



Off-Leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday March 10, 2010

7:30 – 9 p.m.

The Portland Building

Meeting Outcomes/Goals

- Introduce Advisory Group
- Familiarize the Advisory Group with the Off-leash Program
- Determine the next steps

Advisory Group Members Attending: Allen Field, John Tess, Dannel Crawford, Burdean Bartlem, Teresa Ashford, Manon Veilleux, Bernie Knab

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Eileen Argentina, Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong

Facilitator: Stefanie Slyman

Agenda Items

I. Advisory Group Introductions & Ground Rules

The advisory group, audience members and PP&R staff introduced themselves and briefly described their involvement with dogs and the off-leash areas. Stefanie introduced the advisory group's ground rules, which are: Arrive on time, be prepared for meeting topics, listen carefully, speak honestly, respect the view and opinions of others, and allow everyone the opportunity to speak once before speaking twice.

II. Off-leash Program Overview

Eileen gave a brief history of the off-leash program. Portland Parks & Recreation began working with the community to create off-leash areas in 1995. Over the years, the Bureau has worked with several committees and task forces, as well as neighborhood groups, to site off-leash areas. In 2003, City Council approved the implementation of 7 fenced and 23 unfenced sites. In October 2003 an Off-Leash Advisory Committee was formed with the purpose of reviewing the current system and recommending policy, management and site changes. That committee's evaluation and recommendations were accepted by City Council in 2004.

The result is 32 off-leash areas, the largest off-leash system per capita in the nation.

III. Why create an Advisory Group?

Eileen explained that the off-leash system in Portland is an evolving picture. Some sites are more durable than others, some continue to change.



An advisory group has the most promise to create a strong dialogue, and to share ideas and synthesize the best options with the resources PP&R has. Working within the framework established in the 2004 committee's report, we can create a prioritized plan to address off-leash problems and solutions: what could change, what could be done better? It is an opportunity to check in with the community from a group that is diverse geographically, with different interests, perspectives, backgrounds and park uses.

IV. What is working?

Ali said that most users are generally happy and using off-leash areas respectfully. Many people are involved with their local off-leash area and want to know about work parties, stewardship groups and how to be more involved. These people are willing to put a great deal of effort, time and fundraising into keeping off-leash areas desirable places to take their dogs and encouraging responsible off-leash use. Most of the off-leash areas are in good condition. Amenities and infrastructure are okay, with the most significant damage being to ground cover.

Group input included:

- Off-leash areas are working well overall
- Self enforcement does work as does random enforcement (Rangers and Animal Control)
- Off-leash areas create a sense of community
- There are a lot of very responsible users

V. What do we need to work on?

Ali said that PP&R hears from many community members on what's not working. The Bureau also has a good idea of what's not working from site visits and staff observation and feedback. She handed out a list of most commonly heard questions/topics, which included:

- Improvements on condition/amenities (muddy, wet, trashcans, bark chips, fencing, generating the money to support these efforts)
- Changes to off-leash areas (longer hours, shorter hours, adding new off-leash areas)
- Enforcement (too little enforcement, or too much enforcement)
- Education (encouraging people to use off-leash areas)
- Stewardship (creating ways for people to get involved)
- Revenue (tapping into sponsorships, events and classes)

Ali clarified that when new parks are put in, or when parks are master planned, off-leash areas are considered as possible amenities and are now fairly popular. However, there is no process for adding an off-leash area to existing parks. This is something Parks staff is working on.

She also said that most of the comments PP&R hears have to do with dogs being off-leash where they're not supposed to be; the Bureau doesn't hear much about behavior inside off-leash areas.

The group and the audience added their observations on what isn't working, which included:

- People are not complying with off-leash etiquette and rules
- If park rangers or animal control become too heavy handed it makes PP&R look bad
- Not enough response to the change of population and dog community of downtown
- Education or outreach is a necessity
- Addressing conflicts between off-leash area users (aggressive dogs, people bringing small children) and other park users
- How to reach out to those for whom education or self-enforcement doesn't work
- Not having the information that is needed to use the area properly

- o Ground cover issues for a few particular parks

VI. Next Steps

Homework: Ali asked attendees to consider the list of commonly heard topics/questions that PP&R has put together, and brainstorm any additional concerns or solutions. E-mail thoughts to Ali (Ali.Ryan@Portlandoregon.gov) by March 24.

Meeting dates: Stefanie proposed having one meeting per month for March, April and May to get the group up and running. The schedule would then shift to having meetings every other month. The group was amenable to the schedule, but said that an earlier start time would be better; meetings will thereby move to 6:30.

Items for the next meeting: Staff will draft a group charter and draft work plan for review at the April meeting.

Next meeting date: The next meeting will be April 7 or April 28; Ali will confirm with the group and post the date on the website and to the mailing list.



Off-Leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday April 28, 2010

6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Southwest Community Center – Poolside Room

Meeting Outcomes/Goals

- Review the Group Charter
- Review the Off-Leash Program Work Plan
- Provide Guidance/Feedback on the Work Plan

Advisory Group Members Attending: Dannel Crawford, Burdean Bartlem, Michael Kinney, Bernie Knab, John Tess, Jared Tormohlen, Teresa Ashford

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Eileen Argentina, Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong, Zachary Sites

Facilitator: Deb Meihoff

I. Community Comments

- There is a need for a small/timid dog section in off-leash areas. Ali said staff is considering Normandale Park as a testing ground because it has 2 separate fenced areas already.
- There is a need for a bulletin board at Mt. Tabor off-leash area to allow the community to communicate.

II. Review of Draft Charter

Eileen went over the draft for the Off-Leash Program Advisory Group Charter. The proposed charter includes the group's mission statement, character, scope of work, meeting duration and frequency, time commitment and a process to develop recommendations.

Group members agreed that the draft was in good shape. PP&R staff said the charter would be a living document – something that could be amended over time. Ali mentioned the charter, as well as other group materials, will be available online at www.portlandparks.org under the Recreation – Dogs – Off-Leash Advisory Group tabs.

III. Discussion of “Homework” feedback

Ali presented the responses from the previous Off-Leash Advisory Group homework assignment. Main problems group members identified for Portland Parks & Recreation's Off-leash Areas (OLAs) were dog aggression, maintenance challenges, small dogs and big dogs in the same area, hours, and enforcement.

Opportunities identified by the group included sponsorships, fundraising, creating community, promoting the program and peer enforcement.

The homework also highlighted several issues PP&R doesn't hear much about, Ali said, which are problems inside the OLAs. The group also pointed out the need to be flexible in adding/considering new issues.

Using the group's feedback as well as input PP&R has heard from the community at large, several areas were identified as most important to focus on. They are:



- Education
- Enforcement
- Stewardship
- Maintenance
- Program Support
- OLA System Changes

IV. Draft Work Plan

Ali presented a draft work plan, which sets out goals and tasks for PP&R's work on the off-leash program over the next two years. The immediate goals (for Spring-Summer 2010) include:

- Defining a comprehensive off-leash program, including program scope and mission, cost, and budget.
- Developing an education initiative to encourage good use by existing users, as well as use by those who don't currently use OLAs
- Create an area for small or timid dogs
- Create a process for the community to request modifications to the OLAs

Some issues brought up by the group were:

- Defining the program is the most important piece – without defining things like budget/cost, it's difficult to begin other efforts. The group recommended reordering tasks, specifically education. How can we educate if we do not know what we are educating about, or what the budget for that education might be?
- There seems to be an emphasis on fundraising, are OLA users being asked to subsidize the OLAs operations? No, Ali said, the fundraising piece is not aimed at paying for OLAs to operate. PP&R currently does not have an easy way to connect people who desire to raise funds for their OLAs with information about how much it costs to make improvements. There is also a sponsorship piece, in that there may be some opportunities for businesses to support the program.
- The group asked for an idea of OLA costs, what basic amenities are, upkeep costs, and amenity prices to help guide decision-making.
- Group members asked to receive materials a week in advance to allow group members to review and digest the information. Meeting time could therefore be used for discussion of materials rather than review.

Ali emphasized that the plan is a living document and subject change based on the group's needs and expectations. She said that based on group feedback, staff will focus on defining the program for the group at the next meeting, as well as some initial exploration of the education piece.

V. Next Steps

- Ali suggested May 26 as the next meeting date, and reminded the group that meetings would pause for June/July and resume in August. She also suggested setting a regular meeting date, i.e. the fourth Wednesday of every other month.
- There is a homework assignment, which asks group members to brainstorm ideas for the education initiative – what are we trying to educate owners about, and what materials do we need to do this?
- Discussion for the next meeting will focus on defining the program and education.



