



**PARK CITY MUNICIPAL OFF-LEASH TASK FORCE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
445 MARSAC AVE.
PARK CITY, UTAH
MAY 2, 2016**

Heinrich Deters, Trails and Open Lands Manager, Staff Liaison - Park City Municipal asked for a motion to open the meeting of the Park City Municipal Off-Leash Task Force at approximately 3:30pm

**Alison Child, At large, moved to open the meeting;
Ed Parigian, At large, seconded the motion.**

Task Force Members in Attendance:

Kate Sattelmeier - Summit Land Conservancy
Eric Hoffman - Recreation Advisory Board
Barbara Maw – At large
Clay Coleman - Summit County Animal Control
Ed Parigian – At large
Charlie Sturgis – Mountain Trails Foundation
Brian Hanton - Snyderville Basin Recreation District
Alison Child - At large
Ken Fisher – Recreation Manager, Park City Municipal Corp.
Councilwoman Becca Gerber – Council Liaison
Heinrich Deters – Trails and Open Lands Manager, Park City Municipal Corp.
Jody Morrison – Park City Municipal Corp.

Excused:

Andrew Latham - Park City Police Department
Cynthia Sandoval - Recreation Advisory Board
Tod Frohnen - At large
Rusty Millholland - Utah Open Lands
Becky Burns - At large
Alisha Niswander - Recreation Advisory Board

Adoption of Minutes of April 11, 2016 Off-Leash Task Force Meeting. Heinrich Deters did not ask for a motion to adopt the minutes of April 11, 2016 due to not all members having received them. Mr. Deters will forward minutes to all members and ask for adoption of minutes at the next Off-Leash Task Force meeting May 16, 2016.

Heinrich Deters asked for a motion to continue to the May 16, 2016 Off-Leash Task Force.

Ed Parigian, At large moved to continue the motion;
Alison Child, At large seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously

Staff and Board Communications and Disclosures:

Brian Hanton, Basin Recreation reported that his staff presented their recommendations to modify the animal policy guidelines in regard to public events to the Snyderville Basin Recreation District Board at their April 13th meeting.

Mr. Hanton stated that their board approved the recommendations: five yards outside the playing lines dogs must be on physical leash.

Their staff will continue to educate the public with dogs to eliminate possible incidents.

Deters asked the group if there were any questions of Hanton and Basin Recreation.

Charlie Sturgis inquired as to the possibility of the UOP 5K area being dog friendly this time of the year.

Hanton informed the group that he and Bob Radke had been considering this possibility, currently this has not been presented to the board. They are discussing additional trails and development for the area.

Parking was also a question Hanton responded to stating that the Run-A-Muck dog park had parking across the street and on the road; he has plans to address the parking with Bob Radke.

Deters acknowledged the approved recommendation by the Board then inquired as to the next steps: approval by the three parties.

Hanton reiterated that their staff will work on getting dog owners on board regarding all dogs must be on physical leash during events; enforcement may be necessary.

Ken Fisher, Recreation Manager, Park City Municipal stated that the event fields are rented to numerous user groups. Some events such as adult softball at City Park traditionally has dogs running around off leash and difficult to enforce.

Public Input:

Heinrich Deters asked if there was any public input, there were no comments.

Before Deters began the update of the April 14th City Council meeting he stated that he believes public response to the changes with the Off-Leash enforcement have calmed down considerably.

Review of City Council Discussion:

Based on the research and conversations Deters has had with other communities regarding the availability of base line data on dog parks such as incidents and visitor numbers, across the board he found there is very little to none; it's too early for data at this point.

There were a few communities that Deters felt had more of a handle on their dog programs: Moab, Vail and Summit County Colorado.

Enforcement/Tag Program:

Deters continued on stating that Council was interested in enforcement, not necessarily high enforcement; Councilman Henney and Councilman Beerman commented on having an ambassador program in place specifically on the trails in the Round Valley area.

Deters spoke to Council about the 'Tag Program' requesting direction on moving forward with the idea or discontinue; Council stated their interest in the Task Force moving forward, Deters stated a vote was not taken only Council expressing their support.

Public Survey:

Council was interested in a public survey; Deters will work with Phyllis Robinson, Community and Public Affairs Manager for Park City Municipal in creating a draft survey proposal. He also stated that he would like the Task Force to look at the survey questions as well. Deters stated that he will email the draft as it is being created to receive their input.

Evaluation:

Deters stressed that there is very little information on the evaluation of dog park programs. He had made contact with Kathy Kowloude, recently with the Salt Lake Ranger District-Forest Service to discuss any data on the Mill Creek on/off day dog-leash program. Ms. Kowloude mentioned that data is out there although not readily available. The area is forest service land and is under a Salt Lake County ordinance.

