

## SMC Parks Dog Pilot Project Work Group

### Work Group Goals:

- Recommend to the Parks Department 1-2 park sites where on-leash dog access can be piloted and evaluated, based on the work of the Dog Management Committee, and
- Provide a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors about possible off-leash dog access

### Meeting Notes

December 2, 2019

400 County Center, Supervisors' Chambers, Redwood City

**Work Group Members Present:** Bonilla, Brophy, Cervantes, Corwin, Erridge, Hearn, Johnson, Merrilees, Del Carlo, O'Brien

**Work Group Members Absent:** Sullivan

**Staff:** Calderon, Dallman, Finnegan, Jensen, Ormshaw

**Facilitator:** Brown

### Goals for this meeting:

1. Conclude development of off-leash dog access recommendation to Parks Department
2. Confirm the process for submitting the Work Group's recommendation to the Parks Department, the Parks Commission and Board of Supervisors

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm. Pat Brown, facilitator, introduced herself and asked work group members and staff to introduce themselves. She described how this group is different than the Dog Management Committee. The Work Group is:

- working on implementation rather than policy development
- composed of community representatives and Parks Department staff
- charged by the Board of Supervisors with implementation and evaluation of on-leash pilot sites to test the feasibility of dog access to SMC Parks, and developing a recommendation about possible off-leash access.

Pat reminded the group of their agreement to use consensus decision-making within the Work Group using the fist-five method (3 fingers means the member can live with the decision and will not undermine it; less than 3 fingers means the member does not agree, and 3-5 fingers indicates the level of agreement). She mentioned that if the group cannot reach consensus, it can resolve the issue with a majority vote. She also referenced the process map which outlines the timeline for this work group and reviewed the proposed meeting agenda.

Pat then presented and obtained the Work Group's approval of the following group agreements:

- Members prepare for meetings by reading meeting packet
- Speak respectfully during meetings
- Listen for understanding

- Allow the facilitator to guide the process

### **Review notes from the November Work Group Meeting**

A work group member requested to add mention of the public comment that was made at the November 2019 meeting in support of Pillar Point Bluff.

### **Written Public Comments**

Peggy Jensen mentioned five written public comments were shared with the work group by email, and one additional comment was shared with the work group by hard copy at the meeting. All written comments will be posted on the Parks Department Dog Work Group meeting webpage.

Fran Pollard provided a voicemail to Chris Johnson requesting fencing around the tot lot at Quarry Park (preference for split rail rather than chain link) and requesting that dogs not be allowed in the grass area adjacent to the tot lot.

### **Verbal Public Comment**

There were about six members of the public in attendance at the work group meeting and no verbal public comments were submitted.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

The Work Group used the on-leash dog access evaluation criteria as a starting point for the off-leash dog access evaluation criteria. The following suggested changes were made by the Work Group and the Department.

- Vegetation section should:
  - reference native, non-native and species of concern;
  - Specify vegetation will be surveyed along the trails; and
  - Include special surveys of plants of concern within the park.
- Wildlife section should expand definition of how info is collected: by cameras and any other type of wildlife surveys needed; the word 'chasing' should be changed to 'harassing'
- Water quality section should include '...and any other requirements per the Regional Water Quality Control Board.'
- Remove visitor survey section.
- Clarify under signage and infrastructure – any 'additional' items would be recorded.
- Remove all reference of Coyote Point.

Work Group members expressed concern regarding sufficient staffing to manage two off-leash pilot parks on the coastside (Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluff), including tracking of visitor interactions.

