

Dog

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dog park is used by non-club members and even non-cardholders.

"Why should we pay for the brooms and fly control if the park is open to all?" she asked at the Jan. 8 member/director exchange meeting.

Mark Schwartz, club vice president, said the club was made responsible to pickup dog waste when owners do not. He added club members understood it was a task that must be done.

"If it is not picked up it is a health and safety con-

cern," he said.

The board offered no commitment to aide in the cost of brooms and fly control during the Jan. 8 meeting. But Larry Klein, a former board member and active in some clubs, said all clubs are responsible for their own expenses.

"Those lines are clear on responsibilities," he said.

Ms. Paradis argued that the dog park is RCSC properties, not owned by the club, therefore all maintenance should be the RCSC's responsibilities.

Rusty Bradshaw can be reached at 623-445-2725 or rbradshaw@newszap.com.

CLUB

Dog club wants help with expenses

Seeks RCSC support

By Rusty Bradshaw
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Duffeeland Dog Park Club leaders believe Recreation Centers of Sun City officials should help the group with the cost of minor maintenance at the dog park on the southwest corner of Del Webb and Thunderbird North boulevards.

RCSC owns the property after purchasing it from a private owner sev-

eral years ago. Part of the agreement was that a club be formed to be responsible for helping keep the park clean. While RCSC crews do major maintenance and repair in the park, the dog club is responsible for sweeping up dog waste and putting up fly repellents at or near the trash containers.

Dottie Paradis, club president, said the club is open only to RCSC cardholders and guests, but the

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Duffeeland

8/24/16

Duffeeland gets new shade canopies installed

The Duffeeland Dog Park now has two shade canopies for dogs and their owners. The canopies were finally installed in late-July following a number of delays due to permits from the Maricopa County Planning and Development Department. The shade structures are the latest in a series of improvements at the park following its

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News

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purchase by Recreation Centers of Sun City three years ago.

The project contractor was USA Shade and the cost was \$18,496.

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V F SC Dog Park

Sun City dog park gets new features

There are new features in Sun City's dog park.

Recreation Centers of Sun City officials installed two new shade canopies and a water fountain at Duffeland Dog Park, on the southwest corner of Del Webb Boulevard and Thunderbird Boulevard North.

The contractor was USA Shade and the cost was \$18,496.

VF SC Dog Park

VF SC Dog Park Independent West February 17, 2016

Barking for more space

Residents want 2nd dog park in community

By Rusty Bradshaw
 Independent Newspapers

Some Sun City pet owners want to see a second dog park in the community. Because of heavy use of Duffeeland Dog Park, on the southwest corner of Del Webb Boulevard and Thunderbird Boulevard North, park users and Duffeeland club members asked the Recreation Centers of Sun City Board of Directors to

What do you think?

Do you have an opinion on this issue? Share your comments.

Email: rbradshaw@newszap.com

revisit plans for a second dog park. "That would provide more service for pet owners," said Tracy Bussibarger, a member of the Duffeeland Dog Park Club, during the board's Feb. 8 member/director exchange meeting. "You had talked about

it, but nothing has been done so far." Joelynn Higgins, RCSC communication and marketing coordinator, stated in a Sun City Independent, April 17, 2013, article about Duffeeland Dog Park that RCSC officials planned to build an off-leash dog park in the southwest area of the Sun Bowl Property, 10220 N. 107th Ave. But no firm plans or dates were provided at that time. A second dog park has also not been included in the RCSC long range budget. The board did authorize a shade structure and artificial turf for the Best

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Park

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Friends Dog Club training facility at Fairway Recreation Center, 10600 W. Peoria Ave. The project cost \$80,909, with the dog club providing \$5,000 of the cost.

A second dog park in phase one, south of Grand Avenue, would be convenient for some residents.

"I live south of Grand, and going all the way up to Duffeeland would be too much," said resident Dottie Paradis.

In addition, Duffeeland is not segregated, with an area for larger dogs and one for small dogs.

Not a dog park in the traditional sense, the Best Friends Dog Club facility is for obedience and other training, and open only to club members. While overseen by a club, Duffeeland is not restricted to just club members.

RCSC officials did not push forward right away with plans for a second dog park.

"The Board has heard their request and will discuss it," Ms. Higgins said. "No decisions will be made at this time. It is not in the current long range plan."

Not all residents would be thrilled with a second dog park in Sun City.

"We already have a dog park in phase two and if we put one in phase one then people will want one in phase three," said Barbara Knuskus. "There has to be a stop to it."