Deters mentioned that the Mill Creek dog program may not be working as intended. Another area Deters had heard quite a few positive remarks on was the dog program in Boulder, Colorado. Contact was made with the manager of the voice and tag program in Boulder; Deters reported that some dog owners are willing to risk a ticket and not follow the regulations in the Boulder dog parks.

Deters conceded that the Task Force may not be able to get the evaluation information it wants. The group must be willing to be adaptive in their approaches, adaptive in enforcement and education.

Kate Sattelmeier, Summit Land Conservancy stated she had heard recently while attending a County meeting discussing the 'tag program' that what differentiates Park City from Boulder could be Summit County's (Utah) involvement. She doesn't differentiate between County lines/City lines but sees the whole area as one community partly due to it being so small; it should be done collectively.

Fisher explained that separate regulations for different parks would create confusion for users.

Sattelmeier reminded everyone that a 'tag program' just for Park City would include a segment of Round Valley since the County/City lines runs through the park, makes sense same rules and regulations for all.

Deters stated that the County would have to be part of the program due to the licensing aspect of it.

Sturgis and Sattelmeier stated that both City and County need to be on same page for this program.

Deters mentioned that Boulder's implementation of their program was intense likely due to their population being much greater than Park City/Summit County.

Councilwoman Gerber asked for clarification on implementing the 'tag program'; would it cover the four designated park areas. Owners would have to have 'tags' on their dogs in those off-leash areas; although the 'tag' doesn't allow access to off-leash trails. This was confirmed by the group.

Sturgis stated that if a dog passed a certain level of behavior training this could allow the owner to have their dog on certain trails; although those trails would have to be designated.

Parigian shared that he takes his dogs to Round Valley a number of times throughout the week. He has been impressed by the good trail etiquette he witnessed and experienced. He stated bikers and hikers were stopping and waiting for him and his dogs to pass by.

Deters mentioned that observations made by this group and others indicated a positive response from users on trails and in parks. Although cooperation was rarely witnessed at trailheads and parking lots; on leash at trailheads was possibly 20% compliance.

Conversation was lead back to the Boulder program by Deters. He shared that if this program works for them there were aspects the City could possibly use.

Sturgis acknowledged the program could increase awareness although felt that eventually the awareness would dissipate over time; leaving a result that wouldn't have a positive resolution long term. He stated that the 'tag' program may not work long term.

Hoffman informed the group that based on the Boulder evaluation document he researched found on-line: four years into the program incidents of conflict returned to the pre 'tag' program levels; this program was not successful.

Hoffman mentioned that an increase in the conflicts could be due to new/more residents moving into the area, owners became careless and laid-back.

Deters shared that in conversations with Boulder they stated their program had become contentious; he also stated the Mill Creek program also had its problems.

Sturgis inquired if there was data on the number of bites per capita; the numbers shared by the County do not represent there being a problem.

Clay Coleman, Summit County Animal Control explained that the county is working on updating and improving their reporting. The County will report any incident called in even if it does not elevate to pressing charges.

Sturgis suggested that any 'call in' should be considered a report and then broken down into categories/level: individuals pressing charges indicated as one level, injuries indicated as another level and serious injuries another level.

Barbara Maw suggested incident statistics might be obtained by contacting the numerous veterinary clinics in the City/County area.

Conversation continued on acquiring data determining numbers of dog conflicts with other dogs, owners, and people.

It was suggested using the survey to ask some of these questions and possibly acquire additional data. Example: Have you ever been bitten on a trail or dog park; has your dog ever bitten another user on a trail or at a park; have you ever experienced an incident.....?

Deters stated that enforcement has to take a serious role; if there is no enforcement there may be incidents. Although when the ordinance was being enforced owners were not appreciative of the results, tickets were being issued, not a positive response from the community.

Sturgis explained that enforcement is a tool and that the goal should be a standard that all can live with.

Deters continued by stating the goal would be to find the management infrastructure to accomplish the standard.

Child suggested a proposal. The Task Force make a recommendation to the County that requests a change in leash law.

If an owner is on pavement with their dog the dog must be on a physical leash; if an owner is at an event with their dog the dog must be on a physical leash; if the owner is on a dirt trail then an electronic collar/site control is acceptable, excluding Round Valley, Round Valley would be a separate issue. Round Valley and a few other areas designated off-leash at all times.

Ms. Child went on to explain there would be high enforcement in high use areas such as pavement and trailheads. This can be County wide; an owner would know if they are walking on pavement they must have their dog on a leash; walking Main St. they must have their dog on leash.

This could or could not include the 'tag program'

Coleman stated that forest service trails are all designated on leash.

Sturgis mentioned augmenting the 'tag program' with Child's proposal, possibly not including the electronic collar.

