

# Parks Commission

## Regular Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, November 12, 2013  
6:00 p.m., Council Chambers



City of South Haven

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes – October 8, 2013
5. Public Comments and Inquiries Concerning Items not on the Agenda
6. Dog Park
7. Adjourn

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Brandy Gildea  
Parks and Recreation Supervisor

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# Parks Commission

## Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 08, 2013  
6:00 p.m., Council Chambers



### 1. Call to Order by Reinert at 6:00 p.m.

### 2. Roll Call

Present: Cobbs, Toneman, White, Reinert  
Absent: Comeau, Fitzgibbon, Moore

### 3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Toneman, second by White to approve the agenda as presented.

All in favor. Motion carried.

### 4. Approval of Minutes – August 13, 2013

Motion by Toneman, second by Cobbs to approve the August 13, 2013 regular meeting agenda as written.

All in favor. Motion carried.

### 5. Public Comments and Inquiries Concerning Items not on the Agenda

None at this time.

### 6. Elkenburg Park – Phase II

Gildea overviewed the progress so far for Phase II of Elkenburg Park and pointed out the list of priorities in the packets which were developed at the last Elkenburg Park Redevelopment meeting.

After questions, Gildea explained that the recommendation to City Council could include items one (1) through four (4), six (6) and seven (7), except on Item 4, reduce the number of trash receptacles from four (4) to two (2).

Toneman asked for reassurance that the playground will be a really nice one.

Gildea noted that the only priority that was suggested but not included was the fencing.

Motion by Cobbs, second by White to recommend the City Council consider the approval of using the remaining funds from the Elkenburg Park grant, in the estimated amount of \$78,665, to fund the following items from the priority list that will total an estimated \$78,340:

# 1 Playground Equipment	\$55,000
# 2 Security Camera System	\$2,600
# 3 Bike Racks	\$500
# 4 Trash Receptacles (quantity of 2, not 4)	\$2,500
# 6 Bleachers	\$13,360
# 7 Sign	\$2,520
# 8 Player Benches	\$1,860

All in favor. Motion carried.

## 7. Pump Track

Gildea introduced Tony McGhee, Business Development Director and Timothy Drews, Engineering Group Director and Vice President from Abonmarche.

McGhee gave an explanation of the concept of a pump track, the way they are constructed and responded to questions regarding maintenance; dealing with run-off on the site; the popularity of pump tracks across the state; fencing and parking.

Drews answered questions regarding the difference between the novice and advanced areas of the track; shade trees, grass and other landscaping and materials used in constructing the track.

Motion by Cobbs, second by White for staff to continue moving forward with the pump track as proposed.

Yeas: Cobbs, White, Reinert

Nays: Toneman

Motion carried.

## 8. Adjourn

Adjourn at 6:17 p.m.

All in favor. Motion carried.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,  
Marsha Ransom  
Recording Secretary



## Agenda Item

### Dog Park

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#### **Background Information:**

The City has been contacted by the South Haven Dog Park Board to see if there is interest in developing a dog park on municipal property in the future. Their lease for the property of the current dog park expires in 2015.

#### **Recommendation:**

Review the information presented in the agenda packet from the South Haven Dog Park Board and come prepared to discuss if it would be beneficial or meet our recreational goals for the City to have a municipal dog park.

#### **Support Information:**

South Haven Dog Park Board Information

# South Haven Dog Park, Inc.

## Summary

Dog parks have become a popular addition for many municipalities in recent years. Many cities have dedicated a portion of their parks to be used as off-leash areas for people and their dogs. While not always without controversy, these areas often become one of the most popular areas within a community's park system. A dog park is truly a multigenerational activity, and can be seen as *enriching the quality of life for all residents, full- and part-time*. Despite what opponents say, dog parks are used many times by citizens and visitors who would not otherwise participate in organized sports. Many out of town visitors to the South Haven community expect to find a dog park here, since they are so popular in larger urban areas.

South Haven Dog Park is currently not part of the city's park system. It is a member's only dog park located on the 8<sup>th</sup> St. on the land between Al-Van Humane Society and Do-It Corporation. It was built and is maintained with member donations of time and money. We operate on a very slim budget. Our current membership dues are \$25 per year.