### **Discussion of Off-Leash Dog Access Pilot Program: Additional Policies for Consideration**

First, the Department reviewed the policies currently in place for the on-leash dog access program:

- Dogs must stay on designated trails
- Dogs must be kept on leash

- Leashes should be no longer than 6 feet when near other users
- Scoop the poop and use trash cans
- Leave wildlife and vegetation undisturbed
- Bring no more than 3 dogs per person

Then, the Work Group reviewed a list of additional policies used by other jurisdictions that guide off-leash dog access programs. After some discussion and edits to the proposed policies, there was consensus among Work Group members to recommend the following policy guidelines for the off-leash dog access pilot program:

1. Off-leash dogs must be under voice and sight control:
  - a. Voice and sight control means the owner/handler must be in control of dog at all times and must be able to recall and leash dog at any time.
  - b. Owner/handler must have a leash for each dog under owner/handler control.
  - c. Dog must return immediately when called (within 10-second return time).
2. Dogs must remain on designated trails, within view and earshot, and no more than 25 feet away from owner/handler.
3. Dogs must be on-leash in developed areas (i.e. near traffic, parking lot, lawn or play field, deck, picnic areas, etc.).
4. No more than two dogs off-leash allowed per owner/handler.
5. Dogs are presumed to NOT be under control when they:
  - a. Threaten, harass or chase other animals or wildlife;
  - b. Display threatening behavior;
  - c. Physically harm people directly or indirectly by their actions;
  - d. Touch or jump on other park users who have not invited or engaged in interaction with the dog; or
  - e. Do not return when called (as previously defined)

The Work Group did not reach consensus regarding a sixth policy guideline that was added to the list by the Work Group (see below), so the Work Group voted. Eight members supported the sixth policy and two were opposed (one member was absent). Those opposed to this policy were concerned that this policy would make it illegal for off-leash dogs to encounter each other while off-leash.

6. Dogs must be recalled and leashed when encountering others.

### **Process for conveying Work Group Recommendation to Park Commission and Board of Supervisors**

Staff reviewed the process for conveying the work group recommendation to the governing bodies:

Step 1: Work Group prepares recommendation for submittal to the Parks Department.

Step 2: Parks Department prepares a recommendation that includes the Work Group recommendation.

Step 3: Parks Commission reviews recommendations for Off-Leash Dog Access Pilot Program.

Step 4: Board of Supervisors review recommendation for Off-Leash Dog Access Pilot Program.

### **Timeline for Off-Leash Dog Access Recommendation**

Staff reviewed the proposed next steps for the off-leash dog access pilot recommendation:

- December 2: Complete development of Work Group recommendation to the Parks Department for off-leash pilot
- January 13, 2019: Work Group meeting to review report to Parks Commission
- February 6, 2020: Parks Department to present recommendation to Park Commission
- March 2020: Parks Department to present recommendation to Board of Supervisors (BOS)
- April 2020: Report back to the Work Group regarding BOS discussion and next steps

The next work group meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 13, 2020 at 2pm in the Board of Supervisors chambers.

**4:00 PM – Meeting adjourned.**

## San Mateo County Dog Pilot Work Group 2019 Roster

### Members

**Barbara Bonilla**, SMC Parks Commission

**Faye Brophy**, Equestrian Trails and Recreation Advisory Council\*

**Joel Cervantes**, District 2, Ranger III (Huddart, Wunderlich, Edgewood, Flood, Friendship)

**Christine Corwin**, Coastside Dog Owners Group of San Mateo County\*

**Matthew Del Carlo**, District 4, Ranger IV (San Pedro Valley, Devil's Slide, Sanchez Adobe, Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, Moss Beach Park, Pillar Point Bluff, Quarry, Mirada Surf, Tunitas)

**Nic Erridge**, Pescadero Municipal Advisory Council\*

**Jerry Hearn**, Conservation community\*

**Chris Johnson**, Coastside resident\*

**Neil Merrilees**, SMC Parks Commission\*

**Kevin O'Brien**, District 1, Ranger III (Coyote Point and Crystal Springs Trail)

**Jim Sullivan**, Pacifica Open Space Council and Mountain Biker\*

*\*Served on Dog Management Committee*

### Parks Department Staff

**Peggy Jensen**, Acting Parks Director

**Ellie Dallman**, On Special Assignment

**Laurel Finnegan**, Ranger IV

**Priscilla Alvarez**, Ranger IV

**Carla Schoof**, Public Information/Communication

**Hannah Ormshaw**, Natural Resource Coordinator

### Facilitator

**Pat Brown**



**Summary of Regulations Currently in Place  
Related to Dog Access in San Mateo County**

To ensure work group members understand legal guidelines the Parks Department must follow, the following is a summary of regulations currently in place in San Mateo County Ordinance Code Chapters 3 and 6 that are applicable to dog access.

