



Robert J. DeRubeis
Commissioner

Off-Leash Area Working Group

Friday, October 25, 2013

City Hall, Room 202

Meeting Minutes

Attending: Commissioner DeRubeis, Alderman Susan Albright, Officer Ralph Torres, Lee McIntyre, Carol Schein, Carol Stapleton, Bud Grantham

1. Off-Leash Specialist Update

- Mr. Roberts absent – no report
- Animal Control Officer Torres had no report, and commented Mr. Roberts is doing a good job.
- Mr. McIntyre reported the Australian Shepard named Boomer continues to show up at the Cold Spring Park off-leash area after being involved in several dog bite incidents. The owner of one of the dogs bitten by Boomer is frustrated he has not been contacted by the City. Officer Torres stated he has not been contacted by any of the people involved in the incidents. Mr. McIntyre will instruct the people involved to contact Officer Torres directly.
- Commissioner DeRubeis reported a request for the off-leash specialist to write citations has been sent to the Executive Office.

2. Area Updates

- *Hunnewell Park*- Maintenance took a look at the damaged fence. The fence will be repaired. The fallen tree will also be removed by Forestry.
- Officer Torres observed illegal off-leash activity by a dog walking company at Hunnewell Park and notified the individual that citations will be given out if caught again.
- Alderman Albright asked if the off-leash area could be expanded. Mr. McIntyre is reaching out to a contact for the sports league to check on the usage by the leagues.
- *Thompsonville Playground* - Commissioner DeRubeis reported he has spoken with Mr. Tresca who owns the Condo's abutting the playground. Mr. Tresca or his brother may attend one of the OLAWG meetings.
- Mr. Ken Temkin, abutter of Thompsonville Playground commented he has lived in the neighborhood for 50 years; the playground is in great shape. There is more activity in the upper area due to the temporary classrooms at Bowen School. There is also additional soccer practice. Mr. Temkin has not seen much dog walking in the playground. Eighty percent of off-leash/dog walking takes place in the early morning. The people are responsible neighborhood people. The area should be left as is.
- Mr. Temkin asked if the off-leash area will bring people from outside the neighborhood. Commissioner DeRubeis stated that has been a concern for the neighbors in each area previously opened. Claflin Playground has not attracted a lot of usage from people outside the neighborhood; Cabot Park has attracted some people from outside the neighborhood. Mr. McIntyre commented the goal is to have enough off-leash areas in the city for people to find one close to their neighborhood.
- Commissioner DeRubeis provided an overview for Mr. Temkin of how OLAWG was established and what has been done to open the off-leash areas, including the criteria, reaching out to areas users of the proposed areas and hiring an off-leash specialist. Mr. Temkin asked how long the process is to open an off-leash area. Commissioner DeRubeis explained the group meets with park users prior to bringing the proposal to the P & R Commission for an informational meeting, after the informational meeting a Public Hearing is scheduled with the P & R Commission. The P & R Commission meets once per month.
- Mr. Temkin asked if the off-leash area could be placed behind the softball backstop. Commissioner DeRubeis commented at the next meeting an aerial map will be available to look at the area & members of the group can do a site visit. Commissioner DeRubeis suggested Mr. Temkin bring other neighbors/park users to the next meeting.

3. New Business – no new business

4. Next meeting

- The next meeting is Friday, November 8 at 9:30am in Room 202 at City Hall.