

Committee on Common Areas for Dogs
FY 2023 Annual Report

Committee Overview

- The Committee on Common Areas for Dogs shall be defined as any facet of community life pertaining to: the interests, health and safety of dogs and citizens, including their presence in parks, on trails and in open spaces as deemed appropriate, by approval of the South Burlington City Council.
- **Committee Members:**
 - Betty Milizia, Chair (3 yr term/ 2024)
 - Molly Besio-Joy, (3 yr term/ 2024)
 - Robyn Birgisson, (3 yr term/ 2025)
 - Linda Chaison, Member (2 yr term/ 2023)
 - Muriel More, Member (2 yr term/ 2023)
 - Lisa Yankowski, Member -NRCC liaison, (1 yr term/ 2022)
 - (one vacancy due to resignation)

Accomplishments and events:

- Presented to City Council recommended facility changes to Wheeler Dog Park “post” construction to ensure ADA accessibility and expansion in the SW corner, to recapture a portion of the area in the approved plan.
- Presented proposal to Council on the use of ARPA funds to address the needs and impact of dogs on our community.
- Developed matrix to “track” any reported dog “incidents”.
- Received and provided feedback to monthly staff reports on incidents.
- Reported to staff on reoccurring issues for winter maintenance Wheeler Dog Park, (ie damage to gates from snow and ice; needed supplies to address safety issues related to freezing and thawing of surface water.
- Revised “dog park” rules, to address health and safety issues observed and experienced by visitors and their dogs, at Wheeler Dog Park.
- Developed survey regarding “off-leash” dogs, to be conducted summer 2023.
- Hosted “April Stools Day” event at Wheeler Dog and Nature Parks.
- Provided input into preliminary plans for redevelopment of Farrell Dog Park.
- Participated in Community forums regarding Comprehensive Plan 2024.
- Drafted preliminary CCAD workplan for FY 23.

FY 2024 Goals and Priorities *(summarized)*

- Work toward increasing the amount of space available to off-leash opportunities for dogs.
- Develop plan for community education *(signage, public meetings, media, classes)*.
- Gather community input on needs *(targeted surveys, public meetings & events)*.
- Identify and recommend “needed” amenities at the dog parks, such as shade, water and seating.
- Work with staff to determine value of collaborating with volunteers to assist in maintenance of dog parks.
- Follow up with staff on the installation of dog waste bag dispensers. *(Identified as priority of the City Council FY 23 retreat)*.
- Work with staff to revise and develop city ordinances and policies that support responsible dog ownership; plan for dogs in public spaces to ensure health and safety for everyone; to ensure enjoyment for all.
- Assist in identifying the necessary resources to accomplish goals.
- Recommend a QR code be provided at Wheeler Dog Park for contributions, as recommended by patrons and other community members.