Off-Leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday May 26, 2010

6:30 - 8 p.m.

Overlook House

Meeting Outcomes/Goals

- Develop shared understanding of off-leash program, including costs, resources and scope
- Brainstorm problems/priorities for education initiative
- Identify next steps for education initiative

Advisory Group Members Attending: Jared Tormohlen, Teresa Ashford, Dannel Crawford, Michael Kinney, Allen Field, Burdean Bartlem, Manon Veilleux

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong

Facilitator: Deb Meihoff

Agenda Items

I. Updates

- **Small dog area at Normandale:** Ali updated the group about creating a small dog area in the existing Normandale Park off-leash area. An area will be fenced off for use by small dogs, and a volunteer day will be sponsored by the Nutro Company. The volunteer event will be on June 19th from 8 to 11 a.m. Activities will include raking bark chips, painting benches, scooping poop, and spreading sand around.

PP&R will also conduct outreach at Normandale Park to ask users what they feel needs to be done in order to make the small dog area a success.

- **News from Multnomah County Animal Services:** The proposed budget for MCAS restores some funding for previously cut services, and also adds additional funding for new efforts, including education and outreach. This isn't related to the group's work, but signals good news for a partner.
- **Bernie Knab has stepped down:** Bernie Knab has stepped down from his position on the off-leash advisory group due to other commitments. Ali is working on a way to possibly fill this position to meet the needs of the community and group.

II. Review of Off-leash Program

Program

Ali reviewed the proposed off-leash program definition, which is meant to create a shared understanding of what the program is, and what pieces make it up. The basic pieces of the OLA program, which all fit together comprehensively, are:

- The Off-Leash Areas (the physical spaces)
- Education

- Enforcement
- Programming

Costs

Ali shared a summary of program costs. The bulk of the cost is related to maintenance and operation of the off-leash areas, with additional cost for enforcement and program staff. There's also a \$5,000 budget for the education initiative.

There are still some unknowns with the cost piece; Ali will be working with park maintenance staff to ensure that we're accurately representing these costs and have more information at the next meeting.

She also clarified that the costs detailed in the summary, with the exception of the \$5,000 for education, are dedicated to keeping the OLAs open and the program going; it's not funding that can be redistributed to other program uses.

Group questions included:

- What are costs related to specific amenities, such as water or lighting? Ali said it's difficult to identify what amenity costs are for items that depend on utilities because they're so site specific. For example, with water, cost is driven by many factors, like where the water source is, whether or not the water source is safe for drinking, etc.
- How does the park ranger cost break down? The enforcement cost includes both park ranger time on specific dog-related missions (i.e., a problem is reported in a park, and the ranger goes out) as well as the one Multnomah County Animal Officer dedicated to parks. The indirect enforcement costs include the time on regular patrols (rangers would be in parks anyway) that is spent with dog education and enforcement.

III. Education Initiative Exercise

As a starting point, Deb reviewed previous problems and opportunities identified by the group.

The group brainstormed the following ideas for possible education points:

- Users bringing their own poop bags
- Informing other park users (non-dog users) about OLAs (boundaries, hours, etc.)
- Dog owners not watching dogs/paying attention
- Communicable diseases among dogs
- Education for children in off-leash areas or in parks near off-leash areas
- Safety education for children in off-leash areas
- Putting cigarette butts in trashcan so dogs don't eat them
- Dog aggression
- Dog waste
- Hours and when they change for the season
- Best way to ask someone to leash their dog and pick up poop
- Humane Society/MCAS – giving information about off-leash areas and etiquette to adopters
- Advance notice to when off-leash areas close for concerts, solution to debris left over from concerts
- Signage, banners, rotating materials/bulletin boards, press releases

IV. Community Comments and Questions

- One possible solution to the dog aggression issue is to have a behaviorist visit a park once a month, hold a seminar for people who want to learn how to deal with aggressive dogs.

- How will enforcement be handled in the small dog pilot area at Normandale Park? Ali explained that it would be user enforced; signs will be placed in the area to define rules.

V. Next Steps

- Ali will be working to implement the education initiative; she'll be sending out a summary from tonight's brainstorm for further review.
- The next meeting for the group is planned to be in August. However, Ali is open to meeting sometime between now and then if the group feels that it would be valuable. In the interim, Ali will also be sending out materials to the group for review.
- Group members indicated they would like to tour some OLAs, or possibly meet in a park, during the summer months. Ali will schedule those outings.



Off-Leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday August 25, 2010

6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

The Portland Building

Meeting Goals/Outcomes

- Identify priorities for education initiative
- Brainstorm outreach/marketing of education initiative
- Confirm next steps for group's work

Advisory Group Members Attending: Allen Field, Manon Veilleux, Michael Kinney, Dannel Crawford, John Tess, Maggie Thurman

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong, Zach Sites

Facilitator: Deb Meihoff, Stefanie Slyman

Agenda Items

I. Updates

- The Advisory Group welcomes two new members, Maggie Thurman and Laura Venida, who are replacing previous members.
- The small dog off-leash area is now open at Normandale Park.
- Ali and Zach have been giving presentations on dog etiquette in parks to Oregon Humane Society summer camps.

II. Work Plan Check-in

Ali distributed an updated Off-Leash Program work plan, which now includes a timeline chart that helps clarify items being worked on concurrently.

Group members indicated interest in adding a tour of off-leash areas, particularly sites they think are working well and some that could be working better. Sites suggested as working well were Normandale, Chimney, Cherry, and the site of the future Fields Park. Sites suggested as needing improvement were Sellwood Riverfront, Wilshire, and Woodstock.

Ali will put together dates and times for site visits.

III. Education initiative Exercise

Three major topics were identified as focus areas for the education initiative:

1. Lack of scooping. Possible strategies the group identified to help improve the issue included:
 - Moving the trashcans to more convenient locations.
 - Additional dog related outreach (i.e. information packet with dog adoption, at vets).
 - Point out health impacts.
 - Raise overall awareness of responsibilities regarding dog ownership.
 - Outreach at neighborhood block parties
 - Better signage in parks regarding the laws about scooping poop.

Other group comments included:

- Lack of enforcement of this issue, there's a need to issue tickets and fines.

- More bags on site does not necessarily equal more scooping.
- Setting can affect behavior (i.e. less scooping in natural areas).

2. Poor Owner/Dog Behavior in OLAs. Possible strategies the group identified to help improve the issue included:

- Promote the Canine Good Citizenship program.
- Promote more communication between dog owners in OLAs.
- Develop information packet on how to communicate with other dog owners in OLAs.

Other group comments included:

- People have different views of what is acceptable behavior.
- It's not always possible identify the dog owner in more crowded off-leash areas.
- Owners not paying attention to their dogs is a problem.

3. Encouraging use of OLAs (instead of other areas in parks) for off-leash play. Possible strategies the group identified to help improve the issue included:

- Information brochures for off-leash areas.
- Advertising where the nearest off-leash area is if a particular site has limited hours.
- Working with Portland Pooch on OLA education.
- Public service announcements: sanitation, leashing, etc.
- Advisory Group members visiting off-leash areas as ambassadors, outreach.
- Dog parties with treats, distributing information about OLAs.
- Give resources to schools, churches, etc. to advertise where off-leash areas are.

Other group comments included:

- There's an ongoing need to balance the needs of off-leash area users with those of other park users.

IV. Community Comments

- PP&R should add additional small dog areas, as Normandale alone does not meet the need of small dog owners.
- Explore the possibility of mailing educational brochures to licensed dog owners.
- Multiple audience members expressed concern with the OLA Cherry Park. In particular, they would like hours to be expanded. This is a particular need, audience members said, during winter when daylight is shorter.

Ali clarified that the Cherry Park site is a shared use, limited hours site, because of the close proximity of a school. There is not currently a process in place for changing OLA hours; establishing such a process is something that PP&R staff and the Advisory Group will be working on in the fall. Until then, she asks that users respect the posted hours.

Other comments regarding Cherry Park included:

- Dog use is the predominant use. PP&R should do surveys or observations to see what the actual use of Cherry Park is.
- Please consider having water on site for dogs.

V. Next Steps

- Ali said of the items up next on the work plan is creating a toolbox for stewardship - identifying what people need in order to form groups, volunteer, or be actively involved with their off-leash area. Maggie, Dannel, and Allen volunteered to serve on a sub-group to help brainstorm what that toolbox might look like, and will present their work at the next meeting.
- The next Off-Leash Program Advisory Group meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, October 27, with time/location to be announced.



