

From: Finn Ryan <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2019 10:26 AM

To: Parks <parks@cityofmadison.com>; Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>; Voegeli, Doug <DVoegeli@publichealthmdc.com>

Subject: Dogs in Parks

I'm disappointed to hear that dogs rules are proposed to be changed. Every time I run, walk, or take my children to parks, we have to deal with dogs. This means we have to avoid dog shit, I have to step between off leash dogs and my children, or I have to stop my activity because a leashed dog in a restricted park is acting aggressively. There is little to no enforcement of current dog rules.

If dogs are allowed in most parks, will rules actually be enforced? If dog rules are changed, will Madison Parks acknowledge their liability for injuries caused by increased presence of dogs?

This past week the Dane County and City of Madison Public Health Department put out a series of videos on dogs. One of the videos is on avoiding dog bites. The first recommendation for walkers, runners, and cyclists is to cross the street if they come upon someone walking a dog. Besides being totally impractical advice for most situations, this implies that the potential victim is in some way responsible or at fault for getting bit by a dog. It also acknowledges what we all know, dog owners can not or choose not to control their dogs. Yet, you are increasing their presence in public places. I do not support this proposal.

Thank you,
Finn Ryan
Madison resident

From: Laura Novak <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 6:32 PM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>

Subject: Upcoming votes/discussions on dog parks

Hello,

I see on the draft of the upcoming legislation statement of policy and guide-lines for on-leash dog access to Madison parks that your board is listed as the designated board of commissioner to choose the parks that will not allow dogs (assuming the draft passes at the October meeting). I am curious as to what the determining factors/criteria are to make certain parks continue to not allow dogs.

I live very near to Hoyt Park, before we got our dog I enjoyed many walks in the woods there and along the road. The path along the main road (Regent) is especially nice to have since that road has no sidewalk and can be pretty dangerous with blind corners. I was sad and torn when I got a dog, because it meant that I could not walk at or through Hoyt with my dog. It is not only beautiful and quiet in Hoyt park, but it is also a great way to cut through to the top of the hill and more neighborhoods. As a daily user for 2+ years of Hoyt park I can say I rarely saw other people in using the woods trails (especially in the Winter), it was usually me, a runner, and one

other man at the times I walked. I was frustrated when I got my dog and discovered I couldn't take him on these very quiet wooded trails. I can understand not taking him on the fields or the playground, but the woods are rarely used, and would make a perfect place for dog walking. I am hoping that Hoyt is not excluded from the list of parks that will allow dogs. It seems that part of Hoyt woods is even nearly fenced in, and could create an off-leash area in the future with minimal additional fences.

All this said, I do realize we have Quarry Park nearby, that is where we currently walk our dog 2+ times per day. That said, the trails are narrow, risky, and we get very nervous we will collide with the mountain bikers.

Please let me know how the decision will be made and if there will be a chance for public input.

Thanks so much for taking care of our beautiful parks here in Madison!

In Health,
Laura Novak
[REDACTED] McKinley Street
Madison, WI 53705

From: **Jan Axelson** <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, Sep 29, 2019 at 7:08 PM
Subject: Comments on proposed changes to ordinance 8.19 - Animals prohibited in certain areas - Friends of Cherokee Marsh
To: Madelyn Leopold <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>

Madelyn,

Please see below comments to the Board of Park Commissioners from the Friends of Cherokee Marsh board on proposed changes to ordinance 8.19 - Animals prohibited in certain areas.

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh appreciate that the proposed revisions to dog policies continue to prohibit dogs in conservation parks. We believe, and evidence supports, that prohibiting dogs helps protect plant communities and wildlife in natural areas such as those we treasure in our conservation parks.

We don't object to increasing the number of general parks that allow dog walking. However, we're concerned that allowing dogs in most parks could lead to increased confusion that results in more dogs in conservation parks. Even now, due to lack of enforcement and clear signage, it's not unusual to see dog walkers in Cherokee Marsh and other conservation parks.

Thus we strongly suggest implementing improved signage to inform park visitors whether dogs are allowed. In conservation parks, this could include large, visual "circle-backslash" signs in addition to the usual signage stating conservation park rules. At major trailheads, signage could point visitors to nearby dog parks.

In parks such as Meadow Ridge, which encompass both a general park area and a conservation park, all access points to conservation park trails should have prominent signage that identifies the trails as conservation park with no dogs allowed.

Especially if dogs are to be allowed in most parks, we also strongly suggest increasing enforcement activities, including more frequent patrols of conservation parks and the issuing of fines for repeat offenders.

