

DOG TASK FORCE COMMITTEE MEETING

NOTES from December 15, 2003
Downtown Library, Large Conference Room, 12:15-1:30pm

James King mentioned that this committee was formed to wrestle, define and resolve conflicts between dog users and non-dog users on trails. The committee is to receive input and direction to resolve these conflicts. This committee is not here to resolve complaints from enforcement or tickets - this should be dealt with through the enforcement folks, Gastineau Humane Society.

Public Comment:

Kayla Epstein - She is the chair of the Dog Park Committee and Unleashed Committee in Anchorage. She will be in Juneau for the legislative session and is willing to help our committee in any way she can. Anchorage has much stricter dog regulations and enforcement of regulations and ordinances than Juneau. 80% of dog bites nationally happen in homes whereas in Juneau 75% happen on the trails. She mentioned that Anchorage has 5 off leash areas with some being wilderness walk areas and some fields.

David Crosby - He has been walking dogs at Twin Lakes for 20 years and at least half the people he sees on the trail have dogs. He hasn't seen conflicts with joggers. He recommended that people who use an area adopt as a group to police..

Clovis Dennis - Vast majority of dog owners are responsible. She was informing the group about tactics being used by the enforcers and James King reminded her that she needs to talk to the enforcement people.

A representative of the Capital Kennel Club submitted the following on:

"What is Good Dog Citizenship"?

Several members of the Capital Kennel Club of Juneau met during the time period since the last meeting, with the purpose of defining what Good Dog Citizenship was. First, we wanted to recommend that Dog Walking should be acknowledged by the CBJ as a valid and recognized recreational activity. We realize that the recognition of such requires Good Dog Citizenship in order for the activity to co-exist with other resource users. We are in the process of forming a community wide, outreach oriented, group of "Good Dog Walkers", with the focus being education and community service. Members of this group will agree to be Good Dog Citizens. The Capital Kennel Club is also researching ways to encourage Good Dog Citizenship through our classes and other community events.

Here is the definition we came up with for a Good Dog Citizen:

1. A Good Dog Citizen purchases an annual CBJ dog licenses for his/her canine companion.
2. A Good Dog Citizen displays a collar or harness with current CBJ licenses and rabies tags whenever walking his/her dog;
3. A Good Dog Citizen ensures that his/her dog is under control, either by leash or voice command, at all times.
What is control?
If the dog is not leashed, it should consistently return to the owner when called.
4. A Good Dog Citizen keeps his/her dog out of the way of other citizens, whether bird watcher, walker, mother with stroller, bicyclist, runner, skier, etc.
5. A Good Dog Citizen does not allow his/her dog to touch someone who doesn't want to be touched.
6. If walking a dog off leash, a Good Dog Citizen gives the right of way to other people with dogs that are on a leash.

7. A Good Dog Citizen does not allow his/her dog to harass wildlife.
8. A Good Dog Citizen picks up his/her dog's waste and disposes of waste properly.
9. A Good Dog Citizen meets the need of his/her canine companion, including: cleanliness, health, grooming, nutrition, appropriate exercise and training.

Survey Discussion:

Karla Hart - She mentioned that after reviewing some information she thinks that maybe the group is being a little premature in conducting a survey right now. Instead she proposed the committee form 3 subcommittees to address the following key issues:

1. Many dogs need to be off-leash for exercise, training and socialization.

The dog parks and off-leash areas subcommittee is tasked with

- 1 - finding out about what other communities do regarding this
- 2 - exploring areas in Juneau that may be suitable
- 3 - developing proposed guidelines for how to manage, fund (if required)
- 4 - identifying what further information might be needed to make an informed decision or recommendation
- 5 - drafting recommendations for full committee to consider
- 6 - drafting measurements of success for review in fall 2004

2. Areas in Juneau have sensitive habitats, wildlife migrations, nesting and rearing grounds, or are popular wildlife viewing areas.