RCSC officials purchased Duffeeland Dog Park from resident Bob Knight in the fall of 2012, and began operation of the park in January 2013. At that time, RCSC installed a water supply line and timer to irrigate existing trees and plants, and added new waste receptacles. Weeds were also removed and trees were trimmed.

In November 2013, some residents asked RCSC leadership to cease using monitors at Duffeeland, calling it a waste of money. While Jim Wellman, RCSC assistant general manager, defended the use of monitors, the RCSC board suggested an alternative — forming a club for Duffeeland that would be responsible for monitoring, like other RCSC sanctioned clubs. Shortly thereafter, the Duffeeland Dog Park Club was formed to fill that role.

To address continued concerns from residents living adjacent to Duffeeland Dog Park, RCSC officials began in June 2015 some extensive renovations at the park. The changes included thinning out some of the trees, erecting a block half wall with iron fencing topping it on the northern and eastern ends of the park, shaving down some of the mounds, landscaping and enhancements to the irrigation system.

Neighbors had complained of the noise and animal waste smell from the park, and park users standing on the mounds looking into their backyards.

To comment on this story, visit suncityindependent.com.

Duffeeland begins to look like whole new dog park

STAFF REPORT

In about three weeks, Duffeeland Dog Park has undergone changes that are giving the facility a new look — and construction crews are less than halfway to finishing the \$136,000 project.

Since crews began work last month, wire- and chain-link fences along Del Webb and Thunderbird boulevards, respectively, have come down; replaced with 4-foot-high split-faced cinderblock walls that eventually will be topped with another 2 feet of wrought-iron fence.

Posts have been installed for two new sets of double gates along the Thunderbird Boulevard side.

But perhaps the most visible change has been the removal of about a half dozen large trees and the flattening of a series of mounds and small hills toward the southern end of the property.

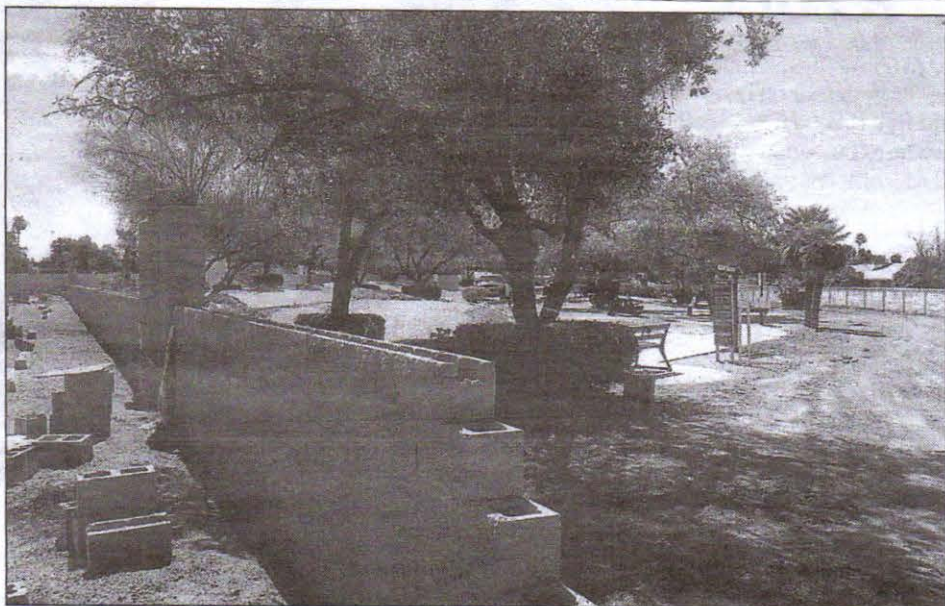
The re-contoured ground was prompted by complaints from residents living next door who said dog owners standing atop the elevated areas were able to see into their backyards.

Dog park users will not lose their shade in the long term.

A handful of new trees — pine and elms — are being planted.

The project also will include a new irrigation system for the remaining trees, according to Recreation Centers of Sun City Assistant General Manager Jim Wellman.

