Jay Ingram

From: Luis Salvago-Toledo [lsalvago@comcast.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 01, 2009 9:22 AM
To: Jay Ingram
Subject: RE: Rancho Laguna off-leash hours

Hi Jay,

After discussing the points included in your e-mail with a number of park users, here's the unanimous input, with which I wholeheartedly agree:

Item "Allow dogs off leash only on the paved and grass section of Rancho Laguna Park."

Comment: From law abiders, we'll all (hundreds of us) become law breakers right away. The paved circular path we walk with our dogs has grass on one side and wood chips or dirt on the other. The dogs walk, run, and romp with their kind here and there. The only way to keep them exactly in the designated area would be using a leash. So, good by to "off-leash" hours! Besides, what's the point? Who'll benefit from it? and what are the chances of enforceability? As a matter of fact, we prefer when they poop in the "forbidden zone" because we can do a more thorough picking job. Additionally, in one of such areas, next to the fence, grow a kind of grass that for some reason they enjoy munching. So, there they go, under our watchful eye. Frankly, Jay, in this case, I feel we're aiming at solving a non-problem. I'm sure the infamous Bernie will opine contrariwise, though, from his dog-hating disposition, anything, no matter how abusive or ludicrous, is to be expected.

Item "... take out dusk and sunset, suggesting 4-6pm during standard time and 6-8pm during daylight savings time."

Comment: Definitely a plus, as far as removing "dusk" and "sunset." However, a number of walkers shelter a similar dislike for "standard" and "daylight savings." That's why I suggested 4 pm year round, to capture the simplicity of the morning hours. As far as including a "to" time, in addition to the "from" one, we see it as another unnecessary restriction that benefits nobody and make a number of us transgressors right away. Please keep in mind that the residents on the neighboring area (Sanders Ranch and its surroundings), frequently walk with their dogs in the Park in the evening hours. Although the parking area gate closes, there are two pedestrian gates that remain open. I oftentimes drive in the evening, park outside and have a lovely evening walk. At times, it coincides that the policeman is locking the driving gate. We have a little chat, and afterwards he wishes me a nice walk and leaves. Is that supposed to become unlawful under the new scheme of things?

In closing, I'd like to remind you that the whole complaint we presented before the Council and Parks and Recreation was simply against Animal Control Services for ignoring the local ordinance. We have nothing but praise for the two mentioned local bodies and how things are right now. So, our list of suggested improvements is pretty modest:

1. Use one single off-leash evening hour year-round: after 4 pm.
2. Install a bulleting board at the park to communicate with us: sports training hours, weddings (the park is large, if we know in advance where the event will be held, we'll be in the opposite end), lost and found, etc.
3. Ask coaches to hold their practices away from the parking area. Right now, as soon as the car door is open, the dog gets out and goes straight to the closest spot: where the kids are practicing.
4. Include a clause somewhat like: "inasmuch as possible, dogs should be kept away from the two children play areas. Yes, "inasmuch as possible" because some young mothers bring them both: their children <u>and</u> their dogs, and, of course, they want to watch them both. As for the rest of us, it's no problem at all to be away from those areas (please keep in mind that one of them is next to the parking lot, so the dog may get out of the car and cross the children playground, but it's only passing by).
5. Please, please, please, respect our evening hours. At the end of a hectic day, nothing beats to walk with Lucky at Rancho Laguna under the stars. The few of us who engage in such practice harm no one and live longer.
6. Staple Bernie's mouth and transfer Animal Control Services to Namibia.

Hoping you'll read my input wearing your best-disposition armor.

Luis

From: Jay Ingram [mailto:jingram@moraga.ca.us]
Sent: Tuesday, January 27, 2009 11:32 AM
To: Luis Salvago-Toledo
Subject: RE: Rancho Laguna off-leash hours

Luis,
I have spent some time on the ordinance revision and will spend more time on it very soon. Right now, I'm trying my best to simplify the entire section of the ordinance. What I have done so far is take out dusk and sunset, suggesting 4-6pm during standard time and 6-8pm during daylight savings time. I also plan to allow dogs off leash only on the paved and grass section of Rancho Laguna Park. I need to address park rentals in this ordinance as well. For example, just last week we booked an outdoor wedding at Rancho Laguna in late September. Their wedding would be during dog-off leash hours, but I can't have dogs at the park while a wedding ceremony is happening.

Please keep the suggestions coming. It looks like this will go back to the Parks and Recreation Commission for more discussion and possible action on February 17, 2009. I will definitely keep you posted.

Thanks for your continued input.

Jay Ingram
Parks and Recreation Director
Town of Moraga

From: Luis Salvago-Toledo [mailto:lsalvago@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, January 27, 2009 11:04 AM
To: Jay Ingram
Subject: Rancho Laguna off-leash hours

Hi Jay,

A number of dog walkers, with whom I agree, have expressed to me that, to simplify the issue as much as possible, stating in the signs that the off-leash hours are before 9 AM and after 4 PM (year round, no "dusk," no "sunset," just pure simplicity) would do. If I remember correctly, such wording would agree with your original suggestion. Therefore, congratulations!

Thanks for your time and effort.

Luis