



Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Fahey and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Geoff Dolan, City Manager

FROM: Richard Gill, Director of Parks and Recreation

DATE: December 6, 2005

SUBJECT: Consideration of the Parks & Recreation Commission Recommendation to Approve an Off-Leash Dog Area at Marine Park

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Commission to install an off-leash area at Marine Park for dog obedience classes and general use by the public in a manner that promotes use by owners of small dogs.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

If approved, the cost for the off-leash area would be approximately \$5,000 for fencing, wood chips, signage and relocation of the irrigation.

BACKGROUND:

In February 2005, the City opened an off-leash dog play area in Live Oak Park beyond the center field fence at Dorsey Field. The City Council made the off-leash area permanent in August because of its great success. The dog run at Live Oak has had minimal problems and has become a social gathering place for many dog owners. When making Live Oak permanent, City Council directed staff to move the dog obedience classes from that site so more time would be available for the public. The Council also stated that if other locations are discovered for a dog run that don't impact the surrounding neighbors, that site should be brought forward for consideration.

DISCUSSION:

Staff believes it has found a site for the dog obedience classes that may also be suitable for a small off-leash play area. The area is behind the racquetball/handball Pay and Play indoor courts at Marine Avenue Park (see attachment A site map). The area is triangular in shape, unlike the dog run at Live Oak which is long and narrow.

Staff reviewed the area in Marine Avenue Park with the Dog Issues Committee and brought it before the Parks and Recreation Commission during their November 14 meeting.

During the November Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, staff explained that the area would work fine for dog obedience classes and if approved as an off-leash play area, it would be operated with rules and policies similar to the Live Oak dog run.

Several Dog Issues Committee members and Parks and Recreation Commissioners expressed that the area was fine for dog obedience classes but small for an off-leash dog play area. The Commission and staff agreed that the number of dogs allowed in the area would be less than in Live Oak and other policies may have to be tweaked to fit the size and location.

The Commission expressed some concern that there will not be as much staff oversight (Marine is staffed less than Joslyn/Live Oak) but concluded that staff may have to adjust the hours of operation and rules should problems arise.

The Commission also expressed a concern for mixing large and small dogs in the area. Staff replied that dog owners have adjusted and worked out these types of situations by themselves at the Live Oak Dog Run. If this becomes a problem at Marine, then staff would have to adjust the policies to have separate times for large and small dogs. Because of the limited size of the dog run, staff does not anticipate these types of problems.

Staff notified the residents living across from Marine Avenue Park regarding the issue for the November 14 Commission meeting and tonight's City Council meeting. Staff also identified the perimeter of the off-leash area with cones and caution tape so the public would have an idea as to the dimensions.

If the Marine Avenue site is approved as an off-leash area for dogs, staff will monitor the area and document any concerns. At the end of six months, staff could provide the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council with a status report.

Attachment A: Site Map

Dog Run at Marine Ave Park