A layer of fresh crushed



Work crews have leveled off most elevated portions of Duffeeland Dog Park and installed a cinderblock wall along the facility's northern edge. [Jeff Grant/Daily News-Sun]



A large swath of Duffeeland Dog Park is now flat after a series of mounds and elevated contoured areas were removed to increase privacy for the park's neighbors. [Jeff Grant/Daily News-Sun]

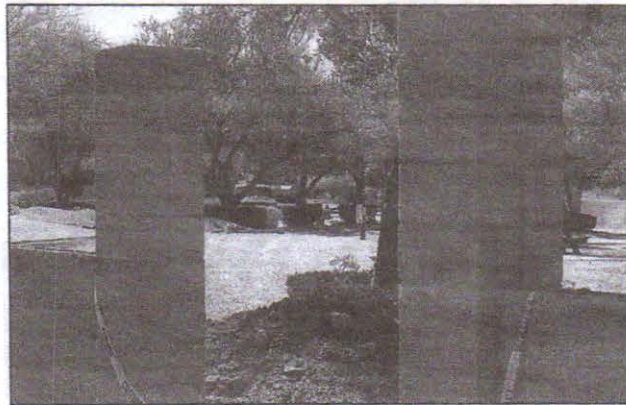
granite will be applied to the parking-lot surface as well as areas inside the park.

Four outside contractors — Wadsworth Construc-

tion, Double R Masonry, B&C Tree and Sav-on-Fence — are handling the project, Wellman noted. The exact cost of the work is \$136,213.

The park has remained closed during the project, which is expected to be completed before the end of summer.

VF SC Dog Park Daily News Sun July 10, 2013



One of two new double-gated entrance and exits is under construction as part of a \$136,000 renovation of Duffeland Dog Park by the Recreation Centers of Sun City. [Jeff Grant/Daily News-Sun]

Block wall remains issue for Sun City dog park club

By Tina Gamez
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The prospect of a wall being constructed at Duffeeland Dog Park has the potential to divide a new club and the Recreation Centers of Sun City governing board.

"The issue of the wall is the number one issue of concern at Duffeeland Dog Park," said Einar Kvaran, vice president of the Duffeeland Dog Park Club. "Nobody wants the wall."

If built, the wall would replace a fence at the dog park.

During the Board/Member Exchange meeting Monday at Lakeview Center, Kvaran said club members would like an opportunity to have input over staff's proposed changes for the dog park.

RCSC Assistant General Manager Jim Wellman said the club members are "getting overly concerned about that wall, and you really don't even know what it looks like, or how it's going to operate or what the intentions truly are."

He added that it's important that staff and the board discuss the wall, then come to Duffeeland Dog Park Club members and explain the reasons for the changes.

The club members' concern, said Kvaran, is the recreation centers would come to the club and say "this is a done



Jeanne Leben pets her daughter's dog, Maggie Mae, at Duffeeland Dog Park Monday. She said she hasn't seen dogs bark at passers-by. (Tina Gamez/Daily News-Sun)

deal."

Board vice president Ron Jesse said the board was going into a work study session following the exchange meeting, and Duffeeland was on the agenda.

Dog Park Club Secretary Tracy Bussabarger asked Jesse if the club members would have input, and he said they would.

Saying nothing has been finalized, Wellman said after the meeting that the fence on the east end of the

dog park that runs along Del Webb Boulevard could be a solid block wall 6- to 7-foot tall for security reasons. Maricopa County "requires a certain amount of opening with a certain amount of closure in the walls, and I believe because of that ruling it has to be pretty much solid, that's why we're looking at that right now," Wellman said.

As for the wall on the north end of the park, Wellman said they're proposing a partial

block wall with steel above it.

With her dogs at Duffeeland Dog Park near the fence along Del Webb Boulevard, Jeanne Leben said she's never seen dogs bark at passers-by. There is one little dog that runs the fence when he sees a golf car, but "he doesn't bark," she said.

She said she and her daughter are at the park every morning, and Leben said she has never seen anybody startled by dogs.

VF SC Dog Park Daily News Sun January 13, 2015

DUFFEELAND



The current Duffeeland Dog Park fence that runs along Del Webb Boulevard could be replaced with a block wall when changes are made to the dog park. [Tina Gamez/Daily News-Sun]

WORK IN PROGRESS



From left, The Duffeeland Dog Park Club's first leadership team includes, from left, secretary Tracy Bussabarger, vice president Einar Kvaran and president Dorothy Paradis. [Jeff Grant/Daily News-Sun]

Dog park club forms to oversee Duffeeland in Sun City

By Jeff Grant and Tina Gamez
DAILY NEWS-SUN

After months of controversy and debate with threats of closure over dog park issues, the Recreation Centers of Sun City Governing Board said that in order to spend money on Duffeeland Dog Park improvements, a chartered club

would need to be formed.

So, on Wednesday at Lakeview Center, approximately 75 residents came together to elect officers for the newly chartered Duffeeland Dog Park Club.

New club President Dorothy Paradis said there was lively discussion by members.

"This is a work in progress,"

she said.

