

# **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes**

## **Regular Meeting – April 9, 2015**

### **Item 1: Meeting Called to Order by Dr. Scott McBrayer at 11:57 a.m.**

Meeting Location: Parks and Recreation Administration Conference Room

#### Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Bob Wiig  
Gary Schroen  
Dr. Scott McBrayer  
Kristy Emerson  
Kyle Emert  
Marc Litzen  
Scott Coleman  
Jim Doody (Ex-Officio)

Board Members Absent:

Parks & Recreation Staff Present: Rob Schoeber, Director  
Tressa Fisher, Administrative Specialist  
Mike Vendegna, Parks Superintendent

### **Item 2: Approval of Minutes**

Gary Schroen moved to approve the March 5, 2015 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board minutes. Marc Litzen seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Motion adopted by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Yes 7 No 0

The Board members wished outgoing Councilman Jim Doody the best of luck in his future endeavors, and thanked him for his years of dedication and service to, both, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and the City. *We will miss you Jim!*

### **Item 3: Off-leash Dogs**

Rob Schoeber asked for feedback regarding the potential of opening up Watson Island as an unfenced “off-leash” area for dogs. Staff has been doing some research and reviewing other cities and organizations on their off-leash policies and/or related issues. A recent article in the Daily Sentinel from Aspentree Veterinary Care was discussed, as well as the response letter from Rob Schoeber (see attached). Discussion ensued regarding the Watson Island location, with the Board members expressing significant concern regarding the large amount of activity in the area and the high potential for incidents. In addition, staff has discussed the proposal with the Riverfront Commission and the local disc golf group, with both groups expressing they are opposed to an off-leash policy at Watson Island.

Mike Vendegna proposed the Board consider allowing for an unfenced “off-leash” dog area on the City owned property located off of Unaweep Avenue (See attached map). Mr. Vendegna stated the 27-30 acre bowl shaped area directly below Clymer’s Dairy would provide the perfect area for this type of use. If

approved, staff would create a destination dog park, installing a split rail fence along the ditch and parking lot, as well as pet pick-up stations and trash cans. There is also a potential to chip seal the road and install some type of bark chip walking path along the perimeter. The location would be a very cost effective area to designate as a large dog park. At this time, staff is waiting for the Bureau of Reclamation to approve the proposal.

Rob Schoeber reported Mesa County Animal Control has recently hired six new enforcement officers and said they plan to begin patrolling and heavily ticketing all areas within City limits. The Board agreed this option for a new off-leash area might be really good timing.

Marc Litzen moved to deny Watson Island as an off-leash area, but to approve for the UnawEEP Avenue location to be developed as an off-leash dog park on a trial basis, pending approval from City Council and the Bureau of Reclamation. Kyle Emert seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Motion adopted by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board:    Yes    7        No    0

Bob Wiig commended Mike Vendegna for continually looking for positive solutions for these types of situations. *Nice job Mike!*

#### **Item 4: Canyon View Playground Update**

Rob Schoeber showed photos of the Canyon View playground currently being installed, stating the crews are moving full steam ahead and are on schedule for a May 8 ribbon cutting. Staff shares in the excitement of the community in anticipation of the new playground equipment.

#### **Item 5: Project Updates**

Las Colonias Phase I is moving along very well, and currently is ahead of schedule. The crews will begin landscaping as soon as the sidewalks are curbing are completed.

Rob Schoeber reported staff has received a proposal from a volunteer group who wants to take the lead and help with trail construction and clean up on several City properties in the Ridges. In collaboration with Share Fest, the group is planning to clean up the area along Mariposa to make it more conducive for bicyclists. They are also wanting to “formally” extend the trail, which is being used now. The group has already held a community meeting which resulted in a committee being formed with a formal proposal being made to the City. The group has stated that all work will be completed by volunteers.

