

# City of Mercer Island

## OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST BOARD

Thursday · March 16 · 2017  
Regular Meeting Agenda

6:00 pm Call to Order & Roll Call

6:05 pm Minutes of January 19, 2017 Meeting

6:10pm Public Appearances

6:15 pm Regular Business

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Off-leash dog education updates                    | Paul West (10 min)         |
| 2. Bike Trail resurfacing update                      | Paul West (10 min)         |
| 3. Budget overview presentation                       | Alaine Sommargren (15 min) |
| 4. Discussion: Public education<br>regarding root rot | Alaine Sommargren (15 min) |
| 5. Leap for Green                                     | Chair (10 min)             |
| 6. Quadrant Reports                                   | Trustees (5 min)           |
| 7. Next Meeting: <b>May 18 , 2017</b>                 | Chair (5 min)              |

7:30 pm Adjournment

### BOARD MEMBERS

Geraldine Poor, *Chair*  
Rory Westberg, *Vice Chair*  
Robin Christy, *Secretary*  
David Wisenteiner, *Council Liaison*  
Marie Bender  
Thomas Hildebrandt  
Craig Olson

### STAFF

Paul West, *Parks Operations Superintendent*  
Alaine Sommargren, *Natural Resources Manager*  
Kim Frappier, *Natural Resources Specialist*





# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 19, 2017

## **Call To Order:**

Chair Poor called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

## **Roll Call:**

Chair Poor, Vice Chair Westberg, Secretary Christy, Trustee Bender, Trustee Hildebrandt, Council Liaison Sanderson, and Trustee Olson were present.

## **Staff Present:**

Paul West, Park Operations Superintendent  
Alaine Sommargren, Natural Resources Manager  
Kim Frappier, Natural Resources Specialist

## **Minutes:**

Chair Poor called for a motion to approve the November minutes. Trustees requested minor edits to the minutes, which will be amended by staff. Trustee Bender made the motion, seconded by Vice Chair Westberg.

## **Approve the minutes of the November 17, 2016 meeting.**

## **Motion passed 7-0.**

**Public Appearances:** There were no public appearances.

## **Regular Business:**

### **(I) Off-leash dog education updates – Paul West**

Paul West reported that the permanent dog owner education signs are being installed throughout Pioneer Park and the brochures have been widely distributed. Paul shared that Officer Ormsby gave a ticket to someone in violation of the City's leash ordinance. Officer Ormsby has not given other tickets to date.

Upcoming dog-owner education includes the spring "walk and talk" where community members have the opportunity to learn about dog policies while walking the trails at Pioneer Park with staff. Parks and Recreation is also planning voice control classes this summer with a professional dog trainer. These will be held on the north end of the island as well as at Pioneer Park.

### **Discussion**

Trustees inquired about the outreach and advertising efforts planned for the voice control classes. Outreach will include flyers, social media (e.g. Next Door and Facebook), and an article in the Mercer Island Reporter.

Trustee Bender inquired about installing additional dog waste dispensers. Alaine reported that staff are in the process of installing two new posts for signs and dispensers. Wherever there is a new "Attention Dog Owner" sign, there will be a dispenser adjacent to it.

(II) Draft Annual Report to Council and 2017 Work Plan – Alaine Sommargren

Alaine presented the draft annual report summarizing restoration and trail management for 2016. She also presented the 2017 Work Plan to be presented to the City Council on February 21st. She noted that the Trust needs to add the “Leap for Green” discussion to the work plan.

Discussion

Trustees asked clarifying questions and made suggestions for adding detail to the 2016 Annual Report including information regarding EarthCorps, as the volunteer contractor, and Natural Resources Staff.

Chair Poor provided an overview of the Trust’s involvement in Leap for Green, which will be added to the 2017 Work Plan. Council Liaison Sanderson suggested clarifying language to replace the bullet item for “off-leash update” since the Trust will be assessing 2016 efforts and developing a plan for the coming year. Staff will make updates and provide the work plan to Chair Poor for final approval. Chair Poor will attend the Council meeting to answer questions.

Vote to approve the annual report and work plan: Vice Chair Westberg motioned; Vice-chair Christy seconded.

**Motion approved 7-0.**

(III) Bike trail resurfacing – Paul West

Paul West made a presentation regarding the bike path along Island Crest Way, specifically regarding tree roots that have pushed up, creating bumps and cracks in the asphalt. The report outlined three solutions to the issue:

- (1) Remove the roots and repave.
- (2) Ramp around cracks and repave over the roots.
- (3) Remove asphalt and replace it with crushed gravel.

Trustees discussed the pros and cons to each option and asked questions regarding cost, maintenance timelines, and effects of root disturbance to tree health. Trustees discussed the importance of protecting the trees along this corridor, which Paul reported are currently in good condition. Trustees also discussed the option of using foam boards under the asphalt, which would further protect trees roots.