Members voiced their opposition to proposals by the Recreation Centers of Sun City to replace a wire-mesh type fence with a 6-foot-high cinderblock wall along the park's eastern edge off Del Webb Boulevard, and replace a 4-foot-high chain-link fence with a 4-foot-high cinderblock wall

and move the barrier 10 feet into the parking lot along the park's northern edge next to Thunderbird Boulevard.

"What a waste of money," said club member Nick Ab-lamis. "A lot of people don't know how to back up, and having less parking space is just going to cause problems,

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VF SC Dog Park Daily News Sun

January 16-12, 2015

Charter

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maybe accidents.”

And, the fence along Del Webb is attractive and draws people to the park, said Carol Hemmes. “You’re taking a beautiful fence away. People driving by can see the dog park,” she said.

Paradis said prior to the election, newly elected board members had discussed that they are not “100 percent in favor of all of the changes” the Rec Centers would like to make on the park.

The Rec Centers is looking for improvements that would add up to \$75,000 so the funds can be included in the budget, but Paradis said the proposed changes are not “set in stone. At least, that is what they led us to believe. Those changes can be modified and is somewhat open for discussion.”

She said she believes the RCSC board will listen to some recommendations from the club.

One of the concerns from

previous board and residents’ discussions was that of dog park monitoring.

“To the best of our ability, club members are going to monitor the park when they’re there,” said Paradis.

The establishment of the club is to “be able to help interface with the Recreation Centers of Sun City” on problems or changes in the park. Paradis added the club is attempting to be “a unified voice for everyone who uses the dog park.”

RCSC officials had told the dog owners they needed to have a mechanism in place for handling complaints from owners. “The Rec Centers doesn’t have time to address these. This way, we’ll be able to handle complaints and act accordingly,” Ablamis said.

The club will “try to have twice-a-month to monthly

meetings to notify members of what’s happening,” said Ablamis; and Paradis noted they plan on varying the days and hours the meetings are held because there are people in the community who still work. Other officers elected include Einar Kvaran as vice president, and Tracy Bussabarger as secretary.

Duffeeland Dog Park is open to all Sun City recreation card holders and their guests, even if they’re not club members.

In existence for 20 years, Duffeeland was formerly owned by Bob Knight and named after his dog. In 2012, the RCSC bought the site from Knight.

Paradis said members of the club plan to attend the RCSC Board/Member Exchange meeting at 9 a.m. Monday in the Lakeview Center Social Hall 3 for dog park discussion.

In December, the Rec Centers Governing Board unanimously voted for the following improvements on Duffeeland Dog Park:

- Bulldozing several elevated areas or berms inside the park to reduce those spots to ground level. Trees that come down with the berms will be replaced with mature trees.

- Building a 6-foot-high block wall along the park’s eastern edge separating it from the sidewalk on southbound Del Webb Boulevard.

- Replacing a 3.5-foot-high chain link fence along the park’s northern edge with a 4-foot-high solid block wall topped by ornamental metal and converting a single-gate entry and exit with a double-gated one. The move would give the northern wall two double-gated access and egress points for users.

VF SC Dog Park

DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sat • Sun • Mon
Feb. 14-16, 2015

WEEKEND EDITION

IMPROVEMENTS

RCSC, dog park club make progress over renovations

By Tina Gamez
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Duffeeland Dog Park improvement discussions between the Recreation Centers of Sun City and Duffeeland Dog Park Club officers have resulted in some compromise over certain details.

Dorothy Paradis, club president, said the rec centers has accepted some changes the club recommended and also received clarification on what they weren't sure about. "With the clarification, we agreed that they were good ideas," she said.

One of the issues of concern was a block wall that would replace the fence along Del Webb Boulevard.



The RCSC has plans to build a wall in place of the fence along Del Webb Boulevard at the Duffeeland Dog Park in Sun City. The dogs on the current fence will be removed and placed on the new fence. [Nick Cote/Daily News-Sun]

Club secretary Tracy Bussabarger said it's not going to be a solid wall. She said it will be a 3-foot block wall with wrought iron. The rec centers will remove the Duffeeland dog ornaments off the current fence and place

them on the new one.

RCSC Assistant General Manager Jim Wellman said the east and north walls will have similar construction using block for the bottom and steel pickets for the top.

"The meeting we had was a lot of give and take. We did agree on a lot of the things, and it should be moving forward," Bussabarger said.

Paradis said that meeting was beneficial. "We feel positive it's a good, open commu-

nication between all of us." Wellman added: "The RCSC looks forward to ongoing efforts with Duffeeland Dog Park Club officers as we strive to improve this dog park for RCSC Cardholder use and enjoyment."