Off-leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday October 27, 2010

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Matt Dishman Community Center

Meeting Goals/Outcomes

- Review Request Process
- Make recommendations on Request Process

Advisory Group Members Attending: Allen Field, Dannel Crawford, John Tess, Laura Venida, Maggie Thurman, Michael Kinney

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Zach Sites

Facilitator: Deb Meihoff

Agenda Items

I. Work Plan Check-In

Ali said progress has been made on the education initiative, new sign examples were brought in to show the group.

Jared Tormohlen has resigned due to other neighborhood commitments. PP&R will be recruiting a new advisory group member from North Portland.

Group members gave input on how the group's work is going so far. Comments included:

- An additional role could include reviewing new off-leash areas.
- More information should be provided for review prior to meetings.
- There is still interest in visiting off-leash areas as a group, this could be done voluntarily on evening and weekends.
- The group also requested a summary of problems/comments PP&R hears regarding dogs, which would help them get a sense of how things are going and to help troubleshoot.
- It would be helpful to get an overview of what their role as advisory group members, to be shared with the folks they talk to at the OLAs.

II. Request Process Exercise

Ali gave a brief summary of the request process, which will be implemented as a way for community members to request changes or enhancements to the park system, not just new OLAs or OLA modifications.

In general, any proposed project will need to meet some basic criteria: It serves the general public, it has a positive impact on current and future park users, it is likely to have neighborhood support, and it has to be compatible with surrounding and adjoining uses along with being compatible with park master plans and reflecting the character of the park.

The group worked through the request process using two hypothetical situations.

Group feedback included:

- Add explanation of enhancement/change of use.
- Make better definitions of enhancement/change of use.
- Add checklist under broad community support.
- Consider adding a fee to submit a process change request.
- Concern about the length of time from start to finish for successful completion of process change.
- Move technical information into supplementary areas.
- Have the process simpler in the beginning and then become more involved as it moves along.

Group members agreed to provide additional comments on simplifying the application, as well as suggestions on which questions should be answered by applicants and which should be answered by staff, to Ali as homework.

III. Community Comments

- Getting park maintenance supervisors to visit advisory group meetings would be great. Giving them a briefing on the group and agenda beforehand would be helpful also.
- Contacting maintenance supervisors for your park is a great way to get small things done.
- There have been mentions of future development around PIR off-leash area without mention of the dog owners and off-leash area.
- Aggressive dogs seem to be the most difficult thing to deal with in off-leash areas. Getting someone high profile come and do a seminar in an off-leash area would be great.

IV. Next Steps

- Feedback on the request process needs to be sent to Ali by next Wednesday.
- The next meeting will be on December 15.
- The group will be meeting more often (once a month) starting in January 2011.



Off-Leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday December 15, 2010

6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

1210 NW 10th Ave. Portland

Meeting Goals/Outcomes

- Review Fields design
- Recommend new Advisory Group members
- Review/make recommendations on Education Materials

Advisory Group Members Attending: Allen Field, Burdean Bartlem, Dannel Crawford, John Tess, Laura Venida, Maggie Thurman, Michael Kinney

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Zach Sites

Facilitator: Deb Meihoff

Agenda Items

Group Review

Fields Park Design

Ali reviewed the design of the Fields Park, a new park that will be built in the Pearl District, with the advisory group. She explained the amenities included in the park and fenced off-leash area and shared the community input on the design that PP&R has received. The OLA surface will be decomposed granite, the same material used with success in off-leash areas in other cities. Other amenities will include benches, a water fountain and a dog wash station.

Other items discussed included:

- OLA size - Ali noted that PP&R has heard from a group of dog owners that would like the OLA to increase in size. Designing new parks requires balancing many competing recreational uses, she said, and dog owners are but one group desiring space in the new park. John noted that the Fields dog owner group is continuing to push for a larger area.
- Forest Park off-leash use – Advisory group members requested further discussion of off-leash trails in Forest Park.
- OLA Design – Group members asked whether or not Fields will be a standard for dog parks in the future. Ali responded that best practices for dog park design are in the group work plan, and the experience of designing the Fields OLA, as well as “lessons learned” after it opens, should certainly be considered.
- Trash can type and placement at the Fields – The group discussed the garbage system for the OLA. A deep can, which is emptied by a truck, is being considered due to maintenance benefits. Deep cans are emptied less often, which makes for more streamlined maintenance. Emptying standard trash cans would be done more often, and the weight of the bags exposes park workers to injury. The group discussed the pros and cons of can placement, and suggested PP&R explore a hybrid system (inside/outside cans) for the Fields OLA.

Community Comments – Fields Park Design

- Why does there need to be a children’s playground at Fields when other nearby parks have play areas for children? Ali said the question could best be answered by public involvement staff, but there was strong community support for having a play area at the Fields. An advisory group member mentioned that there are children in the neighborhood, and a school is being built nearby as well.
- Parks should look into public private co-ownership of some areas.
- The open space that is the current Fields location works well for dogs. With the current design there would be less space for dogs. The area being set aside for the off-leash area is being further compartmentalized with an area for small dogs. The feeling was also expressed that the public involvement process for the Fields Park design was not enough.
- Bringing dogs that are used to an unfenced area into a fenced space could possibly bring in aggression issues.
- Parks should consider limited off-leash hours in the other areas of Fields outside of the OLA.

Advisory Group Applications

There are two open spots on the advisory group for representatives from North Portland. The group discussed the final applications and then anonymously voted on their choices.

Education Initiative Materials

Ali presented the new OLA signs and OLA area handouts. The signs, which will be used to encourage good behavior within the OLAs as well as to encourage dog owners who don’t use OLAs to do so, are based on issues identified by the advisory group.

Feedback on the signs included:

- That dogs who are aggressive or afraid should be taken home is very important and should be emphasized.
- Adding the fine amount to some of the signs might make them more effective.
- The way signs are worded brings a sense of community to the off-leash areas in a non-confrontational way.
- It was agreed that moving the signs will be important for their effectiveness as static signs tend to be ignored.
- Concern was raised that the “OLA” acronym might not be known outside of parks and the off-leash advisory group.
- The distraction sign may need to be broken down into two signs. Distractions are an issue but might not need to be specifically addressed like they are in the current sign draft.

Request Process Update

Ali updated the group on the park proposal process being developed by PP&R, which will be a way for the community to request new OLAs or changes to existing OLAs. Based on the group’s suggestions the application has been split into two forms – an initial form that gathers basic information, and second more in-depth form that will be completed after staff reviews and approval of the initial application. Ali summarized the process and the group reviewed the application forms.

The process should be finalized and application forms available to the public in early spring. Forms will be available online and at PP&R facilities.

Other Topics Discussed

The group expressed interest in making off-leash areas non-smoking. Ali said that she would look into the possibility and report back.

Next Steps

- New Meeting Schedule – Based on feedback from the group a new meeting schedule has been established. The group will now meet monthly, with every other meeting designated as an “educational” meeting for the group to learn about, and discuss, topics of interest. The educational meetings will be one hour.
- January will be a regular meeting; educational meetings will begin in February. In June, Ali will check back in to see if the monthly schedule is still working ok for everyone.
- Deb’s last meeting – this meeting will be Deb’s last meeting as facilitator. Ali and the group thanked Deb for her work.
- Homework – Ali asked the group to send possible topics for the learning meetings.



Off-Leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday January 26, 2011

6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

1120 SW 5th Ave., 2nd Floor

Meeting Goals/Outcomes

- Select topics for upcoming educational meetings
- Discuss/make recommendations on group role
- Review work plan

Advisory Group Members Attending: Allen Field, Burdean Bartlem, Ken Nielsen, Manon Veilleux

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Zach Sites

Multnomah County: Mike Paulsen

Agenda Items

Educational Meeting Topics

The group will have its first “educational” meeting – a less formal meeting to learn about and discuss a single topic of interest – in February. Enforcement, maintenance challenges and solutions, and off-leash hour changes were the three topics group members suggested most. Other topics suggested by group members included:

- Fence vs. unfenced sites, the problems and benefits
- Urban areas and system expansion
- Social activities for dog owners
- Distribution of off-leash areas across the system. Under vs. overused sites
- General project updates

Ali suggested enforcement as the first topic because it coincides with the work plan objectives and is a topic that is brought up often. Multnomah County Animal Control and PP&R staff will prepare the presentation.

Peer enforcement was briefly discussed, and group members recommended a separate discussion for enforcement and peer enforcement.

Advisory Group Role & Work Plan

A large number of group members were unable to attend the meeting; therefore this agenda item will held to the March meeting.

