



# PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

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MEETING DATE NOVEMBER 19, 2015

ITEM NUMBER:

**SUBJECT: COSTA MESA BARK PARK RESTRICTED ACCESS ENTRY SYSTEM AND RULES & REGULATIONS UPDATES**

**DATE: NOVEMBER 6, 2015**

**FROM: PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES / RECREATION DIVISION**

**PRESENTATION BY: TRAVIS M. KARLEN, RECREATION MANAGER**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: WILLIAM LUND, RECREATION COORDINATOR  
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## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Parks & Recreation Commission:

1. Provide direction to the City Council regarding the installation of a fee-based, restricted access, key fob entry system at the Costa Mesa Bark Park, with varying fees for residents and non-residents.
2. Approve the proposed facility rules & regulations.

## BACKGROUND

The Costa Mesa Bark Park opened in TeWinkle Park in October of 1994. In December 2000, the City closed and substantially renovated the Bark Park including turf, fencing, irrigation, hardscape, and other park amenities. Before the Bark Park was reopened to the public, the City required the Bark Park volunteers to establish a 501© non-profit organization and sign a Letter of Understanding (LOU) with the City. The document outlined the responsibilities of the Costa Mesa Bark Park Foundation and the City for the shared maintenance, improvement, and operational expenses of the Bark Park.

On December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013 the City received a Notice of Termination of the LOU between the City and the Foundation effective January 31, 2014.

On June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014 a letter was mailed to the Costa Mesa Bark Park Foundation informing President, Linda McClellan that *"as of February 1, 2014, the City has assumed all maintenance responsibility of the Bark Park. The City will no longer be pursuing a new agreement with the Foundation for the continued use of the Costa Mesa Bark Park and the related storage facilities."*

Since February 2014, the City's maintenance Division had been performing the following tasks on a routine basis:

- Pressure washing the entrance weekly

- Phasing out the existing dog waste bag brand and dispensers and installing the standard City dog waste bags and dispensers
- Replace damaged and deteriorated vinyl trash enclosure with privacy slatted chain link fence
- Scheduled re-planting of trees in the small dog area
- Removal of unsafe chairs including “folding-chairs”
- Installation of irrigation injector system to allow for precision application of soil improving materials
- Application of soil microbes, wetting agents, and similar materials
- Coordination with the City’s contractor WCA for the delivery of chipper grindings in the Arlington parkway area to refresh the area
- Installation of barriers in key locations at parking lot entrances to prevent vehicles and vandals from driving in the large parkway causing damage to the irrigation infrastructure
- Planning of turf renovation and tree replacement throughout the park

Over the last year, maintenance demands have grown throughout the City with special projects and shifting priorities. Routine scheduled maintenance, while occurring weekly, has not been sufficient to meet the needs of the park. In addition, the facility is heavily used six (6) days per week, so a drought and turf renovation has become difficult without a proper rest period.

City staff received general feedback from members of the Costa Mesa community as well as regular, non-resident Bark Park users that there was a desired need for adding upgrades and enhancements to the Costa Mesa Bark Park. Staff members from the Parks & Community Services and Public Services Departments conducted multiple walkthrough’s of this facility to assess immediate upgrade options as well as to pinpoint potential long-term upgrades.

To accompany improvements to the park, staff engaged residents through community outreach initiatives that included staff presence at local K9 dog events & competitions and planning of future classes, events and workshops to be held at the Bark Park. Surveys and comment cards were also utilized at three (3) separate events (Attachment 1). Staff believed that it was important for the community to have a voice and some input into the direction of the park’s future.

Recently Completed Improvements (Attachment 2):

- The small dog area has been expanded by approximately 5000 sq. ft. with a new chain link fence.
- All dog water bowl stations have been power washed and new river rock and pea-gravel has been installed to enhance aesthetics.
- Park benches, entryways & sidewalks, tiled entry path, portable chairs and trash receptacles have been power washed to help with the pungent urine odor in the park.
- Five (5) new picnic tables have been installed: Four (4) in the large dog area, one (1) in the small dog area.
- Thirty (30) new heavy-duty, plastic, ergonomic chairs have been placed on-site for park patron use. Eight (8) new heavy-duty high-back chairs have been added for older patron use.
- The decorative fire hydrant and eleven (11) light pole pylons have been painted to add color to the park.
- Filling in of numerous holes and divots with packed soil/fill has taken place and will continue as needed on a week-to-week basis.
- A new Bark Park Logo has been created for promotional materials.
  - The logo has been used on a Bark Park flag which was hung alongside an American flag on the unused flagpole. The light was also fixed to illuminate the pole at night.

