



Darren Dunkle, Director of Parks, Recreation & Forestry

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TO: Parks Commission
DATE: January 17, 2020
SUBJECT: Dog Park Surfacing

As part of the overall Audit Analysis of the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department over the past ten months, I have evaluated and analyzed the state of the parks system and the maintenance, repairs, development and equipment needs. In doing so, it has come to my attention that the surfacing at the Dog Park has become both a user and maintenance issue.

Due to the number of dogs and humans who utilize the dog park, the turf grass surfacing has been beaten down to dirt and has required staff to provide straw to place over the dirt so that it isn't a mudding mess. It has been past practice to overseed the dog park surface areas twice a year (spring/fall) in an attempt to establish a good turf grass surface. Through staff's analysis we have found that this method is both time and cost extensive and doesn't provide the end results desired. As such, staff has explored various surfacing options that may provide us with the desired end results.

Staff has research various options including sand, pea gravel, screened rock, decomposed granite/granite sand/marble dust and wood chips. As part of our analysis we looked at cost, maintenance, durability, frequency of replacement, and pet/human friendliness. Although these surfaces are currently being used across the country at various dog parks, there are pros and cons to each. However, it is staff's opinion that the best solution would be to use wood chips. The City of Wildwood has been using wood chips at their dog park for about four years, and it has proven to be a great surface as it doesn't only provide for a good overall ground cover, it: 1) Eliminates the mud issue, thus eliminating the need for straw; 2) Eliminates the need to aerate, seed and fertilize; 3) Eliminates the need to water; 4) For us, is a material that the City already has and produces from other areas of our operations, and 5) Is virtually cost free.

Given the factors outlined above, staff would like to obtain the Park Commission's support to move forward with the placement of wood chips at the dog park this winter as time and weather allows.

Attachments