Updates

Smoking in off-leash areas – Ali has been looking into it. Park code currently reads that smoking is prohibited within 25 feet of playgrounds, picnic tables and other areas at the director’s discretion.

Ali mentioned that, with PP&R’s limited resources, enforcing a smoking ban would not be very realistic, but should the group wish to explore the issue further, we can. Group members suggested bringing up the topic again with the full group.

Mike Paulsen has joined Multnomah County Animal Services as its new development coordinator and will be working with PP&R and the advisory group to explore how we might strengthen our education and enforcement approach.

Hot Topics

- There have been some recent conflicts between off-leash area users and other park users at Mt. Tabor and Alberta parks; staff is exploring ways to resolve the issues.
- Ali presented a handout of the top ten parks with enforcement issues based on Park Ranger records.
- There have been problems with dog urine degrading plants and lawn surfaces at Elizabeth Caruthers Park in South Waterfront, an issue due in part to the high volume of dog owners in that neighborhood. Ali is planning on discussing the problem and solutions with the neighborhood's green spaces committee and other stakeholders.
- Education Initiative – The Dogs for the Environment program and PP&R will share the same “dog mascot” to reach a common goal of respectful use of parks and natural areas.

Next Steps

The first educational meeting will be held Wednesday, February 23.



Off-Leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday March 30, 2011

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Multnomah County Building, 501 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Room 315

Advisory Group members attending: Dannel Crawford, Ken Nielsen, Burdean Bartlem, Johanna Riemenschneider, Manon Veilleux, Maggie Thurman, Michael Kinney, John Tess

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Zach Sites, Kurt Nelson

Multnomah County Staff: Officer Jason Bryant

Updates

The Portland Trail Blazers and Banfield Pet Hospital are partnering to do an off-leash area upgrade! Voting is now online; vote for the off-leash area at Normandale, Wallace, or Gabriel Park. The park with the most votes will have an improvement project done.

Chimney Park Project

Chimney Park in North Portland has a large fenced off-leash area. The only amenity currently in the park is the off-leash area. An upcoming regional trail project will link Pier Park to Chimney Park via bridge, and create a new trail section for the North Portland Willamette Greenway.

Design for the bridge and trail has not yet started. PP&R does not yet know what the impacts of the bridge/trail connection will be on Chimney Park's off-leash area, though some reconfiguration will be necessary.

Advisory group members stressed the need for dog owners to be represented and involved in the public process. Ali said the public involvement process hasn't been established, but it will involve Chimney Park off-leash users and other park and neighborhood stakeholders as well as the advisory group.

Enforcement Presentation & Discussion

Park Rangers and Multnomah County Animal Services (MCAS) work together to enforce dog laws in Multnomah County. Officer Jason Bryant is the animal control officer who patrols parks. He works closely with the Park Rangers; Kurt Nelson is the Park Ranger Supervisor.

Educating owners on leash and scoop laws is the main goal of both the Rangers and MCAS. Their first contact with owners is almost always a warning, though there are rare circumstances where tickets are given in first contact. All contacts are recorded, which helps identify repeat violators.

Park Rangers issue an "AC20" to people in violation of city code pertaining to dog violations. Rangers then send the AC20 to the County, which has the legal authority to issue tickets. The County will issue a ticket if a warning has already been given. The County also checks to see if the dog is licensed, fix-it tickets are sent out if the dog is not licensed.

Enforcement resources are very limited. Officer Bryant is the only officer assigned to parks. The Rangers currently have five full-time employees; during the summer season they typically have more, but their numbers depend on budget resources. The Rangers also enforce a wide range of problems in the parks. Dogs are a significant part of their enforcement efforts but not the majority.

Where enforcement takes place is based on information from Rangers, MCAS, the community, PP&R staff, and on knowledge of parks with ongoing dog problems.

It's crucial to report problems to PP&R or the county, especially when injuries are involved. With violent dog incidents, the County does an investigation. If there is an emergency an officer can be dispatched immediately. If you can get the license plate of the owner, along with a description of the person and the dog, it will greatly help with the investigation. Ali mentioned that establishing a clear way to report problems, and making sure contact information is posted, is something we need to work on.

Advisory Work Plan & Role

Ali updated the group on some of the work plan items she and Zach have been working on, including:

- Developing an education campaign to address the issues identified by the group as ongoing problems in OLAs/parks. They are also working on creating a sponsorship program, to gain additional support for the OLA program by partnering with local businesses.
- The park proposal process, which will be the process for the community to suggest changes to OLAs/new OLAs, is going through final reviews. Ali is anticipating it will be finalized in April.
- Ali will be restarting the stewardship toolbox subcommittee, which focuses on developing resources for community members and site groups. A host of things will be put together to help people create stewardship groups for various areas and parks.

Due to lack of time, discussion of group role will be moved to the next meeting agenda.

Community Comments

Community comments included:

- A community member expressed concerns regarding the Chimney Park project, which included need for dog owner involvement and concerns about the project's impacts on the size and usability of the OLA.
- A community member from Sellwood Park expressed their concerns about enforcement, including a concern that Rangers are not approaching people properly and leaving a negative impression on those they do ticket, due to lack of appropriate education.
- Chad Kula, the new steward of the Mt. Tabor OLA, introduced himself. He is currently working on an education initiative for Mt. Tabor. Off-leash and aggressive dogs can be a problem, one question that arises is how far does education go and when are other means needed. Enforcement at Mt. Tabor is a concern, especially how people can report problems with vague or little information.

Next Steps

Homework: Group members will send Ali their top 3 problems that might be addressed through enforcement.

Next meeting: The next meeting is Wednesday, April 27th.



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

Off-Leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday April 27, 2011

6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

The Portland Building

1120 SW 5th Ave.

Meeting Goals/Outcomes

- Evaluate Program Progress
- Refine Program Goals for 2011

Advisory Group Members Attending: Dannel Crawford, Michael Kinney, Allen Field, John Tess, Laura Venida, Manon Veilleux, Burdean Bartlem, Maggie Thurman, Ken Neilsen

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong, Zach Sites

Agenda Items

Updates

Voting for the Trail Blazers and Banfield dog park improvement project has finished; Normandale Park was the winner over Gabriel Park and Wallace Park.

The Nutro Company's "Room To Run" project will be happening at Mt. Tabor Park on May 15. Last year's project made possible the small dog area at Normandale Park. Nutro employees will be working on various projects in the off-leash area for the day; the community is encouraged to come and help out. Further details will be announced as the date gets closer.

Advisory Group Check-In

Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong began review of the group charter and work plan. The discussion is intended to look at what's been accomplished over the past year, what has and hasn't been working for the group, and to make changes to the charter and work plan that'll help the group do good work in the coming year.

Group Charter and Role

Discussion included:

The group extensively discussed their role in advising on projects that are in or will impact off-leash areas, such as the upcoming Chimney Park project. The group's members are intended to represent a broad cross-section of Portland's off-leash area users, group members said, and as such should have a voice in advising on changes.

Staff committed to soliciting the group's input on projects, and ensuring that their feedback is considered along with that of other user groups, community organizations, and stakeholders.

Many group members expressed concern with lack of connection between what goes on in the group meetings, and the work that's being done by staff. Staff committed to doing a better job of coming back to the group with updates on how their recommendations are being implemented, and checking in on in-progress items more regularly. Group meeting notes will also be sent out along with meeting agendas, and comments/changes to notes solicited.

The group discussed what the final product of their work would be – would a formal report be issued to summarize what they've done? There is currently no report planned for a summary of findings and accomplishments that is similar to what the previous Off Leash Advisory Committee produced. Collecting the work done over the two-year period is certainly something the group may want to look at doing.

There is still a desire within the group to visit off-leash areas to identify problems and what is or is not working. One possibility would be to identify community members who frequent those parks often and have them present information to the advisory group.

Recommended changes to the charter document included:

- The word “ensuring” in the mission statement of the group be changed to “maintaining.”
- “Recommending policy, management or siting changes” be added to the scope of work.
- Revising the charter to indicate the group meets monthly

Work Plan

Review first-year goals: The group felt work plan items of establishing a small dog area at Normandale Park and reviewing a process for requesting new off-leash areas or changes to off-leash areas had been satisfactorily completed.

Some of the first-year goals that the group did not feel like they had satisfactorily completed including defining the off-leash program, reviewing education materials, and an outreach/marketing plan for the education materials.

