

**Recommendations from Working Group and Dog ad Hoc Committee
Regarding Section B at Memorial Ball Field**

The Working Group met with the Dog ad Hoc Committee on Thursday, August 2, 2012 and Thursday, August 23, 2012 to brainstorm on recommendations for the use and maintenance for Section B at Memorial Park Ball Field. The group was comprised of approximately 15 volunteers, two Dog Ad Hoc Committee members, one Parks and Recreation Commissioner, John Kindle, and the Dog Ad Hoc Committee staff liaison, Brad Griffith.

Each recommendation from the working group is followed by a staff recommendation and/or additional information.

Summary of Recommendations

1. Posting a "Good Neighbor" sign that states
 - No continuous barking
 - Attend to dogs at all times
 - Clean up after dogs
 - Remove aggressive dogs
 - No unneutered/unsprayed dogs
 - No female dogs in heat are allowed

Staff: Staff supports a Good Neighbor. More discussion is needed to ensure all issues have been captured. This item is discussed again in #7 below.

2. Post a sign to keep dogs off of baseball INFIELD at all times.

Staff: Staff recommends that a sign or A-frame be on the infield stating that dogs are not allowed on the infield at any time.

3. Have the contractor cut grass areas in both sections A & B simultaneously to keep it looking uniformed. Intervals suggested were weekly.

Staff: Staff is working with the contractor to clarify the agreement that both sides of the field are mowed at the same time. The contract currently states that the grass be mowed "at least once weekly (unless weather prevents)."

4. Have sections A & B watered at night and not in the day time hours to allow proper saturation which would lead to efficient utilization time for field users. A suggestion for watering at 10pm was sent to staff after the second working group meeting.

Staff: The best time to start watering early morning such as 3:30 AM or later. This is optimum time. Watering at 10:00 PM is not ideal since plants do not photosynthesize in the dark so water is wasted or worse water sits on the plants roots and causes fungal problems. Staff is working

with the contractors on the sprinkler system to maximize coverage while keeping in mind the best time of day to water.

5. Add a “second can” with a cover at Memorial Park to hold feces to make overflow less along with regularly scheduled carting by staff.

Staff: Staff is ordering a second can.

6. Post a sign assigning liability to dog owners who possibly might allow their dog to collide or make unwanted contact with other field users. Member of the public produced a sign that she took a picture of with the following wording:

“YOU ARE LIABLE FOR ANY INJURY CAUSED BY A DOG UNDER YOUR SUPERVISION, USERS OF THE PARK ASSUME THE RISK OF INJURY OR DAMAGE TO THEMSELVES AND THEIR DOG”.

Staff: In an effort to ensure the language is legally appropriate the City attorney has been asked to advise.

7. Move the signs that currently exists on section B to section A, allowing section B to be open to the public at large.

Staff: (1) Staff recommends a sign identifying Section A and Section B.

(2) Staff recommends that with the installation of the fence, hours when no dogs are allowed on Section A is no longer applicable. Given the high volume of use by sports groups and Albany High School, staff recommends the following sign for Section A (see below).

(3) Staff recommends a separate sign for Section B (see below)

SIGN FOR SECTION A

For the safely and enjoyment of all, please be aware of Albany’s Municipal Codes:

10-4.2: No dogs allowed in Section A of Memorial Park Ball Field when a field user has acquired a permit through the City of Albany for use of the Section A, this includes Albany High School P.E. classes.

A field reservation schedule may be found on the City’s website at www.albanyca.org/rec. and on the bulletin board located in Section B.”

No dogs are allowed on the infield at any time.

10.3-2. It shall be unlawful for the guardian/owner or person having custody of any dog to fail to immediately remove and dispose of dog defecation in a sanitary manner.

10-4.2a. All dogs at all times must be under proper control and supervision by a capable person.

8-4.7 g. It is unlawful in any park, recreation, open space, waterfront or Albany Hill area to store personal property. (i.e. Do not leave dog bowls, chairs, etc at the park as they will be removed by City staff.)

Please Be A Good Neighbor

- No continuous barking
- Attend to dogs at all times
- Remove aggressive dogs
- No unneutered/unspayed dogs
- Do bring females dogs in heat to the park

Liability Statement

SIGN FOR SECTION B (the same sign as Section A without the first ordinance 10-4.2:)

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10.3-2. It shall be unlawful for the guardian/owner or person having custody of any dog to fail to immediately remove and dispose of dog defecation in a sanitary manner.

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8. User hours for Section B:

6:00am-10:00pm (As long as it does not conflict with existing municipal code hours already established).

Staff: The current ordinance states, "No person shall use, remain in or enter into Memorial Park between 11:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m., other than duly authorized City employees, persons participating in City sponsored activities or other activities which the City has provided prior written permission to utilize Memorial Park beyond the closing time. The Director of the Recreation and Community Services Department is authorized to modify the hours of operation for specific facilities within Memorial Park."

#8 from the working group suggests that there would no longer exist any times/days when dogs are not allowed on Section B. Staff is recommending (in #7) that there is no longer a need for days/time when dogs are not allowed in Section A. Should the PR Commission agree that hours when no dogs are allowed is no longer applicable, as stated in the City's Municipal Code, the PR Commission would need to recommend to Council a new resolution.

In Oct 2009, City Council approved the following ordinance:

It shall be unlawful for dogs to be designated areas during designated times and days in Albany's parks as set forth by the Albany City Council. The specific days, areas, and hours shall be adopted by resolution after considering recommendations from the Parks and Recreation Commission. At no time shall dogs be permitted inside the play structure areas of any of Albany's Parks. (Ord. #98-02, §1; Ord. #04-03, §1; Ord. #09-08, §1)

Pending discussions from this evening and recommendations from the PR Commission, staff recommends drafting a new resolution to bring it back to Commission for consideration at a future meeting.

9. QUIET HOURS: Defined specifically as "No Barking or loud/disruptive noise by dogs or their dog owners." The hours for this period were discussed as, FIRST TWO HOURS AND LAST TWO HOURS OF OPEN PARK TIME.

Staff: Enforcement of quiet hours would be difficult. Additionally, based on the current hours the park is open (see ordinance stated in #8), this would mean quiet hours from 5:00am-7:00am and 9:00pm to 11:00pm. Staff feels that if the Commission supports quiet hours that the hours are extend to 5:00am-8:00am and 8:00pm – 11:00pm.

10. Close section B during rainy periods to save area from detrimental foot traffic and then splitting section B down the middle (from east to west with a portable net) to allow dog usage on one side while other side to be given maintenance time.

Staff: Given the nature of complaints from residents living in homes where the field is viewable, having a temporary net or fence down the middle of the field may not be desirable. Staff has traditionally closed both sides of the field during rainy periods. Staff closes Section A and Section B from the end of November to the end of January each year for maintenance and to “rest the grass.”

11. Place gravel or decompressed granite at gate entrances at Memorial Park to curb wear.

Staff: Staff has no objections to installing gravel or DG. More investigation of maintenance and the best material to use is needed.

12. Place a “covered flier holder” rather than just a bulletin board to be erected at Memorial Park to use for information purposes.

Staff: Staff will install a covered flier holder.

13. Revisit creating a YAHOO DOG OWNERS E-TREE to help inform and keep the public current on issues concerning Sections A and B at Memorial Park.

Staff: Staff supports a YAHOO group that can be emailed updates and information. Staff would like someone from the public to organize the group and keep the emails current and to add anyone interested in being part of the email group.