

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: September 9, 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 and PRC Board Representative James Strecker. Special guests include Veterinarian Doctor Ed Jorden.

2) Approval of Minutes:

Kay Haire made a verbal motion to accept the August 5, 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 he is continuing to gather more information from the Corps of Engineers.

Mr. Jarvis said the Army Corps of Engineers requires a permit before we can start any work at the park. Having a permit is essential especially if we want to do anything that will modify the flood plain elevation including grading and filling. Part of the permitting process requires that we identify any wetland areas within our proposed site.

He said he has spoken to various consultants regarding doing a wetland determination study. The cost would run around \$2,000-\$3,500. Mr. Jarvis spoke with PRPL Director Mike Whitaker regarding the study and has been told there is no funding

available at this time from the department. Before we can go any further with a dog park at Riverfront Park we will need to find a way to fund the wetland determination study.

High Sierra:

Mr. Jarvis informed the committee that he was able to speak to a gentleman from Franklin County outside of Denver Colorado who has expertise in developing dog parks in his area. The following items were discussed:

- Franklin County has three Dog Parks. They run about 2 ½ acres in size and an average of 40,000 visit each park a year.
- They use field-fencing that is 42'-46' high with wood railing. One park uses tee post and fencing the other two are wood rails with the fabric stapled to it.
- They do not charge any fees. Funding to build these parks comes out of the cities capitol fund.
- They do have a low maintenance dog park. It is about 7 acres and is constructed with fence and tee posts. The gentleman did say this area is not holding up well because of the inability to maintain vegetation cover causing erosion.
- Irrigation was very important
- Daily use varies considerably depending on the time of day. The most they have seen at any one time is 31 to 38 people with animals. They do not have a cap on the maximum number of animals can be in the park at any one time.
- There are no fees to enter the park.
- Doggy bags were used within the park and ran about \$15,000 a year.
- Demographics were important in what kind of park is build. The type of people and the type of dogs should dictate what the park should look like. He noticed if an area had more senior citizens; they found there would be smaller dogs attending the park. If there were younger people, they would tend to have larger dogs in the park.
- Trends seen at the dog parks include doggy birthday parties and pet training classes.

5) Fundraising:

Mr. Jarvis told the committee he would be looking into pricing for irrigation, seating, shelters and additional prices for fencing without labor costs included before the next meeting. He hopes to have this information at the next meeting so the committee can discuss fundraising.

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

Mr. Jarvis and the committee discussed several details regarding design and amenities. The following information was given:

- **Fencing:** Mr. Jarvis spoke with a fencing supplier about pricing. This supplier has experience in building dog parks in Colorado and was familiar with the 2 types of fencing fabric most commonly used. One is a Field-fence, which has large square openings on the top, and smaller ones towards the bottom. The other type is called a No Climb Fence and the openings are all small. Cost on

the Field-fencing is around \$6 per foot for materials and labor. Cost on the No Climb Fence is around \$8 per foot. He also said treated wood posts with a top rail run around \$9 - \$10 per foot. Mr. Jarvis said the High Sierra Dog Park project would need enough fencing for about 8 acres. Total cost for Field-fencing is \$19,500; \$26,000 for no climb and \$35,750 for chain link. Committee members liked the idea of using field fencing with a top rail for the parameter of the park would be the best. A suggestion was made to put in a movable middle fence that can be moved during certain times of the year and certain events like training classes. They also discussed looking into reducing labor costs for the fencing by having volunteers like the Boy Scouts come and install the fence.

Mr. Jarvis asked the committee if they preferred going smaller for the park. They felt we should start out with a larger park of 8 acres instead of a smaller one like Denver.

A question was asked regarding if there would be an area for smaller dogs and if so what would be the size. Mr. Jarvis said it would be around an acre. He also said the smaller dog area could be used for other uses like doggy birthday parties and training classes.

A question was asked if it would be mandatory for smaller dogs to only use the smaller dog area or could they go into the larger section with larger dogs. Mr. Jarvis said it would fine for the smaller dogs to be with the larger dogs. He did say the smaller dog area would not be open to larger dogs.

Mr. Jarvis asked if they wanted to have a section for smaller dogs; the committee agreed to put one in.

- **Park Entry:** Committee members expressed they would like to have the entry into the park filled in with cement. Mr. Jarvis said the main entry would be cemented to prevent erosion. The bullpen area would have a three-way gate system to access the three sections of the dog park.
- **Irrigation:** Mr. Jarvis said irrigation would be the next important thing to put in following fencing. He said it would be a costly item and suggested using volunteers like the union to do the installation.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:40 am