The group discussed what defining the off-leash program should include, such as: What are the goals, purpose, outcomes and budget of the program and how are these translated into basic needs or a set of standards for the system? The group's first year has been learning a lot about the system and how it operates, Elizabeth said, and it's now time to

look at translating that into a program definition that will support the group's work for the next two years.

Sub-committees were formed to tackle work plan goals outside of regular meeting times:

- Define a comprehensive off-leash program: John Tess, Maggie Thurman, Michael Kinney and Ken Nielsen. This is something that will define the group's work for the upcoming year, Ali said, and it's important to bring something back to the larger group in May.
- Develop an education initiative: Burdean Bartlem and Ken Nielsen.
- Create "toolbox" for forming site stewardship groups: Maggie Thurman, Dannel Crawford, and Allen Field.

The group identified their priority goals for the second year, which are creating an enforcement plan and an off-leash area maintenance plan. Ali said that it may be necessary to slow down the work of the group a little bit, to make sure the kind of review, feedback, and check-in the group would like is accomplished from here on out. Group members said they would rather participate more thoroughly than having work plan items come and go quickly.

Meeting feedback

- Overall the group found the discussion useful – a greater sense of direction and what to expect.
- Some members were unclear as to the role of the committee when issues are brought up to parks; some community members look at advisory group members as the decision makers for all dog issues. This is something the group would like to discuss further.

Next Steps

- An updated email contact list will be sent out, as will meeting notes and a link to the group page on portlandparks.org
- Staff will work to close loops on recommendations, and bring work that's done outside of meetings back to the group.
- Group members will review information that's in their binders.
- Next meeting will be Wednesday, May 25th at the Portland Building.



Off-Leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday May 25, 2011

6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

The Portland Building

1120 SW 5th Ave.

Meeting Goals/Outcomes

- Review draft Education Campaign plan for Summer 2011
- Recommend changes
- Approve Education Campaign next steps

Advisory Group Members Attending: Dannel Crawford, Michael Kinney, Allen Field, Laura Venida, Manon Veilleux, Burdean Bartlem, Maggie Thurman, Ken Nielsen, Johanna Riemenschneider

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Zach Sites

Multnomah County: Officer Jason Bryant

Agenda Items

Updates

The Nutro Company's Room To Run event took place last weekend at Mt. Tabor off-leash area. Nutro employees, community members and PP&R staff were on site making improvements to the off-leash area. A large walking path near the south entrance was completed while other volunteers patrolled for litter and a new poop bag dispenser was set up.

Johanna will join the education subcommittee.

Stewardship Toolkit Subcommittee Update

The stewardship toolkit subcommittee presented a brief outline for the stewardship toolkit. The group defined the purpose of a stewardship group and created a list of startup items:

Purpose of Stewardship:

- Empowers users
- Creates a sense of community
- Connection with PP&R to meet some of their needs
- Assist in monitoring the health of the OLA

Toolkit to include:

- Ways to get other people involved
- Sample fliers

- Creating FB page / web page / free email address
- Have your group or name linked on Parks web page / with Parks staff
- Who to contact if ____ happens (*resolving conflict*)
- Listing of other groups to connect with (i.e. Neighborhood Association)

Ali emphasized the need for a member of the community to be able to step up and become a point person. PP&R can support the stewardship group but active members of the community are also vital. Everything in the toolkit will be available in hardcopy and online. Once the toolkit is developed we can do outreach to different parks to let people know about these resources.

Education Campaign

Ali presented draft materials for the education campaign. They will include:

- A new set of rotating “petiquette” signs for the off-leash areas
- Redesigned tri-fold off-leash area etiquette guide
- 1/3 page quick handout with OLA rules and locations

The “petiquette” series will be on stake-type movable signs. Some messages are specific to parks with OLAs, some are meant for use in all parks.

There is advertising/sponsor opportunities for the campaign materials, including space on the rotating signage and tri-fold handout to help generate revenue for the off-leash program. PP&R may need to do an initial run of materials without ads, to launch the campaign quickly.

Ali outlined the outreach and promotion strategy for the education campaign:

- Press release and pitches to media
- Ad buys if resources are available
- Launching web presence – Parks website, FB page, Twitter
 - Name the dog contest
 - Weekly pet tips
 - Dog of the week
 - Expert advice from vets
- Park Presence
 - Park pop-up education station
 - Staff outreach to other groups, as well as in park
 - Park events

Group feedback/ideas:

- Park event – Pop fly and police dog demonstrations to create a fun circus like atmosphere
- Ken had spoken to Big Tommy’s hot dogs; they were interested in coming to an event for a flat fee of \$300. Some of proceeds will go back to the off-leash program.
- Having a presence on “Dogbook” or Dogster.com
- Costume contests, doggy musical chairs, photos, obstacle course, pet calendar, guess the number of biscuits in the jar
- Having a dog expert or trainer present a class
- Partnering with a local business for an event
- Develop a calendar for related events and outreach
- Partners for distribution of materials: Humane Society, Multnomah County

- Using neighborhood publications
- Outreach through the schools – especially those with off-leash dog problems

Next steps for education campaign:

- Formally defining what we are offering sponsors
- Calling potential sponsors
- Printing promotional materials
- Finalizing an event

Action: The group approved the materials, outreach strategy and next steps.

Community Comments

- Community members from Northwest Portland attended the meeting. They expressed their concern about Couch Park and the off-leash dog problem. People are not following the rules and there is spill over into the playground, other parts of the park and school property. The members attending would like to advocate for a fence around the off-leash area.
- In response to the stewardship outline: It may be time to reinstate a volunteer organization like CSPOT or COLA to be the main contact point between the community and PP&R.
- The first off-leash area advisory group produced a toolkit for stewards, it may be worth looking into.
- Please give community members an advanced notice when parks or off-leash areas are shutting down.
- Look into having off-leash dog access on trails in Forest Park.

Next Steps

- Next meeting will be the last Wednesday in June.
- Subcommittees have their projects to work on; Ali will be checking in with committee leads in the next couple weeks.



Off-leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday, July 27, 2011

6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

The Portland Building

1120 SW 5th Ave.

Meeting Goals/Outcomes

- Review draft Stewardship Toolkit and recommend changes
- Approve next steps for Stewardship Toolkit
- Review draft Willamette Park survey and recommend changes

Advisory Group Members Attending: Allen Field, Manon Veilleux, Ken Nielsen, Johanna Riemenschneider, Michael Kinney

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Angela Abel

Multnomah County: Officer Jason Bryant

Agenda Items

Group Business

- **New Dog Program Staff:** Angela Abel has joined Portland Parks & Recreation as a Community Outreach and Information assistant. She'll be supporting dog program outreach efforts, as well as other PP&R public involvement projects.
- **Dogust Day:** Dogust Day is planned for Saturday, August 27. The Education subcommittee is helping plan the event, and Angela will be lead staff on organizing.
- **Facebook Page:** Ali presented three suggested options (Portland Park Pooches, Park Pups Portland, and Portland Dog Parks) for the Facebook Page. The Advisory Group picked Portland Dog Parks.
- **May Notes:** The Advisory Group approved the May meeting notes.

Willamette Park Survey

The purpose of the Willamette Park Survey is to gather public opinion from park users on moving the current unfenced off-leash dog area to an alternative fenced location at Willamette Park. The current off-leash dog area is approximately 1.7 acres and located along the thin strip of land between the entrance on SW Nebraska St. and the railroad tracks. The proposed new off-leash location is presented as the open field area behind the entrance on SW Nebraska St., comprising of around the same amount of acreage. Survey participants will be informed that the move is intended to restore and preserve the existing Oregon White Oak Habitat located in the current off-leash area.

Group feedback/comments:

- Surveyors need to be careful to not stand in one area (i.e. the soccer fields) in order to not get a skewed views; and suggested possibly surveying at other parks

- Committee members remarked that dog owners are not really using the park for several reasons (current configuration not ideal, too much traffic in park, too many other users) which also might skew the results.
- Other ideas suggested were putting the survey on a bulletin board, mail in comments, survey online, and/or sending it to an email list.
- An aesthetically pleasing fencing might also cater better to non-dog people.

The survey will be completed in the following weeks.

Stewardship Toolkit

Allen presented the drafted stewardship toolkit. The basic idea of the stewardship toolkit was to provide a resource for people looking to volunteer as stewards, or start a stewardship group for their OLA. The toolkit is modeled after the existing community gardens toolkit.

