

Friends of Bluffton Dog Parks Board Meeting Minutes 3/16/17

Location: Bluffton Chamber of Commerce

In Attendance – full board (4), 10 public, Witmer-Jones-Keefer representatives Wallace and Kylie

5:35pm meeting called to order

Requested by Cheryl: For the record (at this time), no minutes from December meeting are noted as we had no Secretary at the time. Daniella, current Secretary, will locate existing notes from that meeting, as soon as possible, and give to Diana for public posting on the website.

February minutes approved. Diana moved to accept, Pike seconded. All in favor.

Treasurers' Report: No activity on the account, brought copies of the bank statements. Usually TR is three pages, waste of trees if no one comes to meetings. Current balance: \$50436.87. Bank Statements (4 pages) being passed around for review.

Reported numbers:

Balance 02/28/2017.	54038.87
Deposits	0.00
Expenses	
Survey.	2000.00
PO Box.	32.00
Master plan.	1570.00
Total expenses.	3602.00
Balance. 03/16/2017.	50436.87

Abby Bird, Inquiry: Why did we pay \$2K for survey, when Town was supposed to designate space and boundaries? Pike addressed: As a board, we elected to ask for the authority to do this project, which means we do not ask for money, which would only add time to the project. There was no data on this parcel from the Town, so we had to have a base map and survey done. Town has given us a lot of freedom as to setbacks and the like. The Town is NOT going to spend money on this project, not because they won't, but because we don't want them to.

Carl: \$2K seems high. Pike: You have to go where the information is. He believes it was a fair price, but of course they made money on it. They surveyed almost four acres in the overall view, so looking at about \$100/acre is a normal price when they do an as-built. They had to survey the whole expanse to be able to give us accurate information as to where we will go.

Diana (cont.): Budget – Not a lot of ongoing expenses, essentially PO Box and website. No detailed budget yet as we didn't know what space we were working with. We will develop that as soon as we can put real numbers on it, and start fundraising appropriately. We will continue to raise money, and if we don't use it all it will be before the next park.

Bark in the Park: On website that we want to hold it in the spring. Called Town to ask whether we could use Field of Dreams, which is booked every Sat for a year. Our site won't be ready for us to do anything on, so it looks like we will be back at the Promenade. Three Sat in May we can use – 6, 13 or 20. Will have to check to see which is best. Don't think we should invest the effort in the silent auction, it's a lot of work and don't make much money on it. Just have people there, sell hotdogs, nothing too fancy. Put out for commentary:

Carl: We should have it at the site. Diana thought there was debris but it turns out there isn't. Could be a possibility, commentary is that this is good and would get people excited.

Shoot for 20th of May, don't want to compete with the Village Festival. Public in attendance in favor of avoiding major community events on same day or weekend.

Daniella's Report:

Rotary: Made presentation to Town on Tuesday evening re Field of Dreams developments, there will be ongoing talks about how to make this a homogeneous park. Support is strong and ongoing. Nothing specific to report other than Field of Dreams update.

Call for volunteers – Daniella will help in compiling volunteers and finding places for them to help as we continue building actionable items to do, as plans firm up.

Board applications: Wendy brought another one, will be addressed now that it's in hand. Call for others.

Backing up to Bark in the Park: Unsure about comment about not doing silent auction and not making a lot of money. Have we not made money over the years from this portion? Pike: We need help from everyone, we want to finish this and help to train us to get it done. If we can elicit the necessary assistance we are certainly happy to do that, but in order to do it we need help.

Turned over to Mr. Milling: Going over plan to orient: Rec court, Field of Dreams area, Rotary Club, ballfields, drop-off loop, Town Maint. Facility, parking. Area behind ballfields (county run) has liability involved so they want to keep everyone from that area (per Pike).

Since last time: Met with Marc, others in Town, had same meeting with Marc that we all had at last meeting. No issues raised by him, only brought up one thing which was to ensure that we have plenty of park space. Marc did not feel that there was the need for much additional parking. He is not interested in maintaining a new parking area, as long as county vehicles can get in and get around people can park there.