Sturgis added that Deer Valley Ski Resort and Park City Mountain are privately owned, this program wouldn't apply unless the two resorts were onboard.

Owners allowing their dogs to be off-leash on a trail must be aware that they are responsible. With the few incidents that were reported by Animal Control Park City/County are doing well considering the number of dogs and people in the area.

Parisian stated that many owners allow their dogs to jump on individuals; for some, that would be construed as an attack, the dog owner is ultimately responsible.

Sattelmeier stated in a situation like that there is no one to report to, having the police department would be helpful.

Fisher shared that one of the goals should be setting clear expectations; owners should know what to expect.

Deters brought the group back to Council's earlier expectation of understanding the program, does it work or does it not work.

The Task Force must be clear on what they are asking the Council; as examples: does the Task Force support off-leash areas, does the community need additional dog prohibited areas.

Maw stated that there are more dog incidents due to dogs playing and accidentally knocking an individual over than due to dog fights.

Maw questioned the dog classes that were discussed in earlier meetings.

Deters stated that the dog classes do not work based on reports; to have dog owners accountable there must be an education element.

Ms. Gerber shared that she has witnessed users in general being more courteous, using trail etiquette and being more responsible. She questions if the City needs to take this next step, could the City possibly wait and watch how the current situation plays out, if bad behavior comes back around and persists then rethink implementing a program.

Deters agreed stating that Boulder reached this same conclusion. From what he has heard from the different counties and communities he's been speaking with, being more stringent at the beginning of the program then tapering off has worked best.

Conversation continued discussing these approaches.

Hoffman reiterated the need to be more definitive in the signage in the parks.

Fisher agreed that having options is very important to this program; stating the hours that an owner can be in an area with their dog and what is allowed in the area needs to be clear.

Deters brought City Park into the discussion once again; what are the groups thoughts on dogs on/off leash in City Park?

Many thought dogs should be on leash; it's a high use area, lots of children, traffic and many events taking place.

Parigian stated that high use in the park is only for three months (summertime) out of the year, the park is rarely occupied from October thru April.

Sturgis suggested considering a Memorial Day to Labor Day timeframe that regulations would be in effect.

Parigian agreed stating that it would ease the impact of use on the Library Field.

Child visited the electronic collar once more stating that an individual should be able to walk on the Rail Trail, walk on pavement, walk on Main Street without a loose dog running around even wearing an electronic collar. Individuals cannot be aware if a dog has on an electronic collar or trust he'll respond to it if he does have one on; individuals need to know they are safe.

Sturgis added that the presence of kids is also a concern, they can't defend themselves nor can some elderly persons.

The discussion moved to the idea of a fenced dog park in City Park.

Sturgis brought up two points for further consideration: first being that Parisian suggested earlier not having a leash law enforced during Oct. to April regardless if there was a dog park or not; second being Child's suggestion that if there was a dog park in City Park the leash law would be enforced at all times.

The dog park may work for those that live in the area similar to the Library Field, kids can play ball at the park and the dogs are in the dog park.

Parisian questioned the availability of space to create a dog park in City Park.

Sturgis suggested a wish list of those things that are doable: high enforcement, low enforcement, 'tag program', no dog's off-leash in the summertime and other times to be leashed. Those stated are all manageable and can be put together in a package to work for the entire county. The Task Force group would be moving in the right direction in making the community members comfortable; decide the selection of the correct type of management tools.

Deters then asked the group for their response to enforcement; it takes coordination and communication – thoughts?

Enforcement can be defined as areas where the expectation is higher; if an owner does not want their dog on leash then visit another park.

How does Willow Creek work with the dogs on leash program; it was reported that dogs are often off leash. The area is signed; regulations are stated in numerous places.

Sturgis stated that enforcement should be viewed upon as prudent and necessary, examples: dog jumping on someone, did someone get attacked - those are prudent and necessary for enforcement examples. If an owner is walking with his dog off leash down the field that is not prudent and necessary enforcement.

Deters emphasized that in an area where the expectation has been set such as all dogs must be on leash an individual would not expect to encounter dogs off-leash. Using Willow Creek as an example, if an individual with their kids goes to Willow Creek expecting it to be a leashed park and a dog comes running over toward the kids that becomes an issue.

Is there enforcement taking place, it's a high use area; dogs are required to be on-leash.

Examples of similar high use areas were exchanged around the table; low season, high season are factors in defining high use areas.

Councilwoman Gerber explained this is similar to speeding in a residential area. If a neighborhood speed limit is 25 mph and an individual speeds through it, is then pulled over by a police officer, can the officer give the individual a ticket regardless if there is anyone else on the road? Yes, he would enforce the speed law because he was setting a precedence and expectation. Same thing would be applicable if there is someone whose dog is off-leash in an area where they are required to be on-leash; even if the dog is not causing a problem the policy should be enforced.