Group feedback/comments:

- The toolkit needs to discuss more general outlines (resource guide), rather than specific instructions.
- The toolkit needs to offer background on the program. Ali said that a working definition is already developed, and that can be included.
- The group discussed whether stewardship groups will be listed on the parks website, materials, etc. Ali said whether groups choose to be listed will be up to them, but support from Parks could include website listings, linking to Facebook page, direct to stewardship group as a resource, helping organize monthly clean-ups, providing flyers, printing, assistance in promotion, etc.
- Some concerns included whether or not the stewardship groups will get listened to and whether listing the steward contact on the website would help groups be recognized more formally. Ali said the website needs to be revised to include a stewardship section. PP&R will encourage stewards to be listed.
- Manon suggested including a “role of the steward” section in the toolkit, with possible rules or suggestions of the role, which could be included in the “operation of your stewardship group” section.
- Each steward should have an anonymous email such as mttabor.stewardgroup@gmail.com, instead of personal emails. This way if the steward changed, the contact information would stay consistent.
- Need to add a “who to call” list.
- If there are possible conflicts about who should be the steward, a possible suggestion was voting, and Parks could help mediate if this was a problem.
- With registering the group with Parks, maybe use “sign-up online” rather than “register.”
- The insurance form was thought of as including too much information. Ali commented how Parks does require an insurance form for the group to sign, and noted that in the final version of the toolkit the form could just be a link, or included in an “additional information” section.
- The drafted document seems more for the steward, so Ali suggested maybe there should be other opportunities for others who don’t want to be the steward.

- The group discussed whether all stewardship groups should be required to meet annually with each other, and determined it should be provided as an option. Ali said that she can organize an annual meeting for all the groups once more groups form, if it's deemed helpful.
- Ali will take back recommended changes for the toolkit. If anyone has other changes, send to Ali soon. Ali will work with graphics and web teams on a final version, and circulate via email for last comments.

Next Steps

Ali proposed a short meeting in August due to the Dogust Day event, or cancelling the regularly scheduled meeting if agenda items can be moved. She'll check with staff and send an update to the group.



Off-leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday, September 28, 2011

6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

The Portland Building

1120 SW 5th Ave.

Meeting Goals/Outcomes

- Recommend changes to Work Plan as needed
- Provide input on Chimney Park Greenway Trail
- Provide input on Education/Enforcement Pilot Sites

Advisory Group Members Attending: Allen Field, Manon Veilleux, Ken Nielsen, Johanna Riemenschneider, Burdean Bartlem,

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Angela Abel

Community Member: Chris Goodrich

Agenda Items

Group Business

- **Normandale Park Makeover:** The Portland Trail Blazers and Banfield Pet Hospital makeover project has been completed, and the park looks great.
- **Work Plan Check-In:** Ali handed out a revised Work Plan, and went over items accomplished to-date. Several items are behind schedule, and Ali asked if the group wanted to drop items, or reprioritize. All items on the work plan are still important to accomplish, group members said. The group recommended taking on the “Develop OLA maintenance Plans” item first, and moving the “Develop Comprehensive Enforcement Program,” item back. Ali will revise the Work Plan and bring updated copies to the next meeting.
- **Off-Leash Program Overview:** Ali asked for guidance on the off-leash program overview. The program overview includes everything PP&R does related to dogs, including maintaining off-leash areas, providing education, enforcing leash laws, and activities. The group had previously indicated they wanted to establish a subcommittee to look at the program overview staff had developed, but that subcommittee has yet to meet. Ali said she feels this is an important piece in PP&R’s ongoing dog efforts, and asked the group for direction. The group will review the definition and discuss at the next meeting.
- **July Notes:** The Advisory Group approved the July meeting notes.

Chimney Park Greenway Trail Update

Kathleen (Kip) Wadden from PP&R planning spoke with the group about the proposed biking/walking paved trail that will run from N. Portland Greenway through the East Esplanade to Kelley Point (a connection for N. Portland to the downtown area). The proposed trail will run through the Chimney Park dog off-leash area, the side by N. Columbia Blvd. It’s anticipated the width of the off-leash area will be reduced by approximately 30 feet.

Kip sought advice on how to reach out to Chimney Park dog users regarding the project.

Suggestions included:

- Putting signs up that informed people about the upcoming meetings; specifically the first meeting on the bridge;
- Alerting the local neighborhood association to put in the newsletter
- Posting on the Portland Dog Parks Facebook page
- Being upfront about the plan to dog owners
- Posting signs when construction will take place since many dogs can get upset with noise;
- Offer to give something back to the dog park community such as water, and/or fixing the fence/gate

Education/Enforcement Pilot Sites Update

The petiquette signs are up in all the off-leash area with specific signs in Fernhill, Grant, and Couch parks. Ken noted that not only do the signs look great, but there has been a tremendous positive reaction to them. Angela has also done pop-ups at Fernhill and Couch, providing information to dog owners. These off-leash areas (along with Grant) were identified by the local neighborhood associations and neighbors as sites with chronic ongoing issues. The education/enforcement campaign is meant to educate park users and then enforce the policies with tickets, rather than in the past of first giving warnings to offenders. The commissioner's office is very supportive and Ali and Angela are working with Mark Ross (PIO for PP&R) to discuss further media attention.

Community Comments

Chris Goodrich, a local community member, came to the meeting to discuss creating an off-leash area in upper Duniway Park. He had submitted a park proposal through PP&R's proposal process, which was denied, as was his appeal (mainly due to drainage issues). Mr. Goodrich contended that the area was very lightly used by members of the public, and there were very limited off-leash areas around the neighborhood. He came to the meeting looking for direction and guidance to his options and possible next steps.

Although all the group members were sympathetic to Mr. Goodrich's proposal, many members pointed out that it is not the role of the advisory group to make these types of decisions. Allen disagreed and felt that the advisory committee should be able to help make decisions with DOLA park proposals. Ali noted that PP&R staff thoroughly reviews each park proposal, and receive many proposals for off-leash areas, among other amenities. She also said that in the existing off-leash areas, PP&R sees chronic problems with sites that are, in one way or another, inappropriate for off-leash use. Staff felt that adding a new site that had several of these issues would create ongoing frustration for the dog owners, other park users, and maintenance staff. PP&R has limited resources for park maintenance, and any new park amenity should be appropriate and long-lasting, Ali said.

The group did suggest that an alternative plan would be to either find a different location, or raise funds to fix the drainage issue at the park—thus alleviating the major problem cited by PP&R.

Next Steps

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 26 from 6:30-8 p.m.



Off-leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday, November 30, 2011

6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

The Portland Building, Room C

1120 SW 5th Ave.

Meeting Goals/Outcomes

- Updates and approve September meeting notes
- Approve OLA program definition
- Presentation and discussion on OLA maintenance

Advisory Group Members Attending: Allen Field, Ken Nielsen, Johanna Riemenschneider, Michael Kinney, Dannell Crawford

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Angela Abel

Agenda Items

Group Business

- **Updates:** The open house to discuss the bridge connecting Chimney/Pier Parks is Wed. Dec. 14th from 6:30-8 p.m. at the St. Johns Community Center. The open house will talk about all affected areas including the Chimney Park OLA.
- **Geocaching policy:** PP&R's policy on geocaching – placing objects in parks for people with GPS units to find – is under development. Staff has asked for feedback from the OLA group on whether PP&R should allow caches to be placed in off-leash areas. Though some group members felt allowing geocaching would be a good opportunity to show dogs can peacefully coexist with other park users, they ultimately determined that caches and geocaching activity would likely have negative impacts (such as dogs disturbing caches, geocachers not being aware of their surroundings as they hunted) for off-leash use. The group recommended not allowing geocaching in fenced areas, and asking people who wish to place caches in unfenced areas to be aware that those spaces are heavily used by dogs.
- **September meeting notes:** Two things need to get changed to the September meeting notes:
 1. Allen disagreed with the committee decision regarding park proposals, and thinks that the committee should have a say regarding proposed DOLAs.
 2. Ken had acknowledged that there was a tremendous reaction to the Petiquette signs that was not reflected in the notes.
- **Park proposal process:** The park proposal process was addressed again with Ali giving an overview of the process. Since the new system was implemented, two DOLA proposals have been submitted—none have reached phase II, which is a more in-depth examination of a proposal, and which would include community members in the decision making process. Angela will send out the proposal process link to the group.
- Michael wanted to know about tabling for stewardship groups. Ali said that if a table is desired, a permit is needed, and PP&R dog program staff can facilitate that. However,

people are free to stand and recruit at parks. It's always best, Ali said, for groups to get in touch with dog program staff so they can help.