Marc interested in including (shared or Town pays):

1. outside of the fence streetscape improved. Trees, parallel parking, nice minimum 5-ft pathway sidewalks when you get out of your car to take you up. Wants to make sure the fence stays behind that, which is fine.
2. At intersection, natural connection to Field of Dreams area so we want to pay attention to that crosswalk.

Areas: Big dogs, small dogs, and nice to have geriatric area. Two separate unleashing areas. Kylie drew two areas for this, 20x20, leading to large and small respectively, and through small is geriatric. Locked maintenance gate is separate.

Carl: Want to move unleashing areas from corners for safety.

Wallace: Felt that was closest spot to parking and easiest access from intersection. Wanted to address the corner. Haven't figured it out 100% maybe, but we are considering plans. Potential for other things in the space, memorial pavers, benches, etc. Whatever it ends up being, we want it to be connected to the formal entry to the park. That will lead to the unleashing areas, which are removed from it a little bit. Have pushed them back and separated to a certain degree, could be more. Kylie: The plaza is a buffer, and the pathway is a second buffer to the entrance.

Wallace: Will move toward general flow and arrangements, next pass will be more technical and we get into the specs of things.

Discussion of acreage: Whole enclosed fenced-in area total is about .9 acres, not including unleashing areas (Kylie). Originally with Town it was 1.2 acres but nobody actually knew, it was just a number given at the time. It's about an acre, all told.

Pike: If we can get little more we want it. Wallace asked: how much more do we want? Would an acre be good? What are we going for?

Abby presented that a minimum of one acre is ideal, according to her sources. Very interested in a ball-throwing lane in addition to other spaces, may or may not need an additional gate. Anything we can squeeze out from that side would be good.

Question: breakdown of each section. Wallace: roughly $\frac{1}{2}$ large, $\frac{1}{4}$ small, $\frac{1}{10}$ th for elderly. Concern brought up about losing space for dogs to run around together with additional spaces.

Wallace: on this round, we will try to squeeze out an acre and see how first three areas work out. Kylie: Have to work out spaces and priorities.

Argued through room that three spaces never had a lot of traction. Abby: the idea of a dog park is to attract as many user as possible, rather than to limit to extremely active dogs. Senior people with senior dogs may still want to go to a park to unleash.

Discussion of priorities: It is a matter of the purpose of a dog park. Abby states that it is to maximize community use. Others argue that it is about having a place to run, not just to go. In order to move forward, must determine the fundamental purpose of the park.

Wallace: Let's get as much land as we can, plan for perimeter fence, spend money on moving forward. Can figure the rest out when we go through technical review, gate widths, etc.

Question: What trees will be present? Kylie: All trees on drawing are live trees on the premises. Want to have a long stretch to run but try to keep as much shade as possible. Not planting any new trees. Can take trees down, want as few as possible while maintaining sufficient shade. Kept as many as possible while getting running space. Wallace: From assessment and technical standpoint, have to go inspect and make sure we can actually keep all of them re: health.

Carl: Can we bush-hog space and tape it off so public can walk it beforehand to see how it feels. Abby: There is a safety issue with too many trees, depending on where they are. Phillip: Town has already expressed that we will not remove trees more than 6" in diameter, as recalled. There will be some that have to come out post hurricane, there is still cleanup to be done. Pike will make inquiry into bush-hogging (Town), do not anticipate that it will be an issue. It's better to walk it right now before bush-hogging creates a lot of debris. We can all go out and take tape to select what we want to stay, and what we want to go. Small things will disappear when we bush-hog so let's not pay to do it twice.

Pike thanked all for coming, will send out an email to set up a conference call to discuss some specifics moving forward so we can move toward some consensus for individual things as well as who will be willing to help with what. We are in the right position and we're getting it done.

Call for next meeting's timing, to be held on the site: 5:30pm, March 23rd

Meeting adjourned 6:42pm