

**TO: HISID Board of Commissioners
Kevin Crosson, Executive Director**
DATE: June 1, 2010

DOG PARK RATIONALE AND PROPOSAL

I. NEED:

Holiday Island property owners are predominantly retired, and their "pets" become a "second" family of children, providing comfort and attention. The population of pets and their importance in residents' lives will continue to increase as more baby boomers discover Holiday Island.

Responsible pet (dog) owners do not permit their "loved ones" to just run loose and annoy other neighbors. Very few homes have fenced areas for their pets, since these can be costly and you must have permission from all your neighbors to construct. Therefore, these pet owners subscribe to a leash usage, even though no enforcement exists at the present time. However, to walk your dog in Holiday Island is dangerous!

Without sidewalks, our narrow, hilly curvy roads with no street lighting are the only option, putting at great risk the walkers and the dog. Also, golfers will tell you "don't use the golf path or fairway to walk your pet." So what is the best option? ---A DOG PARK---

The dog park must meet most, if not all of the following criteria:

- Size, measured in several acres
- Reasonably central location, easy to access
- Cost of implementation and regular maintenance
- Water available
- Shade available
- Few neighbors
- Adequate parking
- Soil suitable for fencing and signage

II. Understandings

Instead of the phrase, *rules and regulations*, which sounds punitive or suggests method of paid enforcement, we suggest "Understandings" which implies that responsible property owners /users will police this opportunity. These understandings will be:

- Owners present at all times, with leash available
- Dogs under control
- Dog up- to -date with vaccinations
- An aggressive dog will be required to leave
- Owners responsible for clean up and disposal or use of other facilities such as

- parking
- Obey the posted use hours and or closing dates
- Park use for property owners only
- Dog park users would enforce these understandings, not HISID personnel.

III. Considerations

We discussed two locations, the multiple use of the existing ball field at the Recreational Center and an existing, currently maintained site at Wild Turkey and Valley Drive. Matching these two locations to the previous listed criteria, it was clearly apparent to the committee members that a multiple use of an infrequently (see Mr. Crosson's memo of March 11, 2010) used ball field was the best choice. This is specifically true because of the high cost of entire fencing vs. partial fencing to match existing, complete new parking vs. use of rarely used existing parking, new water service vs. existing service already installed, same maintenance costs vs. expanded maintenance, and central location along with the use of existing benches, and portable toilets.

In all, the best value for the use of donated and/or village funds is to maximize the investment of an infrequently used ball field.

Other considerations have been discussed such as dog waste with ball playing. Currently, the ball field is partially unfenced and open to unleashed dogs, deer, raccoons, geese and no one is picking up their waste. A completely fenced area, keeping strays and wildlife away, while being self-policed by responsible owners will be a cleaner ball field.

When the infrequently used ball field is scheduled, and a date known for a reunion-picnic etc., then a closed sign will be placed over the dog park sign for the date.

It is intended to develop a bark path around the perimeter to encourage property owners to walk in the park with their dog and closely supervise their behavior, and show that their owner is nearby and increase best behavior. It is intended to have a dispenser in the park for plastic pick up bags and a disposable trash container. It is intended to have a sign announcing the dog park hours and understandings for use.

Several interested committee members said they would feel unsafe and not use the Wild Turkey/Valley location. It is estimated that the only material cost at the ball field would be to match and complete the fencing with a gate or two. Estimates are being sought for this work, which will be paid for from the Dog Park Fund. An account has already been started at the Cornerstone Bank. One member has pledged a generous \$500 to see this park become a reality.

IV. SUMMARY

We believe a dog park is a desirable amenity to Holiday Island for now and in the future. We believe it will be respectfully self-administered by the dog/property owners. We wish to begin with less, rather than more, complications such as fees, tags, etc. We also will

certainly adjust the Park's use as needed. We believe the usage will be even greater than say, the driving range, miniature golf, pickle ball, and tennis, especially on a year-round basis. Our committee members also believe that for the cost of the extended fencing, the park will serve to more effectively maximize the present investment and will be more cost effective than the above referenced amenities as well as serve more people year round.

The attached Roster identifies those property owners who respectfully recommend approval by the HISID Board of Commissioners and the Executive Director of the aforementioned and proposed Dog Park. We appreciate your thoughtful consideration to convert the existing ball field into a multi-use facility including Holiday Island's first Dog Park. We are ready to meet with you to further explain this proposal. It is our hope that this will be a "win-win" project for the BOC and best of all, require no outlay of scarce HISID funds.