

Dog Waste Working Group Meeting
August 7, 2013
7:00 to 9:00
Senior Center Community space

Committee Members Present: Lyn Munno, Elizabeth Grupp, Danis Regal, Susan Ritz and Sharon Asay

The Working group spent most of the meeting editing and finalizing the group's dog waste proposal (attached). Elizabeth wrote the initial proposal and took notes during the meeting on corrections/changes/additions to the document. The group discussed that we should have a slightly different purpose listed for the proposal to be submitted to raise funds for the dog waste stations versus the proposal that more fully discusses the dog waste management strategies to be presented to the Parks Commission meeting on August 29th and the City Council meeting sometime after that.

The group went through sentence by sentence and changed language until it was as agreeable as possible to all members. The proposal will hopefully serve to raise funds for 11 dog waste management systems (bags and bins) throughout the city including 5 in Hubbard Park, 1 at North Branch Park, 1 at Dog River Fields, 2 on the Bike Path and 2 on Stonecutters Way. Lyn reported that she met with Arne McMullen, Director of the Montpelier Recreation Department to discuss the dog waste management systems and see if the Recreation Department would find it useful to have them on any of the rec properties. Arne said they have had big issues with dog waste at the rec fields (including the tennis courts and little league fields) and that they also have lots of issues with waste at the Dog River Fields. It was agreed that it would make sense to have a waste management system at the beginning of the bridge by the parking lot of the rec fields (to service both the rec fields and North Branch Park) and one at the Dog River Fields. The Rec department will handle the pick up at those locations.

The working group discussed several other issues in the proposal. We finalized the recommendation for a more simplified dog waste ordinance that simply states that people need to pick up after their dogs. We also discussed the funding mechanism in more detail. The group generally agrees that the initial funds for the stations should at least come in large part from fundraising efforts. Several members of the committee thought the yearly costs should be a joint venture between the city and town. Danis argued that yearly maintenance costs should be borne by the city. The committee agreed to the following phrase: For the following years we anticipate the operating costs will be borne by the City of Montpelier with efforts to offset those costs by voluntary contributions and community fundraising.

Susan reported that she talked to Phayvanh Luekhumhan about possible funding sources. She suggested some grants. We are not yet sure if we can apply thru Montpelier Alive or if the city needs to apply directly. Susan will try to get on the agenda for a Montpelier Alive meeting to inform downtown merchants about waste stations and potential sponsorships in addition to learning more about funding possibilities through Montpelier Alive and/or the city. met with Phayvanh Luekhumhan from Montpelier Alive. If we are interested in having applying to grants through Montpelier Alive we will need to talk to the Montpelier Alive Board. Lyn mentioned that at the Parks Commission meeting Geoff had said that we could receive donations through the Parks Department if people write dog waste stations or something similar in the memo line.

Another issue that came up is who should monitor the stations, City employees or volunteers. Elizabeth said she would be happy to look at stations in Hubbard Park. Danis questioned how monitoring of the stations would actually be accomplished and pointed out that Lloyd Franks, the person who contracts for the city to pick up waste, would be a logical person to do monitoring. The group agreed that Lloyd Franks could do some of the monitoring but that we still need to work out the details of who would put in new bags and make sure the stations were functioning properly. We discussed that it might be some combination of volunteers and city employees.

We briefly discussed the other proposal that the Friends of the Dogs of Hubbard Park have been circulating. Lyn expressed that she felt like the dog waste group was doing an excellent job and was disappointed and surprised to see an alternative proposal with a more limited waste pick up plan being circulated to so many people. Elizabeth and Sharon expressed that they really support the work of this subcommittee. Danis expressed that she felt like it was necessary to have an alternative proposal due to concerns about the Dog Policy working group, and she expressed that she felt like the Friends of the Dogs of Hubbard Park's Dog Park Proposal addressed the concerns of dog owners and non-dog owners. She did not feel like it was a problem to have the two proposals. We all agreed that we support the work of the dog waste committee and the recommendations of this group.

Fundraising. We discussed fundraising prospects. There are several grants which the dog waste working group can apply to – Block Foundation, NEGEF. Also we are looking into sponsorship. Susan mentioned that she had an individual in the park who said who would contribute \$250 and that the owner of the **Quirky Pet** also said she would contribute. Danis mentioned that Guys Farm and Yard might support \$500. We started to explore what we would be able to do to recognize folks/businesses that contribute. Susan mentioned that Phayvanh had said we can't use advertising on the waste stations due billboard rules in the town and Lyn stated that Geoff and the Commission would probably be hesitant to have advertising in the park. We all agreed that we would do something to recognize contributors but did not come up with a working plan. We discussed that we would like to have these dog waste stations up before the winter so we will need to see if the City budget can help fund the project before all the money for the project has been raised.

Elizabeth offered to make the changes we had discussed to the proposal. The group thanked Elizabeth for her great work on this.

We will present the proposal to the Parks Commission on August 29th and then to the city council after that point.