## What are the benefits of a Dog Park?

- Big Benefits to the Community – Dog parks are truly a multigenerational park activity. Despite what opponents say, dog parks are more for people than for dogs, because they attract the adult users who vote to support parks and who are more vocal in the community. Relatively low construction costs and low maintenance costs also yield the greatest amount of recreation opportunities for the investment, and there is a low (if any) user cost.
- A well-exercised dog is a happier and healthier pet. An exercised pet is more likely to be a better neighbor. Puppies and dogs which get enough exercise by playing in an enclosed dog park are less likely to create a nuisance, bark excessively, destroy property, jump on a passer-by, etc.
- Owning a dog encourages people to exercise. Walking with a dog has been found to stimulate social interaction with other humans and create new friendships.
- Dog parks are more accommodating for physically disabled persons and senior citizens who cannot always walk with their pets.
- Dog parks help eliminate the number of dog complaints from users of other parks (joggers, walkers, picnickers, ball players) when an alternative exercise area exists just for their pets.

## **Background of the South Haven Dog Park**

For many years there has been discussion among the dog lovers in the South Haven community about having a dog park, with the greatest obstacle being the acquisition of land. After meetings and discussion 4 years ago with Mark McClendon and other members of the SHARP (South Haven Regional Park) committee, it was agreed that a portion of that park could be set aside for use as a dog park. The SHARP project looks like it will be a very long process until it will come to full realization. In the short run, it was proposed that we build a park as a “proof of concept” to determine the level of commitment and involvement for a dog park. Mark McClendon has generously leased his land, located next to Al-Van for this use. Our current lease expires in 2015.

The following are some of the people in the community who donated their time, talent and money to this project:

Glenn Sperry (SHDP director) volunteered his legal expertise to create bylaws for SHDP and get 501c3 status.

Gary Gross (SHDP director) designed the dog park fencing, ordered the materials and organized the volunteer work crew.

Mark McClendon donated \$5,000 for the fence perimeter.

Other members and directors of SHDP donated money for the interior fencing, Chamber of Commerce membership, printing and mailing costs and insurance.

### **SHDP Board of Directors**

Joan Hiddema- President, Gary Gross- Vice President, Laura Bos- Secretary/Treasurer

J.Glenn Sperry- Director, Sue Frederick- Director, Gary Stringham- Director, Caitlyn Perry Dial- Director

In March of 2012, we started building the park and it was completed in April 2012. Many volunteers who donated their time and in some instances building materials:

Al Ruppert and Hawkshead crew, Mike Bos of Bos Concrete, Tom Thaler and his construction crew. Debest Inc., Ed Appleyard and 30 more community volunteers!

SHDP is a member of the Chamber of Commerce. We sent out an initial membership mailing to all registered dog owners in the 49090 zip code area. We have about 100 members at this time. We have regular board meetings as well as 2 general membership meetings this past year. We have a Face Book page, an email distribution list and web site [www.southhavendogpark.com](http://www.southhavendogpark.com)

Our Statement of Purpose:

**“A Safe Place for People and their Dogs to Play”**

*To establish a fenced in, off-leash dog park where well-behaved canine citizens can exercise in a clean, safe environment without endangering or annoying people, property or wildlife. To develop a beautiful, well-maintained space open to all dog lovers and friends who are willing to uphold the park's rules and restrictions. To view this park as a community project, in partnership with the City of South Haven and South Haven Area Recreational Park (SHARP), designed to satisfy the needs of dog-owners and non-dog owners alike.*

**What are we asking from the Parks Commission.**

That you would consider the dog park as a capital project for the city.

We have the volunteers, community support, non-profit structure to run and maintain a dog park, but we don't have land. We need a permanent home! It would be wonderful if the dog park was part of South Haven's park system. Most dog parks are city owned parks. This is would make it more accessible to all dog owners in the city and our out of town visitors. It would also allow us to apply for grants and enter contests for dog park equipment.

**Wish List (in order of priority)**

3 acres of land with perimeter fencing, divided into 2 large dog areas and 1 small dog area.

Parking area

Water

Lighting

*Thank you for your consideration!*