

From: diana lejins <dianalejins@yahoo.com>
To: "Larry.Herrera@longbeach.gov" <Larry.Herrera@longbeach.gov>
Cc: Diana Lejins <dianalejins@yahoo.com>; Gary DeLong <District3@longbeach.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, August 8, 2012 3:28 PM
Subject: Fw: El Dorado Dog Park Time Line to 7-12-12 Budget Oversight Committee 8-15-12 #6

Dear Chair DeLong and Budget Oversight Committee,

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: diana lejins <dianalejins@yahoo.com>
To: Diana Lejins <dianalejins@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 12, 2012 5:30 PM
Subject: El Dorado Dog Park Time Line to 7-12-12

Attached is a timeline of events regarding the proposed dog park at El Dorado Park. This facility was put forward as a privately-funded project. The budget allotment of \$65,000 by Councilman O'Donnell for this dog park is inappropriate. It also robs his constituents of much-needed CIP money for infrastructure repairs, etc.

Additionally, with so many cuts in the parks and general budget (especially the Nature Center), this squander is unconscionable. Anyone that halfway understands budgeting, knows that the mortgage, food and utility bills must be addressed before the purchase of luxuries.

This frivolous (and future on-going) expenditure must be reconsidered!

*The only way to keep a government honest is for citizens to be vigilant.
dl

Working to make the World a better place,
diana



EL DORADO DOG PARK Timeline 7-12.doc

EL DORADO DOG PARK – TIMELINE

4-22-08 Email from Dennis Eschen (cc Phil Hester, Leslie Hunsaker, Anna Mendiola)

The City does not have funds at this time to make the improvements necessary to create a dog park in the 5th District. The 5th District Dog Park organization would be required to raise the funding for the improvements to the site.

2-17-11 Email from Jane Bechtol to Atherton Corridor Neighborhood Association:

Given the current economic climate and budget short falls, the city has no money to build the park. Therefore, it is up to interested residents to raise the funds. With an initial estimate for the basic requirements (fences, fountains, double gates, etc.) at about \$105,000, this will be a challenge.

Prior to 3-17-11 Email from Leslie Hunsaker to George Capjian (cc Mendiola, Livingstone and others)

Phil identified the dog park location in the northeast corner of Area II.....**but that the community group will raise all the funding for both construction and on-going maintenance.** Dog Park patrons would have to pay the vehicle entry fee/ Purchase a park annual pass to access the dog park.

The Friends understand that they are responsible for all construction and on-going maintenance costs for the park; however, I am concerned about the groups viability over the long haul to not only raise the construction funding, but also raise the funds on an on-going basis to keep the park clean and pay the potential custodial (building) and utility (water, electrical and sewer) charges.

3-17-2011 Minutes of meeting Parks & Recreation Commission:

Recommendation to approve.....the El Dorado Dog Park.....

The total cost of the project, including fundraising and first year maintenance, is estimated at \$150,000, which is not currently available through City sources.....Partners of Parks and **Friends have agreed to work together to obtain park construction funding through donations and sponsorships.**

Approved: George Chapjian, Director

Mr. Livingstone reported that at the last meeting, the friends of the El Dorado Dog Park approached the Department regarding the creation of a fairly large park.....**He noted that the Department does not have the funds to do this and that the dog park group has agreed to step forward and fund this facility and this project.**

Commissioner Saltzgaver expressed his concern that raising money every year to maintain something 10 years after it is built is different than raising money the first time out. He asked about a guarantee that the money will be there in five years, and remarked that we continue to develop these great projects and then don't set aside any money to maintain them.

Mr. Chapjian said that we have been talking about partnerships with the Animal Shelter. They have their own fundraising mechanism and they receive money annual from people who care about dogs and cats. This is an area where they could help and is also a concern of the Department. He said that the Department is in cutback mode and cannot take on more cost.

Mr. Livingstone stated that the Department did check with the City Attorney's office and that it would be possible for the Parks and Recreation Commission to approve the concept, **based on the group ensuring that a certain amount of money is raised before the Department would go forward with any construction, and that the group is amenable to that type of agreement.**

It was moved by Commissioner Satariano and seconded by Commissioner Antonette to recommend to the City Manager, City Council and Planning Commission that a dog park is an appropriate use for up to five acres of the El Dorado Regional Park, **provided sufficient funds are raised within two years to build and offset the maintenance costs.....**

3-31-11 Long Beach Report by Kerrie Aley

LB's Parks & Recreation Commission has voted to recommend to the City Manager, City Council and Planning Commission that a dog park is an appropriate use for up to five acres somewhere to be determined in El Dorado Regional Park, **provided that sufficient funds are raised within two years to build and offset the maintenance costs.**

The bottom line: the Commission's voted action is an agreement in principle to the concept of a dog park in El Dorado Park....but with no specific site chosen and a requirement that supporters raise funds privately to build it.....