Jan Axelson, President, Friends of Cherokee Marsh

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BEGIN EMAIL STRING:

From: Freiwald, Ann

Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 3:58 PM

To: Celesnik, Marion <█████@att.net>

Subject: RE: Dog Policy

Hello Marian. Thank you for your question.

The Madison General Ordinances that address dogs running at large and the proper handling of dog waste are found below:

MGO 23.32 Regulation of Dogs and Cats Running at Large

https://library.municode.com/wi/madison/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COORMAWIVOIICH20--31_CH23OFAGPUPO_23.32REDOCARULA

and

MGO 7.322 Animal Defecation on Public and Private Property Regulation

https://library.municode.com/wi/madison/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COORMAWIVOICH1--10_CH7PUHE_7.322ANDEPUPRPRRE

These ordinances spell out the fines involved for non-compliance. The proposed change in the park policy regarding dogs does not change the ordinances above.

Ann Freiwald

From: Celesnik, Marion
Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 8:02 PM
To: Freiwald, Ann <AFreiwald@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Dog Policy

Dear Ms Freiwald,

I was reading the proposed dog policy, and I don't see anything about warnings or fines for dogs running at large or for not picking up waste. Are there no longer any fines for dogs off leash? And if not, why not?

Thank you,

Marian Celesnik

END EMAIL STRING

From: Celesnik, Marion
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 10:44 AM
To: Parks <parks@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Dog Policy

We need more effective signs. At beaches there need to be a no dogs allowed sign that is large enough to make an impact. At BB Clark, for example, the no dogs rule is lost in small print of various rules. What stands out is the large NO ALCOHOL sign, which indicates we are serious about no alcohol. Less so about dogs. At Warner beach we have no sign at all at the lifeguard station which is the most visible place to put it. Up north this summer I saw a sign in a park-- Leashed Dogs Allowed. I think that sends a clearer message than Dogs Permitted with the details in small print.

I oppose the proposed policy. It is in no way balanced and gives privileges to dog owners over beach users right to a clean and safe environment. If dogs aren't allowed on the sand for health reasons, why is the grass where we put down towels and go barefoot to be a dog walking spot? Kids faces are on the same levels as dogs teeth, and kids play on the grass, too.

I don't have a rosy picture of dog owners following rules based on my experience at Warner Beach where I find people walking dogs on leash and off. The proposed change would bring more dogs there, and more opportunity for some people to do whatever they want, regardless.

Warner is huge park, and under the proposed policy the only places dogs would not be allowed is the sand beach, within 20 feet of playgrounds, the inside of shelters. How balanced is that? If I get annoyed, then instead of riding my bike to the beach or riding

through the park, I guess I am free to get in my car and drive out out to Cherokee Marsh. I can't swim there, though.

Leaving the beach park dog free would be more fair.

Dog friendly may wear on us. So I wrote suggestions about signs.

Marian Celesnik
[REDACTED] Sheridan Drive
Madison

From: karen hickel <[REDACTED]@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 1:09 PM
To: Parks <parks@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Comment on dog policy

Hello,

I feel there should be a 'No Dogs Allowed' policy at Madison Beach parks. The proposed policy has no dogs on sand beaches.

However, the grassy areas where children and their families are, surrounding the sand, should be free of dog waste.

There is also a public safety risk when allowing dogs to roam around beach areas where folks may be lying on towels in the grass, or having a picnic.

There are miles of paths for dogs to walk in Madison parks, and several dedicated dog parks where dogs can be contained off leash.

Madison beach parks should have a 'No Dogs Allowed' policy which is clearly posted, for the health and safety of citizens.

Thank you,

Karen Hickel
Friends of Warner Beach

From: Linda <[REDACTED]@att.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 2, 2019 1:06 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Parks <parks@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Agenda item 17, dogs in parks

Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting of October 2, 2019
Agenda Item #17, Legistar 57578

I do not support the proposed Statement of Policies and Guidelines.

When dogs were given access to certain park paths, there was first a pilot study conducted. Then the City, via ordinance, Legistar 45918, allowed dog access to an additional 14 parks, limited to "any pedestrian or transportation corridor" and within 6 feet of such path/corridor.

If the City is looking to allow dogs throughout the parks (with exceptions), there should first be a study conducted. And good feedback from such study should be obtained, and it should be easy for park users to make comments. For example, a kiosk at the pilot parks where users can comment on issues such as owners not picking up poop, aggressive dogs, or dogs lunging at wildlife, or even just to say that the person and dog enjoyed using the park.