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RCSC approves dog park budget, new club

By Rusty Bradshaw
Independent Newspapers

Duffeeland Dog Park will get a bit of a new look.

The park, on the southwest corner of Del Webb Boulevard and Thunderbird Boulevard North, has grabbed attention in past months due to complaints from residents living adjacent to the park and some users. It was the subject of an Oct. 10 public town hall meeting in which Recreation Centers of Sun City officials requested suggestions from residents and park users to resolve the problems.

Previously private-owned, RCSC bought the park two years ago.

During its Dec. 18 meeting, the RCSC board approved a charter for the Duffeeland Dog Park Club, which will act as a liaison with the RCSC board. RCSC also approved a \$75,000 budget for improvements at the park. The work includes leveling some of the mounds closest to the adjacent residenc-

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UF Sec Dog Park: Independent Dec 31, 2014

Dog

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es, constructing a six-foot block wall on the east border facing Del Webb Boulevard and a 48-inch block wall with double entry on the north facing Thunderbird Boulevard, and adding or replacing decomposed granite. Some trees will also be removed and replaced with mature trees.

Funds for the dog park project will come from prior year excess, according to Jim Wellman, RCSC assistant general manager.

Resident Noel Kasper, one of the non-complaining residents adjacent to the park, urged RCSC officials to exercise due dili-

gence when renovating the dog park. He argue against the block walls.

"People driving by on Del Webb would not be able to see into the park and see what a good amenity it is," he said.

Mr. Kasper also opposed removing the mounds.

"They provide relief for both dogs and owners," he said.

However, Mr. Wellman said not all the mounds would be removed, only those closest to the neighboring residences on the south and west edges of the park. The facility is adjacent on the east and north to a business, Washington Savings Bank.

Mr. Wellman said the final schedule of improvements could be changed some after consulting with members of the new Duffeeland Dog Park Club.



DAILY NEWS-SUN

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CLUBS



Duffeeland Dog Park in Sun City will undergo improvements including replacing outer fencing with a wall and reshaping the landscaping. [Nick Cote/Daily News-Sun]

Sun City dog park gets funds, formal club charter

By Jeff Grant
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Progress appears to be taking place in resolving issues at a popular local dog park that prompted some members of the community's board of directors to raise the possibility

of shutting the facility.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City is making available \$75,000 in unspent capital funding for upgrades to Duffeeland Dog Park, while users of the park have been granted their own charter by

RCSC's board of directors to address operating concerns at the park off Del Webb and Thunderbird boulevards.

"Now we have a consolidated voice," said Dottie Paradis, one of three Duffeeland users who are leading efforts

to form a club.

Granted a charter last week by the RCSC Board of Directors, the new club will hold its first meeting Jan. 7 for the purposes of naming a slate of officers and recruit-

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VF SC Dog Park

"We have between 50 and 100 (prospective members)," said Tracy Bussabarger, who is leading club organizing activities.

One of the key items the club will discuss is use of the capital funds.

The motion approved unanimously by the nine-member board Thursday at Sun-dial Center auditorium calls for the following improvements:

- Bulldozing several elevated areas or berms inside the park to reduce those spots to ground level. Trees that come down with the berms will be replaced with mature trees.

- Building a 6-foot-high solid block wall along the park's eastern edge separating it from the sidewalk on south-bound Del Webb Boulevard.

