



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
CONFERENCE MEETING

#24-0523

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Susan Grant, Acting City Manager

DATE: June 18, 2024

TITLE: Discussion on Amending the Parks and Recreation Rules and Regulations
- **(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

At the Commission meeting of May 7, 2024, staff recommended the City Commission adopt a resolution to amend the Parks and Recreation Rules and Regulations, as recommended by the Parks, Recreation and Beaches Board (PRBB). After discussion by the City Commission, it was requested that this item be brought back to the conference agenda for further review.

On February 28, 2024, the Parks, Recreation and Beaches Board approved certain proposed amendments to the Parks and Recreation Rules and Regulations, which are listed below, as well as incorporated in and attached to this Agenda Memo as "Exhibit 2".

- Dogs are permitted in parks on a maximum six-foot leash or less under the control of a responsible adult. However, it is strictly prohibited to bring dogs or any other pets on or into any athletic fields, courts, playgrounds or water splash pads, swimming areas, beach, or any body of water unless permitted by law or permitted under this section.
- Dog owners are responsible for cleaning up and disposing of any waste created by their dogs. All dogs must have current vaccinations and a license. Owner or Handler must be responsible for their pet. Aggressive dogs may be removed at the City's discretion. Dogs shall not create a nuisance by causing any form of disturbance such as excessive barking or any similar conduct.
- Dog Beach: Maximum of three dogs per owner or handler.

These recommendations garnered mixed reactions from the community. In February, a petition supporting this amendment was submitted to the PRBAB, signed by 161 neighbors, indicating interest in more inclusive pet regulations. However, at a subsequent meeting held with District Four constituents, opinions varied, some neighbors advocated for extending access to dogs across the entire park system, while others recommended restricting dog access to a limited number of parks within each district to better manage

the impact and maintain the parks' usability for all neighbors. In addition, there were concerns raised with the oversight of existing dog parks that include the safety of dogs and park visitors.

Some suggested resolutions to allow dogs in city parks are:

- Allowing dogs in certain parks determined by neighborhood associations
- Building designated dog areas in certain parks

Our most recent dog run, in Riverside Park, cost approximately \$45,000. With current prices today, this same project is estimated to cost \$65,000 for a $\frac{3}{4}$ acre area. Costs to construct future off-leash areas will vary depending on size, amenities and existing infrastructure. There will also be additional costs for ongoing maintenance.

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item. Any future fiscal impact will be brought back to Commission for approval.

Strategic Connections

This item is a *2024 Top Commission Priority*, advancing the Public Places initiative.

This item supports the *Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2029* Strategic Plan, specifically advancing:

- The Public Places Focus Area, Goal 3: Build a beautiful and welcoming community

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035* Vision Plan: We Are Here

This item supports the *Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040* Comprehensive Plan specifically advancing:

- The Public Places Focus Area
- The Parks, Recreation & Open Spaces Element
- Goal 6: Be a community with high quality parks and recreational facilities that highlight the character of our City.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – Current Parks and Recreation Rules and Regulations

Exhibit 2 – Proposed amendments to the Parks and Recreation Rules and Regulations

Exhibit 3 – Parks, Recreation and Beaches Board Minutes – February 28, 2024

Exhibit 4 – Dog Park Informative Flyer

Prepared by: Carolyn Bean, Asst. to the Director, Parks and Recreation Department

Department Director: Carl Williams, Parks and Recreation