

City of Gahanna
Dog Park Advisory Committee (DPAC)
Minutes -- 5 March 2008
5:30PM
Senior Center

Present: Al Adler
Deputy Chief Kenneth A. Ball (Gahanna Police Dept Representative)
Casey Cannon (Chair)
Michele Cutler (Observer)
Troy Euton (Deputy Parks Director)
Charlie Henderson (Animal Control Officer)
Alan Little (Parks Department Representative)
Terri Montigny (Pooch Playground Representative)
Lori Sobul
Don Sullivan
Vinnie Tremante (New Parks Board Member)
Lynne Vermillion (Secretary)

Absent: Chief Murphy, Dr Kristy Clay, Cathy Koch, John Pizzurro

1. Update from Parks Department:
 - a. Troy Euton opened the meeting by introducing Vinnie Tremante as the new Parks Board Representative and requested the Advisory Committee's views on the recommendations in the Pizzurro Park Natural Resources Survey with regard to allowing dogs access to the creek. (A copy of the Survey is attached to these minutes.)
 - i. The Survey recommended that dogs not be allowed access to the creek or that conditional access be allowed at a single constructed point in order to maintain the riparian buffer zone.
 - ii. DPAC members stated that access to the creek was one of the key factors in selecting Pizzurro as the new dog park location.
 - iii. DPAC members were in agreement that dog access to the creek should be limited to specially constructed access points but questioned whether a single point would be adequate. Additionally, members felt that some type of barrier would have to be constructed to prevent dogs from entering the creek at other areas.
 - iv. Henderson questioned how dogs in the creek would impact on fishing.
 - v. The Parks Dept will schedule an on-site meeting with Tremante and Vermillion to review creek access points in Pizzurro Park.
 - vi. The DPAC should further discuss creek access and the results of the on-site visit at the next meeting.
 - b. Because of time constraints, Little said he would email his update to all DPAC members. (Email comments attached to the minutes.)
 - c. Euton said that Pam Crossmock would schedule the meeting room for future DPAC meetings and asked that she be added to the distribution list. (Done)

2. Old Business:

- a. At the 24 January 08 meeting, DPAC members requested that Police Department and the Animal Control officer be present at the next meeting to discuss enforcement issues at the park. Deputy Chief Bell and Officer Henderson were present for this meeting.
 - i. Bell stated that the Police Department could enforce Dog Park Rules if they were part of existing city statutes. Currently, Dog Park Rules per se are not codified in Gahanna ordinances although certain aspects of the rules are part of existing ordinances.
 - ii. Dog Park users should call 911 any time they felt “threatened” or “menaced” by the actions of any dog or person in the park.
 - iii. Dog Park users should call the non-emergency number (342-4240) for problems of non-threatening issues.
 - iv. The Ohio and Gahanna laws concerning dangerous or vicious dogs only addresses dogs that have “menaced” a person or have injured/killed a person or have killed another domestic animal. This does not address “aggressive dogs” that attack or threaten another dog(s) without provocation in the dog park; however, this behavior is addressed under city ordinance 505.09 as an animal **nuisance** and also under city ordinances 505.01 and 563.19 that state that all animals must be **under control** of their owners.
 - v. Deputy Chief Bell felt that trained volunteers should be able to ask dog owners in the park to follow the posted dog park rules. However, they should not allow the situation to become confrontational. Additionally, any Parks employee may issue reasonable directives to park visitors (Ord 563.13). Dog Park volunteers should have access to a phone number for Parks Staff on weekends/after duty hours.
 - vi. There should be clear guidance posted in the park defining aggressive and nuisance dog behavior. Volunteers and dog park users should have a means of recording problem behaviors so action can be taken against habitual offenders. If at all possible, volunteers or dog park users should get the license plate number of the dog owners.
 - vii. The animal control officer does not routinely visit the dog park in his official capacity but will come if requested. Although Ohio and Gahanna laws require all dogs to always wear a current license and rabies tag, the police and animal control officer do not go out of their way to look for this.
 - viii. Volunteers should be alert for non-dog owners walking down into the park from 270 who could break into cars or cause other problems and then run back to a waiting car.
- b. The DPAC should review and finalize these enforcement issues at a future meeting.

3. Other Business: The DPAC will discuss special events in the dog park at a future meeting.

4. The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 5:30 on Thursday, 10 Apr 2008. Cannon will attempt to schedule future meeting on the second Thursday of each month.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne Vermillion, DPAC Secretary

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2008

Casey Cannon, Chair