Going from 26 parks where dogs can be walked along paths to almost all parks (around 200?) being primarily open to dogs is a large leap.

Making residents who want to avoid dogs go up to 2 miles to find a dog-free park is too far. Whether a child is afraid of dogs, or a person allergic, or a person just does not want the interaction, a person should have better park access than two miles. Plus, there is not any guidance as to what those dog-free parks should consist of. For example, could a tiny pocket park such as Kerr-McGee Triangle Park count as having a dog-free park within 2 miles?

From 2017 to 2018, the number of animal complaints doubled (326 to 707). Has consideration been given to whether opening more parks to dogs will require additional rangers? If so, is that in the 2020 budget?

Has thought been given to public health? We all know many people do not pick up poop -- hence the annual off-leash park cleanup efforts. For example, will kids playing in the park catch hookworm? Check out some internet images of cutaneous larva migrans.

Many dogs are not well socialized or are afraid of other dogs. People often use the park sidewalks to walk these dogs because of a clear view and lack of dogs. Allowing dogs in almost all parks will impinge on this use.

I have had dogs in my life for over 30 years. I am not against dog access to parks, but any proposal should first be tested. And it should be remembered that not all owners are model citizens.

Linda Lehnertz
Madison resident

From: Tracy Doreen <[REDACTED]@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 2, 2019 2:59 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Comment for tonight's meeting - Dogs in city parks

Dear City of Madison Park Commissioners,

No. Please do not open so many parks to dogs.

Parks are paid for by people. Dogs are NOT people too. People need a lot more education about how to handle their dogs in public before access is so opened.

I like dogs. Yet, I want to be able to go with friends to for instance BB Clarke beach without having to:

- A. encounter an unknown and possibly aggressive dog in the *adjacent area of the park,
- B. Step in dog poop,
- C. leave some of my friends out of the park trip, two of whom are highly **allergic** to dogs,
- D. Not invite children who are afraid of dogs to go to the park.

*BB Clarke is a relatively small park for the number of visitors it receives. This park and other small neighborhood parks would not be good candidates to allow dogs on leashes all day. It could quickly become full of dogs. I could see limited hours such as early morning.

I first heard about the possibility of so many more of Madison's parks being opened to dogs just one week ago. I understand the parks has had public input sessions about this topic this summer, but I did not hear about this until today. Please share the results of the pilot program. How was the survey conducted? Was it possible on the survey for one person to send an online response multiple times to stack the results?

I asked one friend about her thoughts on the possibility of dogs being allowed in more city parks. She surprised me how adamantly she was opposed to this change. She related that she was recently in a park and encountered a dog that was on-leash. It ran up to her and bit her! She wasn't sure if it was a park that allowed leashed dogs or not, but she just wanted to walk through the park peacefully. She would not say anything about this in public fearing that "some dog owners are very aggressive."

Another friend who is a dog owner was also against the change as his dog recently became very ill after it was infected by worms. His dog ate another dog's poo that was not picked up near a park.

I could support a limited time (in early a.m. perhaps) in SOME additional parks allowing dogs on leash. I do not think ANYONE should have to walk two miles to find a park that does NOT allow dogs. Perhaps instead there should be a park within one mile of everyone in Madison where one CAN walk a dog. Knowing where one will walk the dog needs to be part of the consideration in getting a dog.

Some of the questions I have about changing this ordinance to allow dogs in so many more Madison parks are:

1. How will the parks department educate the public about which parks dogs are, and are not allowed? (currently some people are not aware of the pilot program and wonder why dogs are now in these parks.)
2. How will requirements/ restrictions be regulated and enforced?
3. Who will make sure dog poop is picked up?
4. Will dog poop left in the parks be tested by the city for worms or diseases and issue public warnings?
5. Will the city take on the expense of providing doggie poop bags and receptacles in parks? (From what I have observed, many, many people do not carry any or enough bags for this purpose and often dump the bags in private residential garbage bins.) I have seen that some other cities allowing dogs in parks provide bags and receptacles.

Looking at the map of where dogs are allowed in Madison, I see A LOT of parks available for dogs and I also see where there is a need for more access. Please limit this access instead of opening most parks. Spend time - a lot more time educating the public and enforcing licensing rules. Untagged dogs, sometimes unleashed, walk by my house every day. I also see dog walkers walking multiple dogs at a time on leash, while texting on their phone. I see a lot of irresponsible dog-walking behaviors that will move to the parks if a majority of parks are opened to dogs.

Of course the exception should be service dogs, if not already allowed, they need to be allowed everywhere.

Sincerely,

Tracy Dietzel



S. Paterson