

City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: <u>08/02/11</u>		Item Number: <u>A-2</u>	
PRCS COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM: Informational Item Regarding the Signage at the Dog Park Relating to (1) the Culver City Dog Licensing Requirement and (2) Children in the Dog Park.			
Contact Person/Dept.: Dan Hernandez, PRCS Director		Phone Number: (310) 253-6655	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☐	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒	
Public Notification: (Email) Meetings and Agendas – Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission (07/28/11).			
Department Approval: Dan Hernandez (07/27/11)		City Attorney Approval: N/A	
Fiscal Impact Approval: N/A		City Manager Approval: N/A	

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) Commission receive information regarding the signage at the Dog Park relating to (1) the Culver City Dog licensing requirement and (2) children in the Dog Park.

BACKGROUND:

The Dog Park Ordinance Review Group (DPORG) was formed in late 2010 to discuss whether or not the Rules and Regulations for the Culver City Dog Park (the “Boneyard”), as stated in Culver City Municipal Code Section 9.10.400, were in need of revision. The DPORG was not a City committee, but a work group that included two PRCS Administrative Division staff members, a representative from the City Attorney’s office, two representatives from the Friends of the Culver City Dog Park (the “Friends”) and the (then)members of the PRCS Commission Recreational Activities and Special Projects Subcommittee, Commissioners Hudson and Kim.

The two main concerns identified by the group regarding public participation at the Dog Park were: (1) Potential dog-on-dog aggression related to the presence of intact male dogs, and (2) potential problems related to children’s behavior in the Park. After much research and discussion, the members of the DPORG determined that concerns regarding intact dogs and the behavior of children were best addressed through additional signage at the Dog Park. It was the consensus of the group that the presence of such signage will assist participants in “self-policing” the Park to deter unwanted behavior and enhance user experiences at the Park.

At the March 1, 2011 Commission meeting, the Commission took action to revise the language on the draft signs recommended by the DPORG and institute a three month trial period for the signage. That trial period ended in early June 2011 and

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the signs, constructed from laminated color paper, are still posted at the Dog Park in several places. Copies of the current signs are provided as Attachment A and Attachment B. Please note that the posted signs are both 11" wide by 17" high.

DISCUSSION:

As a follow-up to the trial period, staff contacted the representatives of the Friends of the Culver City Dog Park who participated in the Dog Park Ordinance Review Group, the Chair of the Friends organization, Code Enforcement (i.e., Park Patrol logs) and the Culver City Animal Control Officer. The consensus of those who responded to requests for feedback seems to be that the posted signs assist with the self-policing of the park, even though the overall effectiveness of signage is, by nature, somewhat limited.

Park Patrol Officers did not receive any calls or proactively come across any problems related to aggressive dogs or the behavior of children in the Dog Park during the period of March 2011 through the present. The Animal Control Officer reported that although her call volume does not typically fluctuate, she feels that signage is vital for education and that there are numerous pet owners who will adjust their behavior if they become aware of the laws, especially if there is a significant financial penalty for violations. Overall, the Animal Control Officer receives an average of 160 to 180 telephone calls per week; approximately nine of the calls each week involve the Dog Park. Other comments received were suggestions to add language regarding fines to the signs and concerns over an unrelated topic, the presence of dogs on leash within the Dog Park.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

The fiscal impact associated with the construction and posting of the laminated signage was minimal and was absorbed by the PRCS Department budget.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. "Boneyard Dog Licensing Requirement" sign
- B. "Children at the Culver City Dog Park" sign

MOTION:

That the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission:

Receive information regarding the signage at the Dog Park relating to (1) the Culver City Dog licensing requirement and (2) children in the Dog Park.