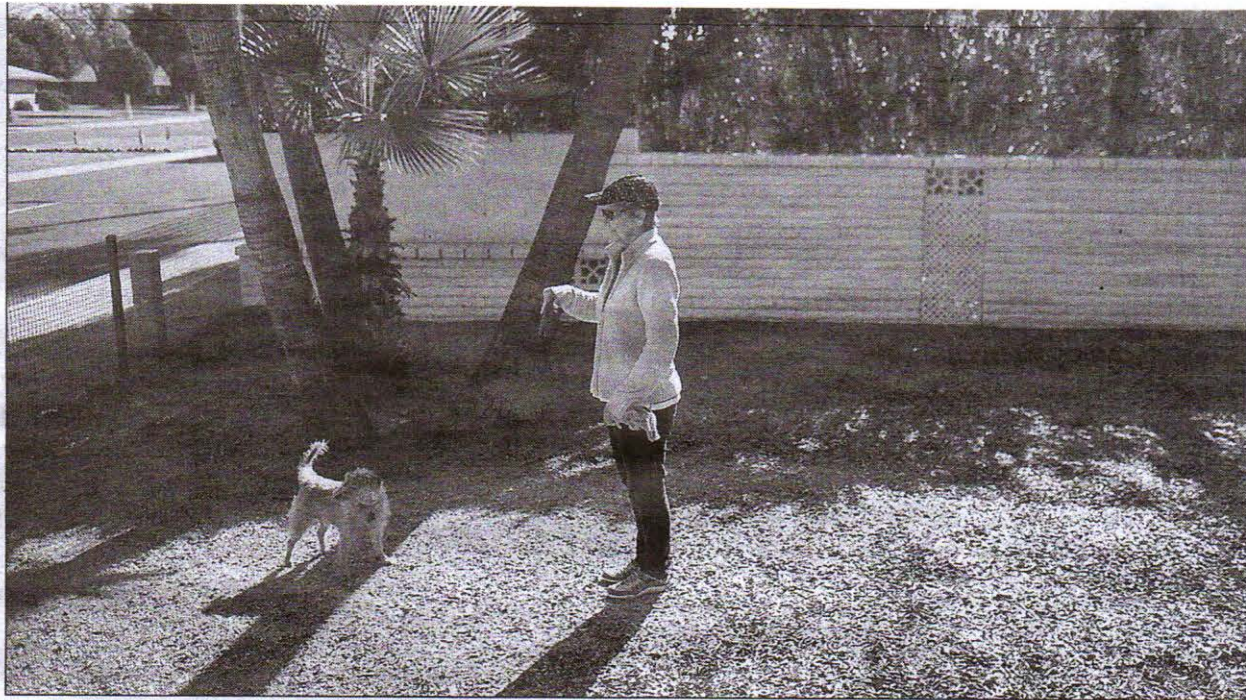
- Replacing a 3.5-foot-high chain link fence along the park's northern edge with a 4-foot-high solid block wall topped by ornamental metal and converting a single-gate entry and exit with a double-gated one. The move would give the northern wall two double-gated access and egress points for users.

- Moving the benches and tables that form the main gathering point for users away from adjacent residences along Camelot Circle and nearer to the Washington State Bank on the southeastern corner of Del Webb and Thunderbird boulevards.

- Extending the northern edge of the park by 10 feet into the adjacent parking lot. The move would eliminate a parallel parking area nearest the sidewalk along Thunderbird Boulevard and reduce the amount of parking spaces to 39 from around 50. Between 10 and 12 vehicles now use that parallel parking area.

- Reapply fresh crushed granite to the current parking lot surface as well as the surface of the dog park.

An item not listed in the motion that is a likely possibility is redirecting the main concrete pathway down the cen-



Susie Steyaert of Sun City walks with her dog, Murphy, at Duffeeland Dog Park in Sun City. The park will undergo improvements, including replacing outer fencing with a wall and reshaping the landscaping. [Nick Cote/Daily News-Sun]

IF YOU GO:

WHAT: First Duffeeland Dog Park Club meeting

WHEN: 10 a.m. Jan. 7

WHERE: Social Hall No. 1, Lakeview Center, 10626 W. Thunderbird Blvd.

DIRECTIONS: Call 623-561-4675

ter of the dog park to make it easier for users to move along it. "Getting around this pathway can be difficult for someone who has trouble walking," said Paradis.

None of the upgrades has been given the final go-ahead, and nothing would be started until the board and club meet to ensure the membership fully understands them and their purpose.

Although Paradis noted the directors have the ultimate decision on improvements, "they'll sit down with us and go over the plans before any work is initiated," she quoted director Bill Pearson as telling club representatives. Pearson, who could not be reached for comment, has been the driving force along with Bussabarger for addressing problems at the park.

Formerly owned by a private citizen and named after that man's dog, Duffeeland has existed for nearly

20 years. In 2012, the RCSC bought the site from Bob Knight for an undisclosed price after Knight contracted an aggressive form of prostate cancer.

Reports of problems surfaced the next year, including complaints by some of the Camelot Circle residents about noise, notably in the morning, and park users standing atop the berms looking into residents' backyards.

Interviews with park users and residents this past weekend indicated the complaints came from a few residents. Several said one in particular has been the loudest voice. No one answered the front door in two separate visits to the house in question.

Meanwhile, another resident, Rolf Berg, said dog noise had been annoying, mainly in the morning before 9 a.m., but that conditions seemed to have improved since a town-hall-style meeting by RCSC officials in October conducted to address resident and park user complaints. It was during that session RCSC board president James Brasher told the audience: "Among the board of directors, there is

some sympathy to eliminate the park so we don't have to deal with all the problems. In the last year, we have had no meeting in which the directors ... haven't spent at least 30 to 45 minutes or more talking about dog park issues."

