

## **AMHERST DOG PARK TASK FORCE**

### Meeting #9

6:00 PM, Monday, April 23, 2018.

First floor meeting room, Town Hall.

### Present:

Nina Allen

Ellen Keiter

Mike Chesworth

Kaye Sherwood (fr. Dougan)

Ted Diamond

Gina Fusco

Jim Pistrang

Jack Jemsek

Ana Devlin Gauthier

Dave Ziomek (Assistant Town Manager)

Carol Hepburn (Animal Control Officer)

### **Agenda**

Approved minutes from last meeting.

#### Review of Stanton Design Grant

DZ distributed a plot drawing and a budget provided by Berkshire Design Group (Peter Wells, prop bono)

This concept budget/plan will suffice to prepare packet to send to the Stanton Foundation.

We have estimates coming in lower than expected for the site assessment/reuse study

Best estimates of surplus?

- Possibly \$30K.

Any action on the potential use of the north side bump of trees?

- DZ: Yes, possible. It may gain us extra space away from the sparrows.

Will the town give us topsoil?

- DZ: The town will contribute subsoil.
- Amherst DEP is supportive of our use of the old landfill.

ADG: Re: dog poop. Looking into composting. Probably cannot be in this first budget. Fundraise later.

TD: Could we partner with the university/colleges for a poop disposal solution.

- Methane to power lighting, or some such.

JJ: I think I know someone deep in to that at UMASS

ADG: Warning: costs for composting at a Canadian dog park cost \$5000/year. Whether CD or USD, that's ruff.

Ana's joke received crickets.

### Review of CPA Town Meeting plans

CPAC will submit their block list of requests for discussion and hopeful approval.

Our \$90k grant request will be split 50/50 with open space allocations and recreation.

JP will explain to TM why he is not recusing himself from

moderating.

Our request will come up to TM most likely Monday or Wednesday, in the third week in May

ADG volunteers to be point person at TM to field question for our dog park

Possible problems at TM?

- Anticipate questions, Ana

Neighbor concerns?

- Site has not been publicized.

- We should go public soon (before the TM) with the site/ concept

- DZ and JP will coordinate a press release

### Report from the Fundraising subcommittee

TD: Fund Sub had a meeting April 9 with only two attendees. Ouch.

Feels we need the conceptual budget to begin strategizing fund raising

Also, we must determine an annual budget for maintenance.

[See April 9 Fundraising Subcommittee meeting minutes]

EK and TD: Found other grants we can apply for to help with construction and maintenance.

- Pet Safe: \$25K for construction. Very competitive.

Application due May 1.

- Stanton suggests that getting other money from other sources is desirable.

JP: Objections to pursuing this grant?

- Unanimously approved
- EK volunteers to spearhead this application.
- MC will forward photos of site
- Thank you, Ellen.

GF: Don't forget the Amherst Rotary also has a \$25K grant we can apply for.

DZ: Reminds us that most projects tend to come in over budget, so more money is better.

### Update on Friends of the Dog Park strategies

KS: Reached out to Kestral Fund re: 501c3. Very positive response.

TD: Dakin also very interested.

There will most likely be an administration fee from either of 5-7%.

Regarding possible need for liability insurance. It seems if we don't charge a fee, the MA law waives liability:

- Statue link provided by V. Zolina, Maynard Dog Park:  
<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter21/Section17C>

### Timeline of activities for the next 4 months

DZ: Possible start construction date: Late Spring/Early Summer 2019, depending on all pieces coming together

- Cutting away some of the slope (as per Heritage's boomerang shape request) could save us some construction costs and help save the sparrows, too.

TD: Suggest fundraising would be more effective if initiated closer to the time of construction start.

JP: Planning needs to happen this summer to establish a plan.

KS: Friends of the Dog Park should get moving ASAP.

NA: Concerned that an established time line for fundraising should happen ASAP

DZ: Forming a capital campaign to establish an endowment for the future of the dog park key to success. Suggests Late Summer/Fall is not too soon.

The fiscal agent would be the entity to be involved in this.

We plan to discuss Fund Raising and FOTDP formation next meeting.

Topics:

- Give options (Memorial bricks, vinyl signs for donors, per year fee for same)
- Levels of gifts
- How do we come up with our gift goals
- Timing

TD: Suggests specific organizational meeting for FOTDP formation

DZ: Look at Friends of Puffers Pond for example

- They raise money yearly, give it to the town for targeted upkeep, thru Kestral Trust

Public comment on other items.

[Note: Around ten students from Amherst College attended]

One Amherst student had questions about proposed rules:

Q: “What’s a prong collar and why prohibit them?”

A: (TD) Cruel, dangerous to other dogs.

Q: “Why choose 14 as the age limit for must be accompanied by adult?”

A: (GF, et. al)

- Through researching what other dog parks do.
- It is High school age.
- We will start with this and adjust if necessary.

Basically, we are trying to avoid anyone getting hurt.

Set next meeting date

Possible dates: June 13, 14, 15

JP will launch another splendid Doodle poll. huzzah.

Adjourn: Seconded, approved. We out.

### **ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN**

DZ and JP will coordinate a press release

ADG: Volunteers to be point person on TM

KS: Follow up with Kestral Fund

TD: Follow up with Dakin

MC: Will produce photos of dog park site

EK: Will spearhead grant to Pet Smart

JJ: Will look into dog poop engineering at UMASS

JP: Will do everything else and then take a well deserved break.