Paul suggested doing some public outreach to determine who is using the trail. Staff could develop a sign with a QR code to ascertain user types, similar to our dog sign feedback effort.

Trustees were in favor of a solution that protects tree roots, reduces maintenance, and not cost-prohibitive. Trustees were in favor of the asphalt ramp or a combination of foam board and asphalt. Paul will develop a cost estimate for the suggested solutions and present a plan in March for the Trust to review and vote on.

(IV) Remote meeting attendance – Alaine Sommargren

Alaine presented the draft policy for remote attendance provided by the City Clerk. A former trustee suggested adopting a remote attendance policy to address the issue of maintaining a quorum. Trustees discussed the advantages and disadvantages to remote attendance and whether Council or other city commissions have similar policies in place.

The Trustees determined that there is no immediate need for the policy. The Trustees agreed to save the draft policy provided by the City Clerk in the Trust Board files should it need to be revisited in the future.

(V) Leap for Green Fair

Secretary Christy provided background on the event and said it is a great opportunity to introduce

letterboxing to the community. Staff reported that the event is on April 1st from 10 am to 2 pm. Secretary Christy offered to assist with preparation, but will be out of town on April 1st. Trustee Hildebrandt and Trustee Bender will assist the day of the fair.

(VI) Park Tour for New Trustees

Trustees expressed interest in a tour of Trust properties with staff for new board members. Alaine will set up a Doodle Poll to schedule the tour.

(VII) Budget Questions

Trustee Bender asked Parks staff about the budget for Trust properties within Parks and Recreation. Paul West offered to present the budget at a future board meeting. This will be added to the 2017 Work Plan.

(VIII) Video Project

Chair Poor asked the board about their interest in pursuing a video project about Trust properties that would serve a public education piece. Trustees discussed the possibility of reaching out to an Eagle Scout or high school group to develop the video. Council Liaison Sanderson will reach out to a contact at the high school.

(IX) Quadrant Reports – Trustees

SE Quadrant - Trustee Olson and Trustee Hildebrandt

Trustee Hildebrandt raised concern about a downed tree in the SE corner of the quadrant, which he saw there in late December. Staff will follow up and ensure there are no safety concerns.

NW Quadrant - Vice Chair Westberg and Secretary Christy

No report

NE Quadrant – Chair Poor and Trustee Bender

Chair Poor noted that she has observed dog owners adhering to the on-leash policy in the quadrant.

(X) Next Meeting – Chair

The next meeting is scheduled for March 16, 2017

**Adjournment:** 7:10 pm

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Geraldine Poor, Chair

Attest:

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Kim Frappier, Scribe

## Paul West

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**From:** Anne Woodley <a.woodley@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 01, 2017 7:30 AM  
**To:** Paul West  
**Subject:** Signs

A bunch of the dog walkers picked these up in the woods. Please share our work with park board



Sent from my iPhone

## Paul West

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**From:** lisabelden@aol.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 21, 2017 12:13 PM  
**To:** Anna Ormsby; Paul West; Bruce Fletcher; Alaine Sommargren  
**Subject:** Grey haired woman with the crazy young Golden in the NW quadrant today (Tues) walking clockwise by my house around 11 a.m.

Hi Anna:

The crazy young Golden was back in the NW quadrant today (Tues. Feb. 21) at about 11 a.m.

Today the owner was wearing a bright blue coat. She's middle age and has short white hair. She owns two Golden Retrievers. She keeps her old Golden on leash, and lets her crazy young one race around at full speed, hunting on and off the trails and way out of her sight. The younger Golden is out of control. It barks and barks and barks for long periods, treeing squirrels and crashing through the native vegetation hunting. I usually can hear it before I see it. The younger Golden has a flat, sleek coat, dark apricot color.

It is almost always hunting at full speed. The owner lets it race on the Perimeter Trail past my house. She does not keep the dog in sight. It is frequently running at full speed and more than 100 - 300 feet away from the owner, out of sight.

Even with all windows closed, I could hear the dog barking and barking and barking. I've reported this dog to you before. I've checked my past emails about it, and saw that I reported the dog as being in the park Weds-Friday around 11:30 to 12:30. That should be modified to include Tuesday, at around 11 a.m.

The best place to observe this dog may be on the N. Perimeter Trail directly across from house. If you stand on the east side of the blind curve, the owner can not see you before hand. I frequently hear the dog barking and barking up a tree to the west of my house, before I see the dog race on the Perimeter Trail past my house. The owner and her old Golden (always on-leash) are usually behind the off leash one by quite a distance. I can't figure out why she keeps the old Golden on leash. Maybe it's deaf. It's the younger one that should be kept on-leash. It is a menace to other trail users (due to its high speed/weight), and to park wildlife and vegetation.

