

Hannah's Bark Park Advisory  
Minutes February 3, 2020

Present: Lynn Simons, Ryan Longoria, Anne Heidemann, Mark Stuldreher,  
Amy Barr-Tickle

Absent: John Dinse, Sue Gamble

The meeting began at 6:02 pm.

**Members on Advisory Board:**

Margy Reimer resigned from the Friends of the Dog Park Board and therefore this leaves a vacancy on the Advisory Board. Amy Barr-Tickle was nominated by the Friends of the Dog Park Board to replace Margy on the Advisory Board. Welcome Amy!

**Membership Update:** Membership is at 219, with a few weekly memberships occasionally. Membership remains steady.

**Public Comment:**

No public comment was brought forth.

**Old Business**

Ryan noted the locks on the gates have been fixed again, and this may be an occasionally re-occurring problem. He will continue to monitor this.

Lynn asked Ryan to update the group on the process of receiving a complaint in the lull between Advisory Board meetings. Ryan reported about five to six complaints are made in a year, and that this is stable. Ryan noted he reaches out to all parties to hear their story of what happened. He noted it is most common that there exist two competing stories, and that there are few impartial witnesses available. He noted he works to have the parties work out the issues by sharing contact information at the time of the incident. This is also clearly stated in the rules. Often, the conflict involves enforcing already stated rules in the park. When there is not a clear resolution to the conflict, Ryan will turn to the advisory Board. If it is timely, he discusses those at the Board meeting. If not, he shares them via email for a group input.

Amy raised the issue of temperament testing prior to registration to make sure they have the capacity to be in the park. In the discussion, questions were raised about the cost (perhaps expensive) and alternatives (Canine Good Citizen testing.) It was also wondered what other dog parks do. Ryan noted that we are unique and in the minority in that we have registration of dogs and owners. The group will continue to think about this.

This issue was discussed in the last Advisory Board meeting and those notes are copied below (because they explain other parts of the process.)

*- The Advisory Board discussed the protocol and procedures the City uses to deal with dog incidents within the park. It was noted the rules and guidelines of the dog park, which are signed by each member, address dog incidents in the park. Members are to seek name and contact information from the other owner, and to report the aggressive incident to the Parks and Recreation department. The Parks and Recreation Department keep a log of dog incidents to identify frequent problem dogs or owners. The Department will seek out information from both dog owners, as there is often an inconsistent view of the incident. The City has the right, and has in the past, advised remediation or removal from the park. The Advisory Board is aware of the City's actions in the past of requesting certain members time their activities to be separate from another dog owner, do not use the park, or engage in education on the rules and policies that were not followed.*

### **Friends of the Dog Park**

FDP updated the Advisory Board about several items. They are moving forward with fundraising for lighting. Lighting will involve eight poles of lights, providing some coverage to the small and large dog park areas. The group has applied for grants, some Board members have donated, and the Board is collecting funds from membership.

Ryan reminded Friends of the Dog Park that the warming shed at the park is available to stock and staff the concession stands as a fundraising opportunity. Lynn noted she had neglected to pass this onto the group, but will do so.

### **New Business**

Amy addressed the issue of a belief that marijuana was present in the dog park.

Prior, the Advisory Board had heard that marijuana is stashed in trash bins, fence lines and outside areas for pick up. A dog became ill and the belief was the dog had ingested marijuana, although there were no toxicology tests available to confirm this. Chris had dealt with this rumor and responded to the member about the concern. Park Rangers, City Police, and City maintenance workers are periodically at the park. Maintenance workers are there daily. No City staff have noticed marijuana in the area or in the trash. No City staff have observed suspicious transactions or behavior related to marijuana or drug use in or near the park. The Advisory Board noted they had not observed marijuana or suspicious behavior near or in the park. Chris noted the City staff, police and Park Rangers will continue to observe the park for suspicious activity. Members can call the police if they observe marijuana transactions occurring in the park.

Ryan added that he is aware individuals do smoke marijuana in that area, but had no knowledge it was in the dog park. Amy added that the dog's emesis smelled like skunk and the owner strongly believed the marijuana came from the park. This issue happened in May and Amy noted two other incidents happened before that were never reported. Amy wondered about using drug detection dogs in the park and Ryan noted that the City does not have such a dog. Amy wondered if the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe might have such a dog. It was suggested to keep awareness of this as we have not heard reports for about nine months.

### **Meeting Schedule**

It was noted meetings will be scheduled about one year in advance to facilitate regularity of meeting. The Advisory Board will meet the first Monday in February, May, August and November.

We adjourned at 6:25.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Simons