#### **Item 6: For the Good of the Community**

The 2015 Midwest Regional Conference is also hosting “The Power of Citizen Advocacy” meeting on Monday, April 27 from 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. This will be a special session specifically geared towards board members and all Board members are encouraged to attend the luncheon. At this time, there are over 100 delegates registered for the conference, with more information and the final schedule coming out soon. Rob Schoeber stated Darin Krueger, Director of Williston Parks and Recreation (North Dakota) will also be here speaking. Rob suggested a panel discussion take place with Mr. Krueger to ask questions regarding how they overcame community hurdles when building their newly completed 240,000 sq. ft. recreation center, how they got started, etc. The Board members agreed this would be the perfect opportunity to brainstorm with an organization who had such a successful outcome.

Rob Schoeber provided a personnel update, stating Randy Coleman and Marc Mancuso have been promoted to Parks Supervisors. Eddie Mort has made a lateral transfer and will be supervising cemetery, south parks, weed abatement, and irrigation. In addition, Darcy Austin has been promoted to the Senior

Administrative Assistant position. At this time, there are still several open positions in the department, including a Leisure Services Representative, Parks Crew Leader, and Equipment Operators.

Marc Litzen asked if special discounts or reduced rates are offered for non-profit organizations, such as Challenger Baseball. Rob Schoeber stated staff works really hard to ensure prices are fair for all field users and stated staff is happy to bring the fees and charges back to the board should they want to review the fees again.

**Item 7: Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tressa Fisher  
Administration Specialist

### Dog-friendly Grand Junction needs an off-leash dog park

Thank you, Connie Blaine. Her letter recommending Watson Island for an off-leash dog park is a great idea. Citizens with dogs who live in Grand Junction have been waiting for such an idea (or a reality) for far too long.

Blaine is right: Why can't the tax-paying citizens of Grand Junction have a centrally located area? Canyon View dog park is disgustingly dirty and too small. Other cities the size of Grand Junction have wonderful off-leash dog parks.

This community is so dog friendly and dogs add so much to one's life. Not only do they provide wonderful companionship at home, they also provide incentive for humans to get out in the fresh air and get more exercise. Come on Grand Junction City Council, step up and make it happen.

**SARAH DUFFORD**  
**and K.D. ASHBROOK, DVM**  
*Aspentree Veterinary Care*  
*Grand Junction*

March 12, 2015

Ms. Sarah Dufford

Ms. K.D. Ashbrook

Aspentree Veterinary Care

2874 C Road

Grand Junction, CO 81503

Dear Ms. Dufford and Ms. Ashbrook,

I am writing in response to your letter dated March 8<sup>th</sup>, regarding the dog park at Canyon View Park. I very much agree with you that we live in a dog friendly community, and dogs provide endless benefits as family pets.

I was disappointed to read your perceptions about the condition of the dog park at Canyon View. Throughout the past year, our department has made this area a high priority and completed a major renovation there. Some of the improvements there included:

- Designed and installed new irrigation system
- Construction of a new walking trail
- Planted 6 new trees
- Additional dog waste stations
- Improved drinking fountain
- Installed several dog play features
- Over seeded area with grass

Since re-opening the site last fall, we have received many compliments from our regular users there. From a facility maintenance perspective, dog parks are extremely challenging. The intensive use takes its toll quickly on these sites, however we understand that this area must be maintained at the same high quality level as our other park amenities. Daily maintenance includes inspecting the area, trash pickup and re-filling the pick up stations. During the growing season, the site is mowed and trimmed weekly and non toxic weed spray is applied regularly.

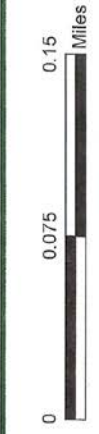
The City is also working on future locations throughout the community for additional off leash parks. We are excited to be moving ahead on plans for both Las Colonias Park and Matchett Park – both of which call for the development of dog parks in their master plan. In regards to the request for Watson Island, we are in the process of evaluating that potential site for off leash dogs with many of the user groups there.

I sincerely hope that you will agree that these above listed renovations have made a positive improvement at Canyon View. If you have any further suggestions that will help us provide the best possible service there, please feel free to contact me at 254-3866, or [robosc@gjcity.org](mailto:robosc@gjcity.org).

Sincerely yours,

Rob Schoeber, Director  
Grand Junction Parks & Recreation

# PROPOSED OFF LEASH DOG PARK



Date: 4/7/2015

1 inch = 229 feet