She believes the dog 'tag program' is great; there are two tools that can be used here; incentive and punish. She stated encouraging the positive action before punishing and taking things away would be the direction to move in; as an example - an incentive could be another dog park.

Ms. Sattelmeier brought back the enforcement issue using examples of dogs jumping on individuals, biting individuals in an on-leash area. If there is no enforcement, no one will follow rules and regulations. Consider additional enforcement resources to help the issue.

Sturgis suggested the possibility of having an enforcement presence at various events to enforce the dog leash laws; at the same time making a visual statement to the community.

Ms. Gerber used 'no idling allowed in Park City' as an example of another similar situation. It is a law the community wants to see and is enforced. The off-leash law could be the similar. Sturgis stated that good and adequate signage is important, if it is not signed no one knows about it.

Sturgis reiterated that the Task Force come up with a wish list of managerial tools that as a group is acceptable to start the process.

Deters interjected that from the management perspective that came from the Mill Creek conversations, if they could change one aspect of the current program it would be a dogs on leash and no dogs.

They found the odd/even days too difficult to manage.

Parigian asked if there was a budget for any variation of the program going forward. He stated that the Task Force can make numerous recommendations but if there isn't any funding source available why go forward.

Deters addressed Parisian's question by explaining how the County approached their financial needs for same issue. The County had both policy and budgeting discussions prior to their December budget cycle. Once the funds were approved they were able to take action.

Discussion continued on the budgeting process.

Deters shared another item with the group regarding Boulder's staffing of their 'tag program' and the assumed costs involved:

Boulder has six employees at twenty-five hours a week; they oversee the enforcement of the 'tag program'; this represents a huge impact on the program and huge financial impact on the City of Boulder.

Erik Hoffman stated that they had three full time employees during the first year of program.

Conversation continued discussing Boulder's use of staff and the breakdown of their man-hours.

Discussion moved to Animal Control for Summit County and Park City.

Coleman stated that they currently have coverage 9am – 5pm five days of the week, (Monday thru Friday), during the summer season they will increase those hours 7am – 6pm; additionally there are on call personnel.

Sturgis asked if the County would consider weekend coverage because of high use.

The Park City Police Department is also available although they prioritize certainly when events are taking place.

Deters stated that this would be a conversation with the Chief of Police and Council; there are numerous priorities examples being; crime, traffic, idling to name a few for the Department although this could also be one.

Councilwoman Gerber stated that an understanding of enforcement and priorities is important; she also reiterated that rewarding good will is very important. The City/County could possibly look at an additional dog park because the community is being receptive to the program.

Conversation continued on this topic, then moved to ticketing and citations.

Coleman stated that they have issued numerous citations to the same individuals and they don't seem to care how many citations they receive.

Child stated that it can be mayhem in a parking lot: getting your dog ready to go out, addressing the child in the car seat, dogs wanting to jump in your car, no one is paying attention.

Deters shared some information again on the 'tag program' in Boulder. They are the only off-leash 'tag program' in the region. They began the program in 2005, Council was concerned that because the program was so successful they would have numerous visitors from all around, and they did. They incorporated a Boulder resident, non-resident and out of state visitor fee scale.

Deters reminded the group that Park City is a preferable destination for Salt Lake City residents they want to get their dogs out of the valley due to the heat during the summer months.

Parisian reminded the group that the discussion on escalating fees for resident, non-resident and out of state has previously been discussed.

Discussion moved on to 'tag programs' in Salt Lake City and Provo.

Conversation moved to dogs on single track trails; does this work especially when there is no line of site, example being Lost Prospector.

There may be trails that can be identified as 'every day' of the week no dogs are allowed.

Deters interjected that he has received messages from residents requesting location of the trails that don't allow dogs and would he and the City consider constructing some.

He stated that there is a possibility of those types of trails in the future.

Coleman addressed the Animal Control policy; they do not have anyone patrolling Park City for animal control issues unless they receive a call.

Fisher questioned the memorandum of understanding with the County.

Coleman stated they are called in when it's deemed necessary.

Conversation continued on this topic.

Sturgis would like to see this process result in options that are responsible and can be presented to the community.

Deters gave the group homework; please arrive at the next meeting with their three best solutions or ideas.

Deters thanked the group and reminded them of the next Task Force meeting May 16, 2016 at 3:30pm in the Council Chambers.

Deters then asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting;

Eric Hoffman moved to close the meeting; Charlie Sturgis seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously

Meeting minutes prepared by Jody Morrison

The meeting of the Park City Municipal Off-Leash Task Force was noticed on Friday, April 29, 2016 on the Park City Municipal website, Utah Legal website and posted at City Hall, Park City.