Total cost of the new dog park for construction and first year maintenance is estimated to be \$150,000.....which isn't budgeted (and the Commission and city management don't support budgeting).

7-8-11 Councilman P O'Donnell press release:

"Currently, major cities throughout California have successful partnerships with companies that sponsor major buildings, sporting venues and parks. **The Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine is currently under-funded for improvements and new developments for such creative projects as the El Dorado Dog Park. Sponsorships would allow companies to underwrite a new dog park** or sports field in exchange for recognition that is appropriate for the site and community."

10/12/2011 Long Beach Post and 10/13/2011 - Patrick O'Donnell mass email:

Also posted on Friends of El Dorado Dog Park website "Meet the Mutts"

"The future park had been proposed by Friends of El Dorado Dog Park who are seeking a 3 to 4 acre off-leash dog park. **The group has committed to fundraise for the cost of the park and amenities for its four-legged guests.**

10-19-11 Email from FEDDP to Judy Crumpton: (Template)

The future park had been proposed by Friends of El Dorado Dog Park, who are seeking a 3 to 4 acre off-leash dog park. **The group has committed to fund-raise for the cost of the park and amenities for its four-legged guests.**

10/19/2011 Email from Robert Livingstone to Patty McCloskey – citizen (cc George Chapjian)

To clarify, the Parks and Recreation Commission approved the El Dorado Dog Park in concept in March of this year. **This would be a Dog Park that would be built/funded by private donations and/or sponsorships.**

Oct 21, 2011 LBReport - El Dorado Dog Park Site NOT Yet Set.....

.....**on Oct 13**, Councilman Patrick O'Donnell (an announced candidate for state Assembly along with Councilwoman Schipske) sent a mass emailing that he was "pleased to announce that a Dog Park is planned for a portion of the Fourth Council District.....

The future park had been proposed by Friends of El Dorado Dog Park who are seeking a 3 to 4 acre off-leash dog park. **The group has committed to fundraise for the cost of the park and amenities for its four-legged guests.**

October 27, 2011 GERRIE SCHIPSKE BLOG

[Response on Poll on Dog Park -- In search of a corporate sponsor](#)

As of today, October 27 -- 276 people have responded to the poll on my blog which asks:

If private funds can be raised to build and maintain a dog park on a parcel of land adjacent to the Long Beach Animal Care Center, would you support it?

66%- YES
31% -- NO
4% -- Unsure

I am also working on trying to find a corporate sponsor who would pay for the dog park - fencing, benches, water, maintenance (at least for 3 years) so that the City of Long Beach does not take on any financial burden for a dog park.

11-10-11 Agenda – Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting:

Unfinished Business

Recommend that the Long Beach Planning Commission approve the conversion of a portion of an undeveloped maintenance yard located within the boundaries of El Dorado East Regional Park into a new Dog Park and parking lot as proposed, and **funded by the Friends of El Dorado Dog Park**, and **recommend that the City Council authorize the City Manager to execute a Right of Entry Permit and any necessary documents with the Friends of El Dorado Dog Park to allow for third party development, maintenance and solicitation of funds for the proposed use for a period of three years.**

11-10-11 Minutes of Meeting – Parks & Recreation Commission:

Recommend that the Long Beach Planning Commission approve the conversion of a portion of an undeveloped maintenance yard located within the boundaries of El Dorado East Regional Park into a new Dog Park and parking lot as proposed, and **funded by the Friends of El Dorado Dog Park**, and **recommend that the City Council authorize the City Manager to execute a Right of Entry Permit and any necessary documents with the Friends of El Dorado Dog Park to allow for third party development, maintenance and solicitation of funds for the proposed use for a period of three years.**

In March of 2011, the Parks and Recreation Commission approved the concept of an up to 5-acre El Dorado Dog Park (EDDP) within the general boundaries of El Dorado Regional Park as an acceptable recreational activity. Friends of El Dorado Dog Park (Friends) listed certain goals for the potential park including: sufficient size for both a large and small dog area, sufficient room for parking, ability to consider grass rather than decomposed granite at their own expense, relative proximity to existing restroom facilities and the ability to add future amenities like drinking fountains, shade structures, trees, stationary play or exercise equipment, restrooms and dog wash stations at their own expense.

.....Friends will be required to build a parking lot in the northeastern corner of the Azteca Yard, purchase and install either a gate arm or pay station kiosk, acceptable ADA access facilities, and install sufficient and safe fencing as determined by the City.....and pay additional costs to the City's contractor for grounds maintenance.

If the Commission approves a preferred site for the EDDP, Friends will be required to submit plans.....for approval and application of the CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) process.....Friends would be responsible for all costs associated with the process.

Staff recommends a timeline of two years by which Friends must provide into an escrow account, the funds necessary to build the EDDP to specifications created by the City, as well as an amount equal to three years of maintenance costs.

Approved: George Chapjian, Director

Attachments - Background, Pros and Cons and Requirements for Proposed Sites

In March of 