The wildlife subcommittee is tasked with

- 1 - reviewing literature relating to wildlife and dogs
- 2 - identifying sensitive areas (and seasons if relevant) in the Juneau area
- 3 - developing proposed guidelines
- 4 - identifying what further information might be needed to make an informed decision or recommendation
- 5 - drafting recommendations for full committee to consider
- 6 - drafting measurements of success for review in fall 2004

3. Dog owners need to know and follow appropriate (and legal) behaviors in Juneau

The education subcommittee is tasked with

- 1 - developing a code of ethics for Juneau dog owners
- 2 - summarizing (or working with GHS and CBJ) current LAWS
- 3 - developing a plan to share this code of ethics
- 4 - incentives to ensure voluntary compliance
- 5 - identifying what further information might be needed to make an informed decision or recommendation
- 6 - drafting recommendations for full committee to consider
- 7 - drafting measurements of success for review in fall 2004

She also submitted the following ***Proposed Timeline:***

- December 15 - form subcommittees
- 2 meetings in January - subcommittees meet in library, access to computers, research resources, book both conference rooms, most likely will require additional work outside of this time by subcommittees/members
- early February - subcommittees check in, report progress, information needs anticipated (if any)

- mid February - report back to full committee with findings and recommendations (and how those might be influenced by more/new information)
 - if more information is needed - research subcommittee to address best way to obtain
- March - full committee discussions, amendments, recommendations for full or trial adoption
- Implementation of recommendations
- Fall 2004 - review measures of success, evaluate programs, and next steps?

Subcommittee membership - formal membership from task force; however, input and participation welcomed from others working in spirit of finding workable solutions, moving process forward.

After discussion and opinions taken from all committee members present it was agreed that the 3 subcommittees be formed. A survey could be done at a later date if the committee thought it was necessary.

Ron Marvin from the Forest Service said they rely on their specialists for wildlife concerns. Most of their trails do allow for off leash use and he is not sure how the forest service fits into any of these concerns. He said that he could share their information with the committee.

Chava Lee reminded everyone that there was a whole other component that they needed to consider too - education for the non-dog owners.

The subcommittees will consist of:

- 1st subcommittee: James King, Chava Lee, Kathy Buss, Sue McGregor- Chair, Kim Kiefer - dog parks/off leash areas
- 2nd subcommittee: Kathy Hocker, Karla Hart-Chair, Bob Grochow - wildlife
- 3rd subcommittee: Sue McGregor, Kathy Buss, Chava Lee-Chair - education

Each subcommittee to meet separately before the next Dog Task Force Committee meeting on January 12th. Each subcommittee will be tasked to define their problem, how to approach solving the problem, steps they are going to take and then define the outcome.

If subcommittees want their information submitted on the Parks and Recreation web site they need to submit to Diane Mastin by January 7th. Drafts need to go to committee early.

Parks/off leash Subcommittee to meet on December 22nd at the Humane Society, 4pm
 Wildlife Subcommittee to meet on January 5th, same time and place as this meeting
 Education Subcommittee to meet on December 29, at the Downtown Library, 12:15pm

It was also decided that anyone from the public that wants to participate just needs to show up at the various subcommittee meetings. There is no need to be assigned to the various groups.

Chava Lee from Gastineau Humane Society wanted to reiterate again that their organization responds to the needs of the community and enforcement is what they do. If people don't call them they can not respond to the problem.

Public Comment:

David Crosby - He doesn't want all dog owners to be forced into a "dog park", which would then become the only area where dogs may be exercised off leash. The solution should not be "all or nothing at all" and should reflect intelligent, defensible judgments about allocation of user time based on existing usage - i.e., seasonal and time of day restrictions, not area bans or leash only at all times

Kayla Epstein - She recommended that all people be considered - even people without dogs. People need to know where they can not find dogs. She also said that some dog owners prefer areas that are fenced.

Andy Grossman - He has always had dogs but is now considering not having any because it is getting increasingly more difficult to find an area where he can take a dog off leash in his area. He was told in the past Basin Road would always be one of those areas and now he has gotten ticketed. He thinks CBJ is discouraging big dog ownership.

Perry Shipman - He wants to commend this group for the opportunity to participate and have his comments included and considered.

Close of Public Comment:

James King - The purpose of this committee is to define what makes sense for this community. The group is not trying to shut dog ownership down. The purpose is to balance needs and desires of everyone.

Karla Hart and Sue McGregor both recommended an excellent resource from Australia. It is a long document, about 100 pages. Its website is: www.petnet.com.au/openspace

Kayla Epstein gave a pamphlet to James King, which is another excellent resource entitled "Planning Parks for Pets". Copies are around \$15.

Adjournment: 1:25PM