

PRC 11/07/19 #5

Dog Off-Leash Area (DOLA)
Update

Written Communication

Whitney Zeller

From: Sameer Raheja <sraheja@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 6, 2019 11:47 PM
To: Neesha Tambe; Gopal Kumarappan; Helene Davis; Xiangchen Xu; Carol Stanek
Cc: Randy Schwartz; Christine Hanel; Kim Calame; Karen Levy; Deepa Mahendrakar; Whitney Zeller
Subject: DOLA Update agenda item Nov 7, 2019

Dear Parks and Rec Commissioners,

Thanks for putting the DOLA update on the agenda for the commission meeting this week. I want to provide some points prior to the meeting so you know what we are asking and why.

With the end of daylight savings, the open hours of 5-7pm make the dog off leash area in Jollyman park difficult to use for the next three months. Sunset is currently at 5:04pm, and will be as early as 4:50pm in December. If DOLA hours are 5-7 we are in the dark for two hours after sunset. It is difficult to see people, dogs and balls.

We are requesting an adjustment of DOLA hours to be earlier during the winter months. I understand staff raised concerns about park usage at 4pm, potential conflicts with youth sports, and the cost of changing the signs (\$300). There was also a question about whether people know what an hour before or after sunset means.

In our experience there are even fewer users of the park in the winter than in the summer. We have taken pictures for the last five days at ~4pm in the park to show almost no usage at that hour. There are no permitted youth activities taking place in the back part of Jollyman in the winter. And our group is happy to contribute to the cost of changing signage if required.

The posted park rules indicate the park closes an hour after sunset. If the city has that as a regulation, then I think it is implicit that they expect people to know when an hour after sunset happens. Frankly no one in our group wants to be in the park an hour after sunset because it is too dark.

This is a trial, the rules are not set in stone, and we hope the city can be flexible. Allowing us to be out during times that work for dog owners and other park users motivated our original request of an hour before and an hour after sunset. We still believe that ask is reasonable.

I look forward to the discussion at the Commission meeting.

Regards,
Sameer

DOLA Update

- Going well, the mayor stopped by and was pleased
- We have not heard any complaints
- With the end of daylight savings, request to move the time from 5-7 to 4-6pm

Saturday 4:00pm (Daylight Savings Time)



Saturday 6:20pm (Daylight Savings Time)

Dogs!



Sunday 4:00pm (Standard Time)

Volleyball game at edge of field (with dog)



Just past the volleyball game,
and well away from the DOLA



Sunday 6:00pm (Standard Time)



Mid-way through open hours
and almost too dark to see
(this photo taken with a flash)

Monday 4:00pm (Standard Time)



No activity in the field

Monday 4:00pm (Standard Time)



No activity in the play area

Monday 5:45pm (Standard Time)



Too dark to see

Tuesday 4:00pm (Standard Time)



No activity in the field

Wednesday 4:20pm (Standard Time)



No activity in the field

5-7pm does not work in the winter

- It is too dark to see after 6pm
- The earliest sunset will be 4:50pm¹
- The park closes one hour after sunset.

1. (Cupertino, California, USA — Sunrise, Sunset, and Daylength, December 2019.
<<https://www.timeanddate.com/sun/usa/cupertino?month=12&year=2019>>, [as of Nov 5, 2019])

Park closes one hour after sunset

Today (Nov 7) sunset
is 5:04 pm

Park Hours: Daylight to
One Hour After Sunset



Our original request was one hour before and one hour after sunset.

5-7pm does not work in the winter

- It is too dark to see after 6pm
- The park closes one hour after sunset.
- The earliest sunset will be 4:50pm

- In the dark, people, dogs, balls, and dog poop(!) are hard to find
- We are out of compliance with park rules
- There is no other activity in the park near the DOLA at 4pm

Concerns from Staff

1. Clarity of Timing

“Because the exact time for dusk changes almost every single day, we chose not to use an hour before and after dusk as we felt that was too vague. We wanted to give specific hours so that people wanting to use the DOLA would know exactly when they could use the off-leash area.”¹

[Back to top](#)

Park rules allow people in the park 1 hour after sunset - this is not vague

Concerns from Staff

2. Conflicts with youth sports

“We also felt these hours would decrease conflicts with field times permitted to youth sports groups.”¹

There are no sports groups using the field in the winter

Concerns from Staff

3. Confusion and additional expense

“Making changes at this time could create confusion and will result in additional expenses. ... Any proposed program changes may result in new signage, which would be approximately \$300.”¹

There is no one out on the field except our group.

Our group is ready to pick up the \$300 cost to change signage.

Change the time to 4-6pm from Nov - Mar 8, 2020

- We are asking for something close to the timing we originally requested
- The hours of 4-6 from the start of November to early March will make the field usable for four of the ten months of the trial.
- Move the time back to 6-8 on March 9, when daylight savings begins again^{1,2}

1. Sunset on March 8, 2020 is 6:08pm, Sunset on March 9, 2020 is 7:09pm

2. (Sunrise and Sunset Times in Cupertino, March 2020,
<<https://www.timeanddate.com/sun/usa/cupertino?month=3&year=2020>>, [as of Nov 7, 2019])

Or simplify and make the DOLA timing 1 hour before and 1 hour after sunset!