



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF MARKHAM

EXCERPT CONTAINING ITEM #0024 OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF MEETING NO. 2 (Jan 09, 2006)

24. DOG OFF-LEASH REPORT (3.0, 3.3, 2.8)

Report

There was considerable discussion surrounding the operation of the proposed Dog Leash Free Committee, and the involvement, if any, of Council in the process. There was concern that notice should not be limited to those households within 120m (400') of the park boundary. There was also concern as to how votes would be tabulated, and who would do the tabulation. There was a suggestion that 70% approval would be nearly impossible to attain. The Committee suggested that as well as written notice, signage indicating a park is under consideration for a leash free area might be installed on park grounds.

Moved by Councillor S. Daurio

Seconded by Councillor J. Webster

That the following recommendation regarding the dog off-leash areas and the following tabled motions to amend be deferred to a future meeting of General Committee, at which time City of Mississauga Councillor P. Saito, the Chair of Leash Free Mississauga, and Members of the Community Issues Committee be invited to attend and provide further information:

"That the staff report dated January 9, 2006, entitled 'Dog Off-Leash Report', be received;

And that Council approve the "Town of Markham Parks Department Guidelines for Permanent Dog Off-Leash Areas" attached as Appendix "A" which were endorsed by the Community Issues Committee on August 15, 2005;

And that Council approve a Volunteer Dog Off-Leash Program permitting volunteer associations to install, operate and maintain Dog Off-Leash Areas on Town owned lands subject to the conditions and criteria outlined in the "Town of Markham Parks Department Guidelines for Permanent Dog Off-Leash Areas" (Appendix "A");

And that the Clerks Department be authorized to advertise for volunteers to form an umbrella group referred to as the Leash Free Markham Committee, who shall organize and represent all local Dog Off-Leash Groups.

And that upon formation of the Leash Free Markham Committee, the Leash Free Markham Committee will review all requests for new Dog Off-Leash Areas on Town owned land;

And that proposed Dog Off-Leash Areas shall be brought forward by the Leash Free Markham Committee for review and consideration by Town Staff once all of the criteria set out in Appendix

“A” has been met;

And that for each Dog Off-Leash Area that is approved the Leash Free Markham Committee and the applicable Dog Off Leash Group be required to enter into the appropriate agreement(s) with the Town to the satisfaction of the Town Solicitor and that the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute such agreements on behalf of the Town;

And that Dog Off -Leash Areas in new parks be considered as they are brought forward through the Development Services Commission’s public consultation process for new parks subject to the same guidelines and approval process as other Town lands through the Leash Free Markham Committee process;

And that the ORC/HYDRO Corridor Lands located at Highway 48 and 14th Avenue not be considered as a possible location for a Dog Off-Leash Area at this time;

And that no further consideration be given to leasing land for a major Dog Off-Leash Area outside the urban area at this time;

And that Town of Markham By-law 167-92, being a By-law for the General Maintenance and Regulation of Parks within the Town, be amended to allow dogs to be off-leash in approved off-leash areas in Town parks;

And that the Leash Free Markham Committee be responsible for all costs related to the implementation of all Off-Leash Areas including fencing, parking, water, washrooms, furniture and any other amenities proposed and funded by the Committee or groups and approved by the Town.

And further that a capital account be established in the amount of \$39,000 with funding provided from the surplus in the 2002 Parks Department Capital Project – Sportsfield Maintenance & Reconstruction (account #059-5350-4800-005) for the upfront funding required for Dog Off-Leash Areas to be repaid by the Leash Free Markham Committee over a maximum of a 5 year period and the need for additional funding be reviewed annually as part of the budget process.”

Motions to Amend:

(a) That the composition and terms of reference for the Dog Leash Free Committee be brought to Council for approval;

(b) That the notice area be expanded to 1000’ from the park to be considered for an off-leash area;

And that staff also consider erecting a temporary sign at the park indicating that the park is being considered for an off-leash area.

(c) That the Leash Free Committee be responsible for distributing the surveys and tabulating the results.”

CARRIED