The owner and the old on-leash Golden cannot keep up with the younger off leash Golden.

I think the owner turns into one of the interior trails heading south from the North Perimeter Trail after she passes east of my house --- the interior trail near the memorial bench. The owner doesn't even wait for her off leash dog before making her turn south onto the interior trail. The off leash dog usually races past the start of the interior trail running further towards ICW. The owner turns in onto the interior trail with her old on-leash Golden, and keeps on walking, without calling her off-leash. She lets it out of sight for a long time. Sometimes, I see her stopping on the interior trail about 80 feet or more south from the N. Perimeter Trail, waiting there for her off-leash Golden to return. I've never heard her call for her off leash dog. I guess she figures it wouldn't do any good. The dog is obviously not under voice control.

She almost always walks in the clockwise direction from 84th, goes on the North Perimeter Trail past my house and from there she usually takes one of the interior trails heading south.

I've written to you about this dog and owner several times. I've never heard her call the dog, so I don't know its name.

Lisa

## Paul West

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**From:** lisabelden@aol.com  
**Sent:** Friday, February 17, 2017 10:24 AM  
**To:** Anna Ormsby; Paul West; Bruce Fletcher; Alaine Sommargren  
**Subject:** Big dog fight in NW quadrant this morning --- large group of off leash dogs

Hi Anna and Paul:

This morning (Friday, Feb. 17), about 8:30 am, there was a group of 3 women walking together in the clockwise direction on the North Perimeter Trail across from my house. They had about 5 off leash dogs with them...mostly large standard poodle mixed breed dogs ...several were almost white in color; and I think one Golden or golden mix. Meanwhile, walking in the opposite direction (counter-clockwise) there was a man with 2 off leash dogs. The 7 or so off leash dogs met at close range coming around the blind curve near my house. There was lots of very loud barking and commotion sounding like a large dog fight. You can image what 7 large deep-chested dogs barking madly at each other sounds like!

I don't think anyone was hurt, but the noise of a large dog fight is up-setting and disruptive and obnoxious so close to my house. It wouldn't last as long if the dogs were on-leash as the owners could separate them faster and get them under control faster.

We could hear the noise well inside of our house with all the windows closed.

In addition to off leash dogs fighting, it is very intimidating for persons walking in the NW quadrant to encounter a large group of off-leash dogs with 3 women walking together and all letting their dogs off leash. Any walker in the opposite direction is faced with the nervous ordeal of getting overrun by an excited pack of off leash dogs, and having to carefully move through the large pack to get by on the trail. Off-leash dogs won't hurt their own owners. That is why the off leash dog folks don't worry about that. It's the person walking or jogging in the opposite direction to the dog pack --- people that are strangers to the pack of dogs --- or their on-leash dogs--- who are placed in harm's way.

I thought there were rules about women not walking together with lots of off leash dogs??? The off leash dogs get bolder, more pack-like and aggressive when their numbers increase.

Anna: could you arrange to come to the NW quadrant some Friday morning at around 8:15 to 9 a.m? You might encounter some regulars and see some problems. Lots happens near the curve in the Perimeter Trail near my house, as people/dogs run into each other there around the blind curve. Also, dogs are frequently out of sight of their owners there, and the dogs seem to be running/trotting fast there ---- still excited and hyped up after getting out of cars --- with owners out of sight around the other side of the curve.

I'm also still seeing people throwing balls on the Perimeter Trail for their off leash dogs to run after .... mostly in the afternoon.

Thanks,

Lisa

**From:** [lisabelden@aol.com](mailto:lisabelden@aol.com)  
**To:** [Anna Ormsby](#); [Paul West](#); [Alaine Sommargren](#); [Bruce Fletcher](#)  
**Subject:** Off leash dogs in NW quadrant Pioneer Park  
**Date:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 6:06:46 PM

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Between 4 and 5 p.m. today, Feb. 9 (Thursday), during my short walk with my husband, there was a man walking 3 dogs off leash in the NW quadrant of Pioneer Park. That constitutes an impermissible "pack" of dogs under the MI Code, and is not allowed. I didn't say anything to him as I'm getting tired of the non-existent "self-policing". The owner is grey haired man, balding on the top, wearing a blue & black jacket (maybe NW Face), driving an older dark Green Subaru Outback Washington license plate 161-GTR. One dog was an older auburn & white Husky; the second a small light colored dog with a tail that curls over its back; and the third was a younger reddish long hair dog with a white stripe on his face running from its forehead to its nose, a white tipped tail, and it may have two or more white feet. It's not a Golden but some other kind a dog. I think the Reddish one took a poop in the woods off the trail, and the man did not pick it up. He put his dogs on leash shortly after that, and he hurried to his car. He parked on 84th near the northernmost entry point. He left Pioneer Park by going north on 84th and turning right (east) onto SE 63rd which leads to the intersection of SE 63rd and Island Crest Way.