<b><u>San Mateo County Ordinance Code</u></b>	<b><u>Penalty for Violation of Code</u></b>
<p><b>Chapter 3.68 – County Park and Recreation Area Rules</b></p> <p><b><u>3.68.180 - Dogs.</u></b></p> <p>(a) <u>No dogs shall be permitted</u> in any San Mateo County Park or Recreation Area, <u>unless such area is specifically designated and signed to allow dogs</u>. This subsection shall not apply to (i) service dogs under physical control, specifically trained to assist persons with disabilities in accordance with the American's with Disabilities Act or (ii) a "police dog" under the control of a peace officer.</p> <p>(b) In any San Mateo County Park or Recreation Area where dogs are allowed, <u>no person shall have more than three dogs</u>.</p> <p>(c) No person shall cause or allow any dog under his or her ownership, possession, or control to enter or remain in any San Mateo County Park or Recreation Area unless the <u>dog is licensed as required by the County of San Mateo, is wearing around its neck a collar and valid license tag</u>, and the owner or possessor of the dog complies with all other conditions of this Section 3.68.180.</p> <p>(d) In any San Mateo County Park or Recreation Area where dogs are allowed, no person shall cause or allow any dog under his or her ownership, possession, or control to enter or remain in such area unless such person restrains such dog, at all times, <u>with a leash not to exceed six (6) feet in length</u> (sixteen (16) feet when unretracted) and insures that the leash and control by the person are sufficient to prevent endangering other persons</p>	<p>3.68.180 - Dogs</p> <p>(f) A violation of the provisions of this section shall be an infraction. Any person to whom a citation is issued for a violation of this section shall be subject to a base fine of:</p> <p>(1) five dollars (\$5.00) for a first violation;</p> <p>(2) thirty dollars (\$30.00) for a second violation within a period of one year of the first violation; and</p> <p>(3) one hundred dollars (\$100.00) for each additional violation within</p>

<p>or animals. Where dogs are permitted only on designated trails, any <u>dog shall be restricted to the designated trails at all times and shall not be allowed to enter the natural habitat abutting the designated trails.</u></p> <p>(e) Any person bringing a dog into any San Mateo County Park or Recreation Area shall <u>immediately remove any feces deposited by such dog.</u> Dog feces must be placed in garbage cans or removed from the San Mateo County Park or Recreation Area. <u>No person shall bring a dog into any San Mateo County Park or Recreation Area without carrying at all times a suitable container or other suitable instrument for the removal and disposal of dog feces.</u></p>	<p>a period of one year from the first violation.</p> <p>*Note that the base fines listed above do not include court fees.</p>
<p><b><u>3.68.080 - General protective regulations.</u></b></p> <p>(a) <u>Vegetative. No person shall willfully or negligently pick, dig up, cut, mutilate, destroy, injure, disturb, move, molest, burn, carry away, collect or gather any tree or plant or portion thereof,</u> including but not limited to leaf mold, flowers, foliage, berries, fruit, grass, turf, humus, shrubs, cones, ferns, mushrooms and dead wood in any County Park or Recreation area, or on the San Francisco Fish and Game Refuge, or on any hiking and riding trail, nor shall any person willfully or negligently allow any dog to do so. Nothing in this section shall prevent the taking of any tree or plant or portion thereof, including but not limited to leaf mold, flowers, foliage, berries, fruit, grass, turf, humus, shrubs, cones, ferns, mushrooms and dead wood in any County Park or Recreation area, or on the San Francisco Fish and Game Refuge, any hiking and riding trail by public officials pursuant to their official duties or by scientific permit from the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Department, or San Francisco Water Department, for the areas under their respective jurisdictions.</p> <p>(c) <u>Littering. No person shall place or throw bottles, broken glass, crockery, ashes, waste paper, cans, dog waste (bagged or unbagged), or any decaying or putrid matter or other rubbish in any County Park or Recreation area, or on the San Francisco Fish and Game Refuge, except in a receptacle designated for that purpose, and no person shall import or deposit any rubbish into or in any County Park or Recreation area, or on the San Francisco Fish and Game Refuge, or hiking and riding trail. No person shall transport or dump any rock, rubble, dirt, sand, fill or other similar material into or in any County Park</u></p>	<p>3.68.010 - Violations, a misdemeanor.</p> <p>Any person violating any of the provisions or failing to comply with any of the mandatory requirements of this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, unless otherwise specified.</p>

