

# **SOUTH LOOP DOG PAC BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**FEBRUARY 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2011**

*Present:* Lynda Young, Stephanie Daugherty, Doug Freymann, Pamela Focia, Juli Valdez;

*Absent:* Wendy Ito

## **A) ADMINISTRATIVE & MISCELLANEOUS**

- January Minutes approved 4:0
- *Bulletin Board:* The CPD has 'approved' installation of a new bulletin board at Grant Bark Park. We will coordinate installation of the board in late March.
- *Verizon Park Takeover:* SLDogPAC submitted an FOIA request with the CPD to obtain a copy of the permit allowing Verizon to take over Grant Bark Park in January. We will continue to raise the issue with the CPD and, eventually, local media, as a question of respect for people with dogs who use Grant Bark Park, and in order to prevent future unannounced takeovers.

## **B) JACKIE GUTHRIE, PARK SUPERVISOR, DALEY BICENTENNIAL PLAZA**

- CPD representative Jackie Guthrie was unable to attend the meeting. We will try to reschedule for the March meeting, or, if needed, at a time of her convenience.

## **C) POO-FREE PARKS**

- SLDogPAC has been contacted by Poo Free Parks, a company that installs advertising-supported dog bag dispensers (i.e. installation, maintenance, and support are provided at no cost to residents or the city). The board voted 5:0 to support Poo Free Parks' efforts to begin a program in Chicago, as being in line with our previous efforts to provide dog bag dispensers in the South Loop.
- Several questions were raised: (a) what sort of bags are provided (handled? biodegradable? (b) what city/institutional support is needed to make the program happen? (c) would other DFA committees be willing to advocate for widespread implementation of this program in Chicago? (d) what strategy for installation would be the most appropriate – installation 'in parks' or installation 'on street corners' throughout the South Loop?
- Poo Free Parks has a minimum requirement for number of installations in order to move forward, meaning that involvement of groups outside of the South Loop would almost certainly be required.
- Next steps:
  - Raise the issue with the Alderman of Wards 2, 3, and 25 (which encompass the South Loop) and their representatives.
  - Raise the issue with Jackie Guthrie of the CPD at the March meeting.
  - Reach out to representatives of the DFA committees in Chicago.
  - Longer term – publicize the effort with the Sloopin blog, Chicago Journal, Chicago Tribune, and other media outlets.

- Lynda agreed to ask friend “Mark” about city requirements for approval of this type of program.

#### D) MAINTENANCE

*Coliseum Park:* Damage to the south gate was reported to CPD and a repair work order has been issued. Users of the park have stepped up to clean the park, and have been reporting issues that need repair.

SLDogPAC received a quote from Poop911.com for weekly cleanups at Coliseum Park Dog Run. The costs seems reasonable but nevertheless are beyond our budget without further support from park users.

The CPDR ‘gravel pockets’ are not workable and need to be redesigned prior to any attempt to replace the gravel. This too will cost, and we need to gauge user support before deciding to go ahead.

Lynda agreed to draft a sign raising these issues (‘cleanup’ and ‘gravel areas’) to be posted at CPDR, highlighting the need for donations and involvement, asking for users to contact us, and noting that we will try to organize a CPDR User meeting in the Spring.

Doug will design a website survey in order to get user feedback on these issues.

*Grant Bark Park:* Planning for gravel replacement is underway. Pam is coordinating with the vendor in order to submit the appropriate permit request to the CPD. The board approved payment of a \$250 fee and \$1500 security deposit by a vote of 5:0.

Issues are numerous, and include:

- How much gravel do we need? 20 tons of gravel were added to the area one year after the park opened. It is believed that a truckload is 13 tons. The gravel area is approximately 34’ wide by 220’ long (7480 sq ft).
- How will a gravel truck gain access? It is believe that gravel trucks are ‘the size of a semi’, which would be too large to fit in GBP. Can we arrange delivery of smaller loads?
- How will gravel delivery gain access to the park? Claudine Malik of CPD indicates that she will coordinate with the contractor on the Verizon project to allow access with the north fence removed.
- Once inside, can gravel be dumped directly into the gravel area at the north end? It is likely that there is space, but we need to have an estimate for the ‘size of the pile’.
- When should gravel be delivered? It is likely that we will not be able to gain delivery until the weather is warmer. Will we still be able to have the fence removed to allow access?
- We need to install a gravel barrier along the west fence. Construction fabric is likely to be the best material for this, and has to be located, purchased, and installed. The fence is about 220’ long.
- Who can we contract to redistribute the delivered gravel? Lynda agreed to contact Mary Gawenda and other vendors (Kinsella) about arranging this.

#### **E) MEMBERSHIP**

- Memberships renew on 3.31.11. We need to initiate a membership drive asking for renewals and recruiting new members. The following steps are planned:
  - Letters to current members go out in early March.
  - Website/Facebook/Twitter announcements of the Membership Drive go out in early March.
  - Signs will be placed at the parks announcing the Membership Drive, and outlining what we need funds for (e.g. maintenance, bags, etc).
  - Local media (Sloopin, Chicago Journal) will be contacted mid-March.
- Pam agreed to design the signs to be posted at the parks.
- Juli agreed to contact Café Society to see whether we could arrange an outdoor dog-friendly membership recruitment party in the Spring.
- Juli agreed to begin checking with local condo boards about providing funding or membership support for the SLDogPAC and/or dog park cleanup costs (e.g. Poo911).

#### **F) FETCH! & SOCIAL MEDIA**

- Facebook & Twitter – the SLDogPAC Facebook page has 140 ‘likes’ and the Twitter account has 105 ‘followers’, and Facebook and Twitter have provided the primary mode for communication with the community over the last several months. Our email database is quite large, only about 125 recipients actually open and read *Fetch!* when it is sent out.
- *Fetch!* for February/March – Discussion of items for inclusion: i) Membership, ii) iPoop (targeted fundraising), iii) Gravel replacement at GBP, iv) update about Verizon, v) CPDR dog fountain funding request, vi) work order to fix CPDR gate.
- Lynda agreed to print more GotADog flyers for distribution in March.

#### **G) OUTREACH**

- *Monthly park table* – Tabled until Spring.
- *Installation of Poo Bag Dispensers at other local parks* – The board discussed installation of poo bag dispensers at Cottontail, Roosevelt, and Ping Tom parks. This would require approval of the various Alderman and the Chicago Park District; the issue can be raised at the next meeting with Jackie Guthrie of the CPD. Note that maintenance of new dispensers would probably not be too onerous, but that the cost could be significant (\$1000/yr), and so requires both membership support and careful budget planning.

#### **H) PARK BANNER & SIGNAGE**

- Tabled until the March meeting

#### **I) NEXT MEETING**

- Monday March 14<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 PM, location TBD

**PENDING ITEMS (JANUARY MEETING):**

1. Contact Donna's Place to coordinate about Survey, membership, events.
2. Recruit dog-walkers as a business members - long term we'll have a 'Dog Walkers support' page on our website
3. Write thank you notes for in-kind donations in 2010
4. Initiate targeted fundraising for Gravel replacement project
5. Arrange to get a new shed for Grant Bark Park
6. Outline Membership Renewal project for January-March 2011 - Fetch delivery and targeted letters to remind members about re-joining in March.
7. Contact Katie Pape, a dogwalker on the north side who wants to coordinate with SLDogPAC.
8. Close ProPay account

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