In addition to neighbor complaints, some users had claimed they were being bul-

lied or verbally abused.

Not everyone is happy, however, with the proposed park changes or some of the current rules.

"We already have fence around the park. We don't need to spend \$75,000 moving the fence out. (Another 10 feet isn't going to do anything for the park. It's a wast-

ing across the street, and they will have to walk across," he added.

Neighbors, including Berg backed the changes. "I can live with it," he said when asked about eliminating the berms and moving the gathering point away from his backyard wall.

While Bussabarger supports the changes, she said RCSC needs to lengthen park hours — now 8 a.m.-5 p.m. until March 1 — gradually widening to 6 a.m.-7 p.m. during late spring through the end of summer.

Laws in Maricopa County and local cities prevent dog owners from letting their canines off a leash outside dog parks. Sun Citians have other options outside the community, including Peoria's Scotland Yard dog park off Union Hills Drive. That facility is lighted.

But Bussabarger said Duffeeland is more than a dog park for many of its users.

"We're a community. This is the only place they have to see or greet people. It's really important for them to come here, so they don't wither away without seeing other people," she said.



Dog owners enjoy a late Monday afternoon letting their canines roam in Duffeeland Dog Park in Sun City. [Jeff Grant/Daily News-Sun]

Park

Continued From Page 2

However, board members are trying to work with the park users to implement some of the suggestions garner during the town hall. He said one suggestion was to form a dog park club to work as a liaison and sounding board for concerns at the park.

"We want to work together to fix these problems," he said.

Mr. Brasher was called for further comment, but he did not respond by press time.

Homeowner Jerry Sylvester, who lives adjacent to the park, has complained about noise, smell and park users standing on mounds looking into his backyard. But Mr. Brasher said other complaints and incidents included park users taking aggressive actions against other users and RCSC staff. He also said there has been use of profanity and a general lack of respect toward RCSC employees.

RCSC officials received a variance from Maricopa County to construct a 10-foot wall to separate the park from the adjacent residences. But board member Bill Pearson said that will not likely happen.

"My push has been to raise the wall," he said. "The first goal was to get the cost then meet with neighbors."

He said cost estimates ranged between \$100,000 and \$200,000. That made the project too costly.

Park users got wind the impetus for the wall was a petition signed by adjacent homeowners. Board member Ron Jesse said the petition did drive the wall research. Resident Noel Kasper, who lives adjacent to the dog park, said he did not sign the petition and knows of two other homeowners there who did not.

"I would like to see it because it predates the wall," he said.

RCSC officials said at the Oct. 10 and Oct. 13 member/directors exchanges when Mr. Kasper broached the subject again that they could not locate the petition.

"It was not a formal petition," said Jan Ek, RCSC general manager. "It was brought to the board at the office."

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FALL SPECIAL

2

community news

RCSC, dog owners working on issues

By Rusty Bradshaw
Independent Newspapers

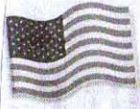
Sun City pet owners were up in arms when it appeared they could lose the community's dog park, purchased by Recreation Centers of Sun City two years ago.

The RCSC board told Duffeeland Park users the facility could be closed and revamped for a different use if issues of harassment, bullying and privacy were not resolved. RCSC officials told users in a letter about a number of complaints and incident reports, including one RCSC employee receiving a death threat. Those issues were detailed again in an Oct. 10 town hall meeting.

"There is sympathy by some board members to eliminate the park and some sympathy by others to make improvements," said Jim Brasher, RCSC board president during the town hall meeting. "Before we invest any more into it, we want to see if it will be a reasonable gathering place."

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VF SC Dog Park



Daily News-Sun

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Wednesday,
Dec. 11, 2013

Vol. 57 No. 124
1 Section 32 Pages

BOARD MEETING

Sun City dog park rule changes become effective next week

STAFF REPORT

The Recreation Centers of Sun City West is moving forward with rule changes for the Duffeeland Dog Park.

Effective Dec. 19, there will no longer be an RCSC facilities attendant at the park, which is located at the southwest corner of Del Webb Boulevard and Thunderbird Road in Sun City.

Users of the park felt the cost of monitoring the facilities was unnecessary and the requirement for checking in with the monitor created a bottle-neck at the en-

trance, which caused several problems as dogs were required to remain leashed in this area, Rec Centers officials said Tuesday.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City also announced late Tuesday afternoon that Dan Schroeder, Mike Kennedy and Peter Lee emerged from a crowded field to win seats on the RCSC Board of Directors.

The current board has been dealing with issues surrounding the dog park for weeks.