or Recreation area without the permission of the Director, or the General Manager and Chief Engineer, or their representatives for the areas under their respective jurisdiction.

- (e) Watershed Protection. No person shall allow any dog to contaminate in any way whatsoever any watershed or water supply in any Recreation area or in any County Park, or in the Watershed, or water supplies of any water purveyor holding a water purveyor's permit issued by the California Department of Health Services pursuant to Public Health Code, Chapter 7, Section 4011.
- (f) Water Quality Protection. No person shall wash clothing or cooking utensils, bathe in, or in any other manner pollute the waters of any Recreation Area or any County Park, nor shall any person leave bagged or unbagged feces or in any other manner pollute the waters of any Recreation Area or any County Park, or in the Watershed, or water supplies of any water purveyor holding a water purveyor's permit issued by the California Department of Health Services pursuant to Public Health Code, Chapter 7, Section 4011.
- (i) Domestic Animals. Except as expressly permitted pursuant to Section 3.68.180, no dogs, cats, fowl or other domesticated animals shall be permitted to enter or go at large in any County Park or Recreation area, either with or without a keeper. No person shall release any captured wild animal within any County Park or Recreation area except authorized public officials pursuant to their duties.
- (j) Abandoned Animals. No person shall abandon a dog, cat, fowl or other animal within any County Park or Recreation area, or in the San Francisco Fish and Game Refuge.
- (k) Wildlife. All County Parks and Recreation Areas and the San Francisco Fish and Game Refuge are sanctuaries for wildlife. No person shall feed, approach, disturb, frighten, hunt, trap, capture, wound, kill, chase, pursue, or disturb the natural habitat of, any wild bird, mammal, reptile, fish, amphibian or invertebrate within a County Park or Recreation Area or within any San Francisco Fish and Game Refuge area located within the County, nor shall any person allow any dog to do so. This prohibition shall not apply to the following:
- (1) Action taken by public officials or their employees or agents, within the scope of their authorized duties, to protect the public health and safety.

<p>(2) The taking of fish as permitted by State Fish and Game Regulations.</p> <p>(3) The capturing and/or taking of park wildlife for scientific research purposes when done with written permission from the Director of the San Mateo County Division of Parks and Recreation or, in the San Francisco Fish and Game Refuge, from the San Francisco Water Department.</p>	
<p><b><u>Chapter 6</u> - Animals</b></p> <p><b>6.04.04 - Dog and cat licenses.</b></p> <p><b>6.04.060 - Public protection from dogs.</b></p> <p><b>6.04.070 - Prohibited conduct.</b></p> <p><b>6.04.080 - Protection of animals in motor vehicles.</b></p> <p><b>6.04.090 - Release for confinement.</b></p> <p><b>6.04.100 - Dangerous animal permit required.</b></p> <p><b>6.04.105 - Declaration of vicious animals.</b></p> <p><b>6.04.110 - Issuance of permit for dangerous animal.</b></p> <p><b>6.04.115 - Hearing procedures.</b></p> <p><b>6.04.120 - Mandatory dangerous animal permit requirements.</b></p>	<p>6.04.130 - Misdemeanor violations.</p> <p>(a) A person violating any provision of this chapter shall be guilty of an infraction except as otherwise specifically provided.</p> <p>(b) A person violating any provision of subsection (a) of section 6.04.100 or subsection (a) of section 6.04.105 of this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.</p>