- Two (2) 10' x 4' color banners with the new Bark Park Logo were installed to highlight park entrances and facility visibility.
- New metal, updated informational signs have been installed at park gate entrances.
- Verbiage to the “Bark Park Rules and Regulations” has been updated for easier reading by the public:
  - Staff met with City Animal Control Officers to discuss and gather feedback/recommendations on various items for possible rule changes and additions.
- Metal trash cans have been replaced with new recycled plastic models.
- New K9 steel artwork has been added to the park: Twenty (20) metal dog silhouettes were affixed to perimeter fencing areas. Forty (40) additional metal dog silhouettes have been purchased and will be installed.
- A new kiosk message board has been installed for postings of city events, park updates, news, and public postings.
- Tree curbing has taken place in select locations of the large dog area.
- Old and worn artificial turf has been removed from the water bowl station in the large dog area.
- Turf renovation is in progress for a portion of the large dog area - 17,190 sq. ft

#### Artificial Turf Pilot Project – K9 Grass

The consistent high use of the Bark Park, coupled with large amounts of pet waste has left large areas of the park with unsuitable soil conditions for natural turf. As a result, staff researched alternative options to natural turf and met with ForeverLawn, the industry leader in producing and installing K9 Grass. K9 Grass is an artificial turf product that is designed specifically for use at dog parks and facilities.

In order to fully test out the K9 Grass product and see if it can withstand the use generated at the Bark Park, staff will run a pilot program of 600 sq. ft K9 Grass inside of the Mini Bark Park beginning in late November. Staff will assess the wear and ongoing condition of the K9 Grass product, solicit feedback from park users, and determine if the product is suitable for use in a larger capacity as a long-term solution to poor turf renovation.

#### Staffing

In order to accompany the aforementioned upgrades and improvements, the Parks and Community Services Department has hired a part-time maintenance worker who is dedicated to work at the Bark Park. The maintenance worker is responsible for the following tasks:

- Walk-thru of facility for assessment of safety and maintenance needs.
- Empty trash receptacles & replace can liners.
- Refill waste receptacle bag dispensers.
- Fill in holes and complete minor turf maintenance.
- Power wash walkways and dog watering bowl area.
- Remove remaining pet waste.
- Work with maintenance department staff on larger scale projects at the park.
- Other duties as assigned.

#### ANALYSIS

The Costa Mesa Bark Park’s convenient location and large footprint make it a very popular destination for both local residents and non-residents. Recent completed upgrades have resulted in an increased level of satisfaction from patrons, which has led to increased facility usage.

There is a need to explore innovative solutions to control access and require proper licensing and vaccinations for participants. In an emergency situation, such as a dog bite or owner related altercation, there is currently no system in place to identify the involved parties. After speaking with Bark Park users and conducting community outreach at several dog related events, staff would like to receive direction on the following:

- Implementing a restricted access, key fob entry system with varying fees for Costa Mesa residents and non-residents. This will allow for tracking of all park users and will require all patrons to first license and vaccinate their dog(s) before gaining access to the facility. In the event of an emergency, or dog bite, staff will have access to participant information for those in the park at the specific date and time.
  - **ADD INFO ABOUT KEY FOB COMPANY AND PRICING HERE**
  - If fees are to be charged for non-residents there will need to be a revision to the City's municipal code. Currently Section 3-107(c) states: "Dogs in the care, custody and control of nonresidents who are traveling through the city or temporarily staying in the city for a period not exceeding thirty (30) days, or dogs temporarily brought into the city for exclusive purpose of being entered in a bench show or dog exhibition, provided such dogs are so entered and not kept elsewhere in the city."

