



# Administrative Report

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J.2., File # RP24-0570

Meeting Date: 4/10/2024

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**To: RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION**

**From: CAMERON HARDING, COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR**

## **TITLE**

RECEIVE AND FILE UPDATES REGARDING THE CITY'S ONGOING MAINTENANCE OF THE DOMINGUEZ PARK DOG PARK

## **BACKGROUND**

At the Recreation and Parks Commission's (Commission) March 13, 2024 meeting, the Commission requested a future discussion that would include an update regarding the City's ongoing maintenance of the Dominguez Park Dog Park. This was in response to a public comment given by resident Vicki Callahan that was given that evening and outlined a number of concerns related to her experience at the park. A copy of the information she shared with the Commission is included as an attachment. The following is information regarding each concern and responsive information from the City, detailing current practices, limitations, and guidance for future instances.

### **Water Stations**

Ms. Callahan expressed concern over the existing water stations, specifically that she experienced them being perpetually clogged and not user friendly. The drain lines for the water stations were built to percolate into the ground (french drain), which causes them to become clogged more often than if they were connected to an underground drainage line. In order to fix this issue, the City would need to develop a Capital Improvement Project that would include the installation of a direct connection with the sewer line, replacing the percolating system currently in place. Unfortunately, the ground at the park continues to settle since it sits atop of a former waste site, which causes concern over the installation of underground piping that could be damaged by any shifts in the ground. Furthermore, this type of project would be costly and extensive, resulting in the temporary closure of certain areas of the park during construction. Staff has looked for comparable water stations that support the existing percolating drainage system in the hopes that new technology may help with the drainage, but no existing system has been found.

### **Coyotes**

As a result of the height of the exterior fence surrounding the dog park, Ms. Callahan noted that coyotes have entered into the dog park area. Further, she relayed that dogs are also able to jump over the fence, causing safety concerns for the dogs and others using areas adjacent to the dog park area. The current fence was recently replaced and is the same height as the previous fencing, which is 4 feet tall. This project was done collectively with the insight and coordination of the Friends of the Redondo Beach Dog Park (FRBDP), a local, nonprofit organization that is dedicated to preserving and expanding areas for dogs and their owners to enjoy safe, off-leash access. This organization

also provides ongoing maintenance and upkeep assistance at the park and is well acquainted with its usage. Currently, there is no project in place to raise the height of the fencing surrounding the dog park.

### Homeless

Another concern that was shared was that there are homeless individuals sleeping in the park, which creates an unwelcome environment for park users. The Redondo Beach Police Department has a Quality of Life Unit that was created to assist in facilitating services and providing resources for those experiencing homelessness throughout the City. Staff recommends contacting this team using the non-emergency number (310.379.5411) to report concerns related to unhoused individuals at the park.

### Drainage

The drainage of the dog park and adjacent areas is a concern due to deep gullies that contain rocks, asphalt and glass. Additionally, Ms. Callahan mentioned that small dogs are able to get under some fence areas due to erosion following rain. The Public Works team, along with the FRBDP, are grading in and around the dog park area weekly. The teams have been instructed to visually inspect the area and maintain ground levels, where necessary. Additionally, the City occasionally brings soil into the park to fill in any areas that are depleted. An important factor to this issue is that as a result of the dog park being built on top of the former waste site, the shifting of the ground also causes drainage issues and areas where erosion is more present. The City will continue to keep an eye on this and address any noticeable issues.

### Herbicide

Ms. Callahan requested the City discontinue using herbicide on weeds. The Public Works Department confirmed that while it does use an herbicide throughout the parks, it is implemented in conformance with the annual permit obtained from the LA County Agricultural Commissioner, which requires limited use and close supervision by trained City staff to ensure the safety of residents, including pets.

Five years ago, the City Council confirmed a practice to discontinue the use of an herbicide called Roundup in City parks to a different chemical herbicide, Cheetah Pro. It is applied in strict accordance with the manufacturer's safety directions and optimum environmental and landscaping practices to properly treat, control, and prevent destructive outbreaks of weeds. Following its application, staff ensure that the herbicide safely dries and is rendered essentially inert before allowing park users to access treated areas. The herbicide is most effective when applied during warmer temperatures, so its application is typically planned for morning hours prior to heavy use of the park. Drying time can vary based on weather, required application rate and other factors, so the City positions Parks Maintenance Staff around the sprayed area until the herbicide has dried.

Staff recommends the Commission receive and file this report in response to Ms. Callahan's public comment made on March 13, 2024. A representative from the Public Works Department will be in attendance to answer any technical or operational questions of the Commission.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Public Comment Received from Vicki Callahan, March 13, 2024