

Notes – Westgrove PACK Board Meeting – May 17, 2017

The meeting was hosted by Anne Street and Barry Spangler and started at 6:30PM. In attendance: Barry Spangler, Melissa Pandin, Scott Erb, Liz Yap, Jeff Pandin, Michelle Randall, Anne Street, and Kathy Seikel. Absent: Steve Zweifach

Dog Park Monitor Training. First on the agenda was a training session conducted by Phil Hager to explain FCPA's expectations for volunteers serving as dog park monitors. Phil explained that our primary duties are to ensure that waste bag dispensers are filled and to make sure that park users are aware of park rules. Phil reminded us that we are not expected to advise park visitors of the rules but not enforce them. In the case where a park user that refuses to comply and we feel that the health and safety of either patrons or dogs may be at risk, our best option is to call the non-emergency number for Fair County Police to have an officer come down to the park. Phil told us that all volunteers are accountable to the County and that no one volunteer at a given park may be placed in charge of other volunteers. He also reminded us that no one can require that a volunteer work a particular schedule or any set number of hours. He encouraged us to fill out time sheets to report our hours since the County uses this information to demonstrate how they are leveraging in-house resources with volunteer staff time.

Phil reminded us that by registering with the County as volunteers, we are covered by FCPA's liability insurance. Notwithstanding this fact, he said there may be some exposure for the Westgrove PACK as there was for Reston Dogs in that Reston Dogs, the 501©(3) that oversees operations at the Barron Cameron Dog Park was named as a defendant in the lawsuit filed two years ago by a neighborhood association aggrieved by what they alleged was the unacceptable level of noise (barking, etc.) coming from the dog park into their neighborhood. We asked Phil the status of the lawsuit and its ultimate outcome but he was unable to provide this information and referred us to his supervisors.

As a final piece of advice, Phil encouraged the PACK to pursue obtaining an MOU outlining the respective roles and responsibilities of the PACK and FCPA, something we have sought since the term of the previous MOU expired. Dan suggested Barry get in touch with Todd Brown (todd.brown@fcpa.org), who has taken over for Todd Johnson, as the responsible official at FCPA who could work with us to establish such an MOU. Barry agreed to follow up on this.

Board members made a couple requests of Phil: 1) Melissa asked that covers be added to trash cans whose lids have been lost to reduce odors from the cans that can be particularly troublesome in hot summer months. 2) Barry and Melissa asked for Phil to replace the stone dust that use to be in the areas beneath park benches.

Remarks from the Chair. Barry told the group he had opened up the South end that day (May 17) and that it would remain open for the remainder of the year (except for possible short term closings necessitated by turf maintenance, weather, and/or standing water on the turf surface). Barry discussed options for dealing with standing water in the north end. He mentioned a phone call he had with Dave Bowden, Planning and Development Division of FCPA. Mr. Bowden apparently appears not to be a big fan of rain gardens but had other suggestions for improving drainage. He advised that the PACK meet

with the person now assigned to oversee the Westgrove Park Master Plan, Andy Galuch. Barry and Scott will meet with Mr. Galuch at 10:00AM on Wednesday, May 24, to discuss various options which might include a rain garden, embankment or a hole filled with gravel.

Barry mentioned how pleased he was by the attendance at the last PACK General Meeting, when Mike Tomai gave a talk on canine behavior and asked for suggestions for an outside speaker at our next General Meeting. After some discussion, the group decided that canine first aid (what to do in case of an emergency at the park, what materials to have on hand, how to give CPR to a dog, etc.) would be a good topic for the next meeting. It would also be helpful if the speaker could address common poisonous foods and plants relating to dogs. The group agreed to start putting out feelers to identify a potential speaker for this topic.

Treasurer's Report. Jeff did not have a report but said he would give the Board an update at next month's meeting, after we have a tally of income from the Spring Fundraiser.

Other Business. Liz provided an update on preparations for the Fundraiser and reviewed the order of events (from set-up all the way to clean-up) so that everyone knew what was expected of them. Liz was able to solicit help from people outside of the Board who had not participated in the past and voiced her desire to engage park users to volunteer their time to help out during park events (fundraisers, hot dog Fridays, etc.). Given the importance to reach out beyond the Board to others who can donate a few hours of their time to help out at park events, Liz would like the Board to appoint someone to serve as the volunteer coordinator.

Kathy Seikel, the Board, Secretary, resigned her position. Barry will be looking for a replacement so that, ideally, someone can be in place by next month's board meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00.