OLA Program Definition Approval

In advance of the meeting, Ali sent the OLA program definition to the group for approval. In general, everyone was okay with the definition, but there were a few comments:

- Stewardship group needs to get added.
- There needs to be a catalogue of prices, which is an upcoming item on the group's work plan.
- Change in wording suggested: not just "exclusive to dogs", but needs to acknowledge that owners are allowed in DOLAs also; and rewrite last sentence on enforcement. Ali will rewrite and circulate for final approval.

OLA Maintenance Presentation

Ali gave a presentation on the maintenance issues and costs for the dog areas, highlighting ongoing challenges of maintaining OLAs, particularly turf and drainage problems that many OLAs experience.

Ali noted that many of the cost numbers do not accurately reflect the actual cost of maintaining dog parks, particularly unfenced OLAs, because staff does not always differentiate between hours worked in the park in general to hours worked in off-leash areas. Capturing that accurately is something that Parks staff is working on.

Allen asked why costs at unfenced areas need to be attributed to off-leash use, because things like mowing, trash pickup, etc. would still need to happen if an off-leash area was not there. Ali said that dog use raises the level of maintenance needed – dogs are tougher on turf than casual recreational use is, dog waste requires more frequent trash pickup, and there's an expectation that areas be maintained year-round, which means PP&R needs to address issues like mud and holes with additional resources such as bark chips or re-seeding.

Group members pointed out that all turf issues are not due to dog use. Other park users damage turf, as do maintenance activities such as trucks and their tire ruts. Members also noted that OLA information boards should be added to the list of amenities that need to be maintained in OLAs.

Next steps for the maintenance plan include Ali analyzing costs, developing maintenance guidelines for existing areas, and developing maintenance guidelines for new dog off-leash areas. The group will discuss this again at the January meeting

Additional Comments

- Petiquette signs should be two-sided.
- The PIR bathroom is locked. Ali will see if Parks can unlock it for DOLA users.

Next Steps

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 25, 2012 from 6:30-8 p.m.



Off-leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday, January 25, 2012; 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

The Portland Building, Room C (1120 SW 5th Ave.)

Meeting Goals/Outcomes

- Updates and approve November meeting notes
- Maintenance standards exercise

Advisory Group Members Attending: Dannell Crawford, Allen Field, Ken Nielsen, Johanna Riemenschneider

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Angela Abel

Community Members: Tanya Barham, and Amy Casanova (on phone)

Agenda Items

Group Business

- **Advisory Group Changes:** Due to other projects, Ali no longer has the capacity to staff monthly meetings. The group will now meet bi-monthly. Burdean resigned from the group due to work commitments.
- **November Notes:** The November notes were approved.
- **Chimney/Pier Open House:** The open house on the Chimney-Pier Parks Bridge went well. People seemed very excited about the connection that will be created, which will allow Pier Park neighbors to get to Chimney Park and the OLA on foot.
- **New Developments:** Construction on the Fields Park will start this spring.

Maintenance Standards Exercise

Committee members were asked to identify the conditions they would want to find at a dog park, in order to help PP&R create guidelines for dog parks maintenance. Items included:

Fencing/Boundary Markers

- No horizontal or vertical gaps
- Have working gates
- Make markers and signs very visible

Play Surfacing

- No muck in paths or pools of muck
- Fill in holes with gravel
- Include some areas of soft green grass
- Replace bark chips with rainy weather
- Be aware of poor drainage
- Keep grass at a variable height, but not long enough to seed

Bulletin Boards

- Need to inventory all boards in parks to see which ones need replacing. Some signs have old or faded information

- Make sure information is accurate and legible
- Need waterproof containers for information/maintainability

Trash Cans

- Regular scheduled pick-up= keep cans from overflowing
- Have trash cans at entrances
- Keep bag dispensers near cans
- When the deep garbage cans are outside the OLA, have bag dispensers inside the OLA.

Informational Signs

- Keep it simple!
- Information overload isn't the answer (5 signs on 1 post doesn't work any better than 1 sign)
- Clear messages
- Mark the boundaries of OLA
- Note where leashes are required
- Signs should be placed at eye level

Scoop Bag Holders

- Provide bags
- Several locations in the parks
- Have scoop reminder signs
- Make signs playful/fun: "no poop left behind" or "do your dooty"

Specialty Amenities (lights, benches, picnic tables, water spigots)

- Have them all, make sure they work, and let people clearly know where to find them
- Have water fountains and spigots at each OLA
- Amenities should be listed on the information board
- More amenities should be included in each park
- Have drinking bowls available

What can dog owners do?

- Train their dogs to be under voice control
- Be self-aware of themselves and aware of their dogs
- Update bulletin boards (remove old materials/organize postings)
- Pick up dog poop and take it home
- Give positive feedback and reinforce good dog owner behavior
- Have poop bags and restock the holders.

Community Comments

Amy Casanova called the OLA committee to talk about problems with off-leash dogs particularly at Irving Park and Irvington School. In general she feels that non-fenced OLAs are problems due to people not picking up after their dogs and owners not paying attention. In addition, OLAs near elementary schools and close to playgrounds are also areas of concern. Ali said that Irvington School is Portland Public School property. PPS is working to create more consistent messaging to dog owners about visiting school grounds with pets. The rule is, no pets until after 5 p.m. or until afterschool activities have concluded, and pets must be leashed per Multnomah County Leash Laws.

Tanya Barham also discussed the problems of off-leash dogs at Irving Park. Irving Park does have an OLA, however, dog owners are consistently letting their dogs run off-leash all over the park and in the sports fields. The group recommended doing an educational/enforcement blast at the park, and Ali and Angela are going to meet with Tanya to discuss some of the issues and how Tanya (and possibly other park users) can help with the educational aspect. Angela will also send Tanya the link for the park proposal process to apply for a fenced OLA area at Irving.

After hearing from Amy and Tanya, the group discussed the issues and possible additional resources of enforcement.

Next Steps

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 28, 2012 from 6:30-8 p.m.



Off-leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday, May 2, 2012

6:30-8 p.m.

The Portland Building, Room C (1120 SW 5th Ave)

Meeting Goals/Outcomes

- Review existing leash and scoop law enforcement issues
- Provide feedback on leash and scoop law enforcement issues and next steps
- Review options for continued engagement of off-leash area users
- Recommend preferred option(s) for ongoing engagement

Advisory Group Members Attending: Dannell Crawford, Ken Nielsen, Johanna Riemenschneider, Manon Vieullex, Michael Kinney, Laura Venida

PP&R Staff: Ali Ryan, Art Hendricks, Angela Abel

Community Members: Tanya Barham, Bill Bangall, Leigh Eicher, Jan Valentine, Clayton Lloyd, Alexandra Brown

Agenda Items

Group Business

- **January Notes:** The January notes were approved.
- **Updates:** Chimney Park was the winner of the Blazers/Banfield Dog Park Makeover. The project and grand reopening celebration will take place in September. A dog-themed movie, along with dog activities, will be held at Brentwood Park on July 24 as part of PP&R's Movies in the Park.

Leash and Scoop Law Enforcement Presentation and Discussion

Ali introduced Art Hendricks, PP&R's security manager. The purpose of the leash and scoop law presentation and discussion is to review what the current enforcement approach is, to share upcoming changes to enforcement resources, and to gauge the group's support for a new method for enforcing leash laws in parks.

Current approach: PP&R currently contracts with Multnomah County Animal Services (MCAS) to provide a full-time Animal Control Officer, as well as administrative support for processing citations written by Park Rangers. The standard enforcement approach is education first, citation second. On first contact a dog owner receives a warning. Their information is entered into the Ranger database. On second contact, the owner receives a citation. PP&R has also, with the support of the advisory group, adopted a no-warning approach in parks with chronic noncompliance with leash and scoop laws. In those parks, PP&R staff performs extensive outreach via in-park visits, signs, neighborhood association visits, etc., and citations are issued on first contact.

The current model has its problems, primarily lack of enforcement resources. The highest number of complaints received by PP&R are regarding off-leash dogs. Requests for enforcement of leash laws are frequent, with PP&R dog program staff hearing 50+ requests since January.

Upcoming changes: PP&R no longer has funding to contract with MCAS. The MCAS animal control officer will no longer patrol parks, and Park Rangers will no longer be able to write citations. Park Rangers are also seasonally employed, and during winter months, PP&R will have minimal ability to enforce leash and scoop laws.

New enforcement method: Given the ongoing challenges with non-compliance, PP&R is seeking a sustainable, effective method for enforcing leash and scoop laws in parks. Ali and Art are proposing that Park Rangers issue citations directly, and that PP&R will process the fines and define an appeal process. A number of questions remain as to how to give Rangers citation authority, what the citation process would look like, and how PP&R would administer it. Ali and Art will bring back a solidified proposal in June. For now, they wanted to see if the group supported Park Rangers being able to issue citations.