There are new dogs showing up in the park, including now a pair of English setters that race around off leash, one of which regularly leaves the Perimeter Trail and runs up to our backyard gate.

There are lots of off leash dogs running very fast on the Perimeter Trail ---- two dogs running together far ahead of their owners ---- on the trail near my house.... as in running full speed around blind corners which is not safe for other trail users.

Owners are continuing to throw tennis balls for dogs to chase. And the dogs are going way off trail to get them. Today, I saw two fresh tennis balls ---- one in a newly planted area off of the Perimeter Trail just after where it turns south near the NE corner of Pioneer Park's NW quadrant. Someone also left a long stream of plastic dog doo bags off of the Perimeter Trail, and didn't bother to pick them up. They are a little bit south of the newly planted area, on the left side of the Perimeter Trail if one is heading south.

Also today, an off-leash black lab and a yellow lab came up to me uninvited. They frequently do that. I have to tell them NO and shoo them away. They are mellow dogs, but are not under voice control. At least they are slow. The owner is a grey-haired woman with shoulder length hair. She's a regular in the park.

Also today, there was a dog named Milo (short hair, may be pit bull mix) who would not leave me alone. It's very friendly, but not under voice control. It's owner is an older grey haired man, who was nice, as was the dog.... but the dog is not under voice control.

There are some small trees hanging over the Perimeter Trail now, due to the recent heavy snow load. They are blocking the Perimeter Trail in its run parallel to ICW, and there are some small trees blocking the Woodpecker Trail (I think that's its name). Park personnel need to clear those out of the way, please. I tried to get them out of the way, but couldn't.

Thanks,

Lisa



**From:** [lisabelden@aol.com](mailto:lisabelden@aol.com)  
**To:** [Paul West](#); [Alaine Sommargren](#); [Anna Ormsby](#)  
**Subject:** Pioneer Park Unleashed continues to post inaccurate information  
**Date:** Monday, February 06, 2017 5:48:46 PM

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Hi Paul & Alaine, Officer Ormsby and council:

The FaceBook group named Pioneer Park Unleashed continues to post inaccurate information that is self-serving and wrong.

Marie Bender recently posted that off-leash dog folks use the NW quadrant the most. That's NOT TRUE.

People walking or jogging or using the park WITHOUT DOGS is the user group that uses the park the most. I should know.... unlike off leash dog owners.... I live on the edge of the park 24/7 and can easily see who is using the Perimeter Trail in the NW quadrant as it passes my house. My husband & I also usually take at least 3 laps around on the Perimeter Trail when we go out, which is usually every day; whereas, most off leash dog folks only go around one lap, and not every day. They are not aware of that most users are NOT off leash dog owners.

There is a persistent problem of off leash dogs going off trail.

I recently encountered a woman with an Old English bulldog off leash. The dog was wandering way off trail in a relatively newly planted area across from the fire station. I told the owner about the rule of discouraging off leash dogs from going off trail. I gave her a city handout about off leash rules. She thanked me for that, and then continued to let her dog wander off trail. When I repeated the rule to her, she said: "my dog will only poop off trail. It won't poop on the trail".

She said she would go (into the undergrowth) to retrieve the poop. She didn't even connect the dots that dogs and people are not supposed to trample on the native plantings.

Something inside of me doubts she would have picked up the poop if I had not been there. Maybe it's all the poop left on the ground that makes me think that.

There is dog poop in many areas near the Perimeter Trail in the NW quadrant. It's piling up and is disgusting. That is one accurate observation reported on Pioneer Park Unleashed's website on Jan. 17.

On another dog issue....

**My husband, who is disabled from a stroke, has started to walk with his cane again on the Perimeter Trail in order to fend off off leash dogs.** I was with him when he hit Holly Levin's younger golden retriever in the ribs to keep her dog from knocking him over. She lets her large dog run up to strangers. She has no control over it. She doesn't even try. We did not "invite" her dog to approach. It came at a run towards us and then pestered us and started to lift up to jump on my husband. Holly's completely oblivious to the problem. In fact, on the same walk where my husband had to beat her dog away from him with his cane, on our second lap on the Perimeter Trail, her Golden came up to him again, and after the dog came Holly, and she greeted him cheerily: "Why are you using your cane ... you were walking so well without it....?"

My husband muttered to me after she left: "To beat your damn dog away".

She doesn't get it.

Please relieve us of this problem.

Thanks,

Lisa