

Agenda

1. Approval of minutes from 10/7/2023 meeting
2. Report on meeting with the Town Board
3. Reports from WSDPC subcommittees a)information re:other dog parks, information already gathered from previous exploration into dog park. b)possible funding resources.
4. Determine dates and location for possible site visits.
5. Other

Oct 7, 2023

West Stockbridge Dog Park Committee Regular meeting

Present: Jana Sax, Roni Kramer, Lorri Santhay, Sharon Vidal, Renee McCormick

Absent: Michael Bolognino, Heather Hicks

Guest: Beatrice

Jana Sax called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. She asked for a motion to approve the previous meeting's minutes. Renee McCormick offered the motion, Roni Kramer seconded, and all voted to approve the minutes from the previous meeting.

Ms. Sax read aloud the proposed mission statement and supporting information for the West Stockbridge Dog Park Committee, as follows:

Mission Statement

In partnership with the West Stockbridge Select Board and related Town Departments, Boards and Committees, the West Stockbridge Dog Park Committee shall:

- *Estimate costs for the park's design, construction, and maintenance.*
- *Identify funding sources and secure funding for the dog park's design, construction, and ongoing maintenance.*
- *Determine options and a final location for the park.*
- *Oversee the design, construction and maintenance of the park.*
- *Research, establish, post, and maintain rules and regulations to promote safe park use.*
- *Create a plan for the long-term oversight and maintenance of the park, without creating a new tax burden on the town.*
- *Advise public officials, boards, committees and residents about the benefits of dog parks.*

What's a dog park, and why are we proposing one for West Stockbridge?

A dog park is a fenced-in area with multiple gated points of entry that allows dogs to roam and play off-leash in a safe manner. An area designated for dogs to run off-leash avoids conflicts with other users of public lands such as at playgrounds or public parks. In addition to the benefit to our dogs, a dog park also gives the townspeople an opportunity to come together and socialize with each other, offers new residents an opportunity to meet and mingle with long time residents, gives surrounding towns that do not have dog parks (Richmond, Lenox, and Stockbridge) a place to run their dogs, and provides an additional reason for commuters on the Mass Pike to stop into town and visit the park and in turn, our local businesses.

Members

Heather Hicks

Jana Sax, Co-Chair

Lorri Santhay, Treasurer

Michael Bolognino, Co-Chair

Paige Orloff, Clerk

Renee McCormick

Roni Kramer

Sharon Vidal

The group discussed issues of ensuring dogs using the park are licensed and properly vaccinated. Lorri Santhay shared the Egremont dog park's online registration requirement. Beatrice suggested posting a QR code to allow people to register with the park on the spot. Sharon Vidal noted that insurance will be important to consider.

The group approved the mission statement with the addition of "including insurance" to the first bullet point:

- *Estimate costs for the park's design, construction, and maintenance, including insurance.*

Jana reminded the group that the current plan is to get this committee approved by the town at the soonest possible Select Board meeting.

As separate subcommittees, Ms. Kramer and Ms. Santhay will research grants and Ms. Vidal and Ms. McCormick will research regulations and other logistical concerns. Ms. Santhay mentioned the Lakeville, CT park as a good resource, and Ms. Sax noted Brewster, MA also has a well-designed park to view as inspiration.

The group discussed possible locations identified thus far, including the current dump, old dump, the lot between cemeteries (owned by Charter Communications), behind town hall, and Card Lake. The group agreed to source additional info on locations from the town Parks and Rec committee. Ms. Santhay agreed to research past work by Parks and Rec Cttee on dog park. Ms. Sax affirmed that the work of this committee will fall under the town's Public Works. The group discussed possible resources within the town including Kurt Wilton, Wayne Cooper, and the town Parks and Rec committee.

Ms. McCormick reiterated interest in a dog registration event to publicize the dog park. Jana noted that we need to consider how to garner support for the park.

Ms. Sax asked if we might consider partnering with Richmond and having a joint effort/joint park. After discussion, the group agreed to wait until our committee is officially endorsed by the town.

The group discussed fundraising needs, and possible mechanisms including a "Friends of" group, forming 501c3, and using GoFundMe or other crowdfunding platform.

The group discussed communication and agreed to use the group email address (ws_dogpark@googlegroups.com) for notifications and keep information on the group's shared Google Doc.

Ms. Sax will look into getting onto the Select Board agenda as soon as possible, and see if the group can use a town meeting room in the future. If not, Ms. Kramer offered her home as a meeting location.

Ms. McCormick will see if Heather Hicks wants to join either of the research subcommittees.

The group agreed to meet next on October 21, 10 a.m., location TBD (Six Depot, Town Hall, or Ms. Kramer's home).

The meeting adjourned at 11:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paige Orloff