In addition to the mon-

itors, concerns were also raised about the number of dogs allowed to be brought to the facility by each owner/handler, and it was determined that a maximum of three dogs would be permissible, officials said.

In order to address how the change to an unmonitored facility will affect neighboring properties, the RCSC Board of Directors also has revised the hours of operation as follows:

• 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. January, February, November and De-

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Voters in the Recreation Centers of Sun City Board of Directors election chose, from left, Dan Schroeder, Mike Kennedy and Peter Lee to serve on the governing body. The winners were announced Tuesday. [Nick Cote/Daily News-Sun]

ordinance requirements, according to the RCSC.

"Users of this RCSC owned and operated facility will now use this park at their own risk and will be expected to oversee adherence of the rules by other users. The park remains available to RCSC cardholders and their invited guests only; not the general public," the RCSC stated in a release.

Park users who observe anyone failing to comply with the Rules and Regulations are asked to complete an RCSC Incident Report, officials said.

in | WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2013 A5

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5 p.m. March

5 p.m. April and

7 p.m. May,
1 August.

will be closed
Friday of each
park mainte-

handlers must
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Dog park users want monitors removed

By Rusty Bradshaw
Independent Newspapers

Duffeeland Dog Park users have requested Recreation Centers of Sun City officials cease using monitors to enforce rules at the facility on the southwest corner of Del Webb Boulevard and Thunderbird Boulevard North.

RCSC officials began using monitors at the park, as they do at other corporation facilities, during the summer as a way to gauge the number of users and to enforce rules that were put in place after the park was purchased from resident Bob Knight. Jim Wellman, RCSC assistant general manager, said a rec card is required at other RCSC facilities before residents and visitors can use RCSC-owned facilities.

"When we saw the numbers (park usage), we were delighted and startled," said Bill Pearson at the Nov. 4 RCSC member/director exchange meeting.

He said there were 5,000 dog visits to the park since monitors began working at the park more than one month ago.

"There were 1,500 in the first 10 days alone," he said.

Monitors check to see if users have a rec card, and turn away those who do not. They are also charged with enforcing the park rules during its open hours, 6:30 a.m.



Residents gather with their dogs in 2012 when RCSC officials announced they would purchase the Duffeeland Dog Park. Since then, park users and homeowners adjacent to the park are at odds over noise, order and monitor issues.

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to sunset.

However, some residents who attended the Nov. 4 meeting said it was a waste of money for RCSC to post monitors at the park. Dave Kansorka estimated RCSC was spending \$8,000 per month for monitors at the park. When questioned where he got that figure, he said he calculated a \$10 per hour wage by 10 hours in a day.

Originally privately owned, RCSC officials purchased the park on Thunderbird Boulevard North, behind the Washington Federal building, in fall 2012.

Park users also believe if monitors are used the sign in table should be inside the park fence, not outside. They claim when the table is outside park visitors get backed up with their dogs on a leash, and with dogs gathered together like that problems will occur.

"Dogs become aggressive when they are on a leash," Mr. Kansorka said.

With the table inside, park users can release their dogs while signing in, therefore eliminating the gathering. However, that presents a problem for monitors, according to Jim Wellman, RCSC assistant general manager.

"If a dog is unleashed and there is some kind of problem, like the owner does not have a rec card," then we have to corral the dog," he explained.

Board member Dave Wieland said monitors' main function is to keep residents of surrounding communities who do not own

property in Sun City from using the facility.

"When we first began operating it, we had people from Youngtown, El Mirage, Surprise, Peoria and Glendale using the park," he said.

Because it is now owned by RCSC, the facility is for rec center cardholders only.

It was also suggested Sun City resident dog park users form an RCSC-sanctioned club. That would require the group to provide their own monitors, like other clubs that use RCSC facilities.

Jerry Sylvester, a homeowner adjacent to the park, requested last month RCSC officials extend and soundproof the block wall between the park and homeowners immediately adjacent to it. The suggestion was made by Mr. Pearson earlier this year during a member/director exchange meeting in which residents complained about noise and other issues related to the park.

Mr. Pearson said multiple things need to be done to improve the park, including constructing a monitor station and possibly adding restrooms. Mr. Wellman said funds will be appropriated in next year's budget for a variety of improvements.

Mr. Pearson agreed with one resident's suggestion of forming a dog park committee with park users as part of the membership.

Board member Cord Angier encouraged dog park users to continue to provide input for the board.

"Our job is to find solutions that work for everyone, not just small groups of people," he said. "So we need to continue to hear from you; and we are listening. There have been a lot of good points made today."