Advisory group members supported Rangers being able to issue citations, but want to see a more developed proposal that they can comment on. Michael was against giving the Rangers the ability to cite dog owners unless Rangers were also fining for other violations, and not targeting dog owners alone. He also wanted to see more park signs that would allow people to call in for other violations. Ali said that in order to apply a fine to leash and scoop law violations, those violations would need to be removed from the rest of the park code offenses, which are punishable as criminal actions. Currently, after a certain number of violations, having a dog off-leash in a park does become a criminal offense. Subjecting leash and scoop laws to a fine makes those violations non-criminal offenses.

Other feedback included:

- Revitalize CSPOT, or another community -led group that could take on more advocacy roles. Ali said PP&R can help, but coordination/organization/management of the group would need to be lead by the community.
- Make fines higher.
- Look into other types of penalties besides fines, such as having to attend a class for responsible dog ownership
- No enforcement tends to legitimize the behavior, and/or lead to unnecessary conflicts in parks between users. Enforcement is a necessary part of encouraging compliance.
- Table at events such as Doggy Dash
- Have advocacy/volunteer groups take on the responsibility of patrolling the parks and talking to dog owners. Ali is looking in to Bob McCoy's model of this for Forest Park and other Friends groups/Community Foot Patrols. PP&R would need to develop a training model/method so that people would know how to respond in confrontational/hostile encounters.
- PP&R should revisit no-smoking in off-leash areas.

Community Comments

Three major problems were brought up:

1. The Fields temporary off-leash area is creating problems for other neighborhood residents, particularly Encore residents. Dog owners are not obeying leash and scoop laws at all. Ali said the area is an interim solution, and that Hoyt Street Properties is preparing another

piece of property for use by dog owners during the Fields construction. Contact Hoyt Street for more information, and to share concerns about off-leash dogs on Encore property.

2. Dogs off-leash and poop are creating problems on fields and school grounds, especially before during Little League games. Ali said if PP&R knows where and when problems are happening, Park Rangers can go out in advance and educate/cite owners. If problems are occurring on school grounds, the school needs to be contacted directly.
3. Off-leash problems are continuing at Irving Park. Tanya is willing to help create an education/volunteer model for all Parks to use, or possibly initiate a group to patrol the parks and help educate.

Next Steps

- The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 20, 2012 from 6:30-8 p.m.
- Ali will put the options for continuing engagement of dog owners on that agenda, as we didn't get to it.
- Angela is sending Petiquette for Parks brochures to Tanya, Jan, and Ken; she will add community members present to the list to be notified about the next meeting.



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

Off-Leash Program Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Wednesday June 20, 2012

6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

The Portland Building, Rm C (1120 SW 5th Ave)

Meeting Goals/Outcomes

- Identify future priorities for Dog Off-Leash Program
- Identify preferred option(s) for ongoing engagement of dog owners
- Provide feedback on leash and scoop law enforcement proposal
- Thank group members heartily for their wonderful contributions over the past two years!

Advisory Group Members Attending: Dannel Crawford, Allen Field, Michael Kinney, Ken Nielsen, Johanna Riemenschneider, Laura Venida, Manon Veilleux

PP&R Staff: Mike Abbaté, Tania Curiel, Art Hendricks, Ali Ryan

Agenda Items

Future Priorities for Dog Program

Ali introduced Portland Parks & Recreation Director Mike Abbaté. Mike thanked group members for the work they've done over the past two years, and asked them to share their priorities for future off-leash program efforts. These included:

Continue to engage dog owners. The group suggested several methods, including:

- **Encouraging and supporting the formation of stewardship groups.** Group members strongly supported forming stewardship groups as a way to continue to work with dog owners to keep dog parks and parks safe and healthy. They suggested more support from PP&R, starting with more promotion and outreach for the existing stewardship toolbox. Ali noted that PP&R can market the toolbox and provide support for groups forming, as well as ongoing stewardship activities, but forming and keeping the groups going is ultimately up to the dog owners. Michael suggested Portland follow the model established in Seattle, with the Citizens for Off-Leash Areas (COLA) group. Ali said PP&R would love to work with him if he or other community members would like to bring a proposal forward.
- **Increase public awareness of dog off-leash areas and leash laws.** Suggestions included developing a media strategy, presence at local businesses and events, and signs and outreach regarding program efforts such as the stewardship toolbox.
- **Encourage responsible dog ownership through programming.** Suggestions included free obedience training, increased education events, citywide promotion responsible dog events, a possible slogan, and sponsors. Stewardship groups were

recommended as possible organizers of events like training sessions, to encourage community connection and participation.

Improve in-park signs and communications. Group members suggested using existing kiosks/sign boards to communicate with dog users, and assessing whether existing signage/communication was sufficient at all off-leash areas. They recommended always using the same official sign/poster template, so users would know postings were from a credible source.

Make it easier for dog owners and park users to contact PP&R. Suggestions included adding contact information to existing signage, with easily accessible ways to communicate concerns, report problems, and ask questions.

Continue to provide education along with enforcement. The group commented on how they do not want PP&R to be “dog catchers,” rather they would like education/enforcement tailored to specific situations and problems in parks and off-leash areas instead of a “one size fits all” approach. Group members suggested educating students as well as adults, and possibly visiting schools. The group supported continuing the Petiquette education and outreach efforts, as well as continuing to use the Parker logo.

Enforce all laws and park rules, not just those related to dogs. The group discussed the need for equitable enforcement of laws and rules. Though group members said enforcement of leash and scoop laws is necessary, they wanted to see enforcement of other rule violations as well. The advisory group suggested increased all-round enforcement in regards to activities like drinking, smoking, and loitering.

Other priorities included:

Ken Nielsen provided memo with his priorities, which included: 1) Support for Park Rangers having citation authority. 2) Double-side printing Petiquette signs for maximum messaging and outreach. 3) Building on Parker image, with possibility of copyrighting the image. He also emphasized the importance of educating children on visiting parks with pets.

Leash and Scoop Law Enforcement Proposal and Discussion

PP&R Security Manager Art Hendricks gave an overview of the proposed changes to enforcement of leash and scoop laws. Currently, PP&R contracts with Multnomah County Animal Services to provide one animal control officer to support parks, as well as to process infractions and issue fines for citations written by Park Rangers. PP&R no longer has funding to contract with MCAS; the contract will end July 1.

Given the ongoing challenges with non-compliance, PP&R is seeking a sustainable, effective method for enforcing leash and scoop laws in parks. PP&R is proposing that Park Rangers issue citations directly. Art gave an outline of the proposed changes, which would include:

- 1.) City code would be revised to allow Park Rangers to issue citations for leash and scoop law violations. The code change would need to be approved by City Council.

- 2.) Park Rangers would continue to use their current approach to enforcement. At most parks, dog owners would receive a warning on first contact, and a \$150 citation on second contact – contacts would be tracked through the Ranger database. In parks with chronic lack of leash law compliance, PP&R would post extensive signage and do extensive outreach, warning dog owners that leash and scoop laws would be strictly enforced. At those parks, \$150 citations would be issued on first contact with a dog owner. Owners would have the opportunity to appeal citations, likely through the existing city hearings process.
- 3.) Prior to implementing the code change, PP&R would undertake a citywide education and outreach campaign to encourage leash and scoop law compliance to make dog owners aware of the increased focus on compliance.
- 4.) Revenue from the program would support a year-round Ranger team, as well as staff to support education, outreach, and processing of citations. Any revenue beyond that would be directed back to the dog program, including OLA improvements, as a priority.

Art and Ali noted that it will be important to track the effectiveness of the program as it is implemented. Use patterns of parks will change, with off-leash activity shifting, and PP&R will monitor that. For example, Art said that intensive educations at Forest Park – including volunteer foot patrols and Rangers – have increased compliance in the park. Art also noted that in other cities where fines are issued regularly, most dogs are on leash.

The group supported the city code change, as well as the proposed enforcement, education, and continued investment in the dog program. They emphasized that education must continue to play a role. Members said there is a need to improve off-leash area usability, and increase user satisfaction, especially with the renewed focus on compliance. They supported reinvesting revenue into the off-leash areas and dog program.

The group suggested an evaluation of the program at six months. Ali suggested an open house or some kind of other public forum may be appropriate for the review.

Thank You!

This meeting concludes the work of the Off-Leash Advisory Group. Ali thanked group members for their hard work and dedication over the past two years, and presented them with certificates and dog-shaped chocolates.