sites was shown to the committee. The general area shown is located on the west side of park near the parking lot. This eight-acre site is close to parking, includes great rock formations for dogs to play on and can be serviced with drinking water.

Mr. Jarvis made the following comments about the High Sierra site:

- A maintenance access gate will need to be put in.
- He would like to keep the rock formations. Committee members agreed.
- There may be some grading and filling of low areas.
- High Sierra Park is already irrigated; will need to extend irrigation and drinking water to the dog park site.

A comment was made to have a spray park put in for the dogs to play in. Mr. Jarvis thought it was a good idea and will be discussed further.

5) Fundraising:

The committee discussed several ideas for the financial aspect of maintaining the dog parks. Those ideas are as follows:

- Have a metal box at each dog park entrance for people to donate or contribute. It was brought up that in other cities these metal boxes have raised thousands of dollars on a regular basis.
- Work with the Billings Animal Shelter and have them attach an additional fee to licensing there pet. The amount could start at \$1.00.
- Have a dog use fee for those who come in from out of town. They could pay at the entrance into the park.

- Owners would pay a certain amount like \$30 to use the park and then be issued a card to carry around. These cards could be used to open the gates into the parks.

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

Mr. Jarvis and the committee discussed several details regarding the set-up of the parks. Those are as follows:

- Use turf grass in place of the native grasses in the area unless the park is to remain a natural area. Turf would hold up better to the amount of traffic from both the dogs and their owners.
- Fencing should be sturdy and approximately 4 feet high. Suggestion was to use sheep fencing.
- Park size should be around 8 acres and have a double entry. Also the dog park should be divided from a maintenance standpoint to give on side a chance to rest and regenerate.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:45 am