

MEMORANDUM

TO: Cape Elizabeth Town Council
FROM: Ordinance Committee
DATE: June 20, 2019
SUBJECT: Dog Ordinance Amendments

Introduction

At the May 31, 2019 meeting, the Town Council referred to the Ordinance Committee review of Dog Ordinance Amendments. Amendments were prepared by the Conservation Committee to modernize the ordinance and allow more nimble public open space management.

Process

The Ordinance Committee reviewed the amendments at the May 28th and June 17th meetings. Extensive public comment was provided at both meetings.

Highlights

The bulk of the amendments were reviewed without change. The shift to a category and property manager system for management of dogs on town property remains in the amendments.

The Ordinance Committee more fully established a public process for making a category change. The committee also fleshed out the Limited Privileges List concept, using the Short Term Rental enforcement provisions as a model.

The Ordinance Committee imported the existing Fort Williams Park leashed and unleashed areas dog policies into the category framework. The leashed and unleashed areas were not changed.

The proposed ordinance limits dogs to on leash only within the lined areas of athletic fields during the playing season. Off-season, dogs may be off-leash on athletic fields. There was public comment that dogs should not be allowed on athletic fields for the health of children coming into contact with the field. The Ordinance Committee felt that a leashed dog would be more closely monitored and that athletic fields provide a pleasant walking environment off season.

Recommendation

At the June 17, 2019 meeting, the Ordinance Committee recommended to the Town Council the Dog Ordinance Amendments by a vote of 3-0.

The Ordinance Committee recommends that the Town Council discuss the presence of dogs on athletic fields. The Ordinance Committee noted that the Town Fee Schedule needs to be amended to add an impoundment fee.