

HIDDEN VALLEY OFF-LEASH MANAGEMENT PLAN  
STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

Thursday April 23, 2015

**Participants:** *Colleen Wallace-Barnum, Karen Vigil, Shyanne Schull, Kevin Joel, Kyme Kelley, Susie Kapahee, Judy Luce, Malaika Heinbaugh and Meg Miller.*

**Project Goal:**

Create an off-leash management plan for Hidden Valley Regional Park.

This meeting was held at the park with a hike around the park to look at the different areas that might work as an off leash area.

On the hike, we discussed the use of volunteers to assist with making sure folks are following the rules. Meg was very concerned with putting people in that position due to the conflict and the general negative reaction people have to "being told what to do". Colleen suggested that making contact with the COLA group in Seattle may be a good idea. As it is written in the contract between the City of Seattle and the citizens for Off Leash Area, volunteers are advocates of off-leash areas, help advocate for the desired use being off-leash, and the need for all to follow the basic rules for everyone's safety.

As we were hiking in the east portions of the park where the trails are steep and narrow, Suzie stated that she would not use that area due to the difficulty of terrain. Many of the park users from the area that are interested in off leash are not hikers they are casual walkers and the east portion of the park is very steep with uneven footing.

When we walked to the inner loop area, there was good discussion about fencing. Many did not see the need for it, but Kym brought up the private property boundary to the west and neighbor fencing. Washoe County would not want dogs in an off-leash area to have direct access to a private citizen's backyard. We discussed the need for fencing where it does not exist, along the western boundary. The type of fencing was also discussed. We agreed that many residences along the park perimeter may not want a fence blocking their view especially since weeds and debris would blow against the fence and it could be an eye sore, while adding more maintenance responsibilities for park staff.

We finished the hike and sat at the Vista Pavilion to discuss how we wanted to move forward on our own plan and what our plan should address.

Colleen asked the group about the plans from other areas that were to be reviewed by all members of the stakeholder group.

Suzie said she liked the Portland plan that allowed for different times each day for different groups, therefore accommodating all. She thought it was important to address whether it was fenced or not as well. Kevin Joell warned the group that we should not fall into the "please them all" complex and the

approach of different areas may be better. Specific days/times may be a challenge to manage and understand. He felt the goal was to have less regulation and management and to keep it simple. Kevin did mention that the Tahoe Rim Trail folks have 84% voluntary compliance on the mountain bike use of TRT at Tahoe Meadows.

It was stated that we should not have a fee for use – most felt that was inappropriate.

We had a brief discussion about which areas based on the maps #1 through #4 would be best and the East of fence area was mentioned as a good location for off-leash. I reminded the group of the terrain and the comments from survey monkey in regards to flat terrain from many of the regular dog walkers in the Hidden Valley community. Kym suggested we add some of the north area to include the flat perimeter loop trail and provide a different type of fencing that would work where the trail is adjacent to the road. The inner loop was mentioned as a good off-leash area, or maybe a combination of the two areas.

We confirmed the different sub-sections of the management plan that we should work on for our next meeting. They are as follows:

1. Design (features, signage, fencing, etc.)
2. Enforcement/Regulation
3. Community volunteer group

We also agreed to work on identifying an area or a few areas that we felt would work well based on the field trip and user experience.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday May 28<sup>th</sup> 10am to 12pm. The meeting will be held at Washoe County Regional Animal Services on Longley Lane in the classroom. Physical address is 2825-A Longley Lane.