### Guidelines

The current rules and regulations of the Costa Mesa Bark Park are ambiguous in several areas pertaining to dog weights, minimum dog age, restrictions for dog service providers and a maximum number of dogs per patron. With input and support from Animal Control, staff recommends the following changes to the current Bark Park "rules and regulations" as follows:

- Weight limit for dogs in the small Bark Park area set at less than 30lbs. Currently there is no specified weight limit.
- Requirement for dogs to be at least six (6) months of age to enter the Bark Park area. The current rule says four (4) months.
- All individuals, including dog sitters, dog walkers and dog trainers are restricted to no more than three (3) dogs per patron.
- Requirement for proof of vaccinations, dog license, and spay/neuter for all dogs entering the park.
- Dogs must wear licensed tag while in the park.
- Dog sitters, dog walkers and dog trainers must obtain a City of Costa Mesa business license to operate inside of the park.

### Possible Long Term Improvements & Upgrades:

The Public Services Department is currently in the process of preparing the necessary documents to solicit quotes for the completion of a "Bark Park Master Plan Design." The 2015/2016 CIP budget has an allocation of \$50,000 for this project. This project will be completed before June 30, 2016. Staff will bring recommendations on possible future enhancements to the park at a later date.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. The Parks & Recreation Commission could choose to keep the rules and regulations as stated for the Costa Mesa Bark Park.
2. The Parks & Recreation Commission could recommend the installation of a restricted access key fob entry system with adopted fees for residents and non-residents at the Costa Mesa Bark Park. If fees are to be charged for non-residents there will need to be a revision to the City's municipal code, Section 3-107(c).
3. The Parks and Recreation Commission could recommend the installation of a restricted access key fob entry system with adopted fees for residents only.

4. The Parks & Recreation Commission could make no changes to access of the Costa Mesa Bark Park.

## **CONCLUSION**

Staff recommends that the Parks & Recreation Commission provide direction to the City Council regarding the installation of a fee-based, restricted access, key fob entry system at the Costa Mesa Bark Park, with varying fees for residents and non-residents.

Staff also recommends that the Parks & Recreation Commission approve the proposed facility rules & regulations.

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**Travis M. Karlen**  
Recreation Manager

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**Justin Martin**  
Recreation Supervisor

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**WILLIAM LUND**  
Recreation Coordinator

Attachments:           1. Survey Results  
                                  2. Park Improvement Photos

## Costa Mesa Bark Park Survey Results



Survey

1. How many dogs do you own? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What days do you normally attend the Bark Park? M T W TH F S Su (circle)
3. What time do you come to the Bark Park? Opening - 10am 10am-4pm 4pm-Closing (circle)
4. Are you a resident of Costa Mesa? Yes No (circle)
5. Would you be interested in attending programs and/or special events geared towards dogs? Yes No (circle)
6. What improvements would you like to see at the Bark Park? \_\_\_\_\_

Please list your information if you would like to be put on a mailing list regarding future improvements to the Bark Park:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Costa Mesa Bark Park Survey							
Total Responses	42						
Number of Dogs	1	2	2+				
	30	8	4				
Daily Attendance	M	T	W (Closed)	TH	F	Sa	Su
	25	27	-	31	27	30	26
Time Of Day (Attendance)	Opening - 10am	10am - 4pm	4pm - Closing				
	5	6	31				
Are You a Costa Mesa Resident?	Yes	No					
	24	18					
Interest in Dog Events/Programs	Yes	No					
	39	3					
Park Improvements Wanted							
Turf/Grass	14						
Shade/Tree Coverage	8						
Dog Agility Equipment	5						
Increased Seating	9						
Improved Water Bowls	3						
Parking Lot Improvements	3						
Fencing	4						

**COSTA MESA BARK PARK  
COMPLETED UPGRADES  
BEFORE & AFTER PHOTOS**

Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



- Water bowls power washed and cleaned
- Additional river rock around water bowl station
- Metal trash cans replaced with new recycled plastic model.
- New plastic ergonomic chairs
- New K9 steel artwork will be added to the park: Twenty (20) metal dog silhouettes affixed to perimeter fencing areas.
- New promotional banner with Bark Park Logo
- Additional park benches and tables for seating
- New metal informational signs installed on park front entrance areas.
- Installation of new kiosk message boards for postings of city events, park updates, news, and public postings.