

MIDDLEBURY DOG PARK QUARTERLY MEETING - 07/10/2018

Members present: Dustin Hunt, Brian Hald, Mitch Kramer, Rick Wheeler, Mark Wilch, Jane Steele, Liz Mullikin, JoAnne Gruber

Announcements

-Homeward Bound has a fundraiser in progress. For \$25 and an essay about why your dog deserves the hand crafted dog house on display at G. Stone Motors you could win the house. A suggestion was made that Dog Park users enter the contest and, if selected as the winner, donate the house to the MDP. The winner will be announced on July 20.

-The annual book sale held at Hannaford Supermarket added \$651.00 to the Dog Park coffers. Many thanks go to Hannaford employees and Jan Phelps for the all work they did sorting through books donated and keeping the book bin stocked for the month of June.

-Quarterly revenue from bottle redemption donations was \$12.10. It was noted that our flyer at the redemption center was missing, a new flyer will be delivered this week.

Priority Issues (time sensitive, finances, safety, other pressing)

- 1) **Finances** - Currently our account has \$2614.91. It is important to note that over the course of the last fiscal year our expenses totaled \$2290.27. Fundraising is a necessity.
- 2) **PetSafe Bark for Your Park Grant** - No application was submitted this year. At grant writing time uncertainties concerning the Park made us a less than ideal applicant. All paperwork prepared for this year will be saved for use next year should we decide to move forward with an application.
- 3) **Storage Shed** - An update on the storage shed from Lowes is needed. JoAnne will follow up on this.
- 4) **Shelter Removal** - Dan and Mark took apart, as much as possible, the collapsed shelter on site at the Park. What remains is safe although removal of the lumber and the roof structure remains a priority. Volunteers will be needed to take apart the roof structure, a truck/trailer and torque guns will be required as well. Rick and Jane will plan a work day to accomplish this.

- 5) **Dog Escape** - A small terrier was able to exit the Park by crawling under the fence/gate. Jane will ask Brian Bischof of Cedarledge to help remedy the situation at multiple spots.
- 6) **Tennis Ball Limit** - Tennis balls left on the ground within the Park are a hindrance to mowing. The balls can become projectiles aimed at a passing train (yes, this happened) and the mower can rip balls into pieces that can then be eaten by dogs. Although it was suggested that we revisit the tennis ball limit, the limit still stands.

Talking Points

- 1) **Mowing** - As mowing is a big expense it was recommended that we consider mowing the Park ourselves as some other parks do, with volunteers bringing in their own mowers. The size of the Park could make this a challenge. No action was taken.
- 2) **Trees** - Dustin suggested that there is a tree(s) that might be moved from the Rec Department site to the MDP. He will follow up on that.
- 3) **Waste Receptacles** - Daily Park users pick up stray waste and empty the waste receptacles, so no other volunteer effort is needed.
- 4) **Water** - To have water access in the Park without adding water lines we might possibly dig a well and add a hand pump. Perhaps this could be the focus of a capital campaign. Mark will contact Spafford and Sons to access feasibility of digging a well.
- 5) **Fundraising** - As mentioned above, our group needs to make a plan for fundraising. To that end the following suggestions were made: rethink placing a donations box on site at the Park and empty it daily; sell Friends of the MDP shirts, water bottles, EUROS and/or towels (if we can find an inexpensive source); and have a capital campaign with water access as the focus.
- 6) **Front Porch Forum Post** - A Park user posted that people without dogs should not enter the MDP. This was the result of an incident that occurred when visitors without a canine companion entered the Park and failed to properly close doors as they did so. As a group we agreed that we cannot restrict who enters the Park, but we can communicate expectations to those who use it.
- 7) **MDP Google Groups** - Members agreed to change our Google groups set up to allow all members to reply to emails sent out. That change will be made by JoAnne immediately.

- 8) **Group Leader** - A suggestion was made that our stewardship group needs a designated leader as a business contact as well as overall organizer and head of long range planning. Although the Park's physical site has daily oversight our group otherwise does not. NOTE: This is not the job of Middlebury Parks and Recreation.
- 9) **Woofstock** - Homeward Bound's annual fundraiser will be held September 15. No decision was made as to a MDP presence at the event.

Next Quarterly Dog Park Meeting - Mark your calendars now for the second Tuesday in October, 10/9/2018. Meeting will be held at 4:30 at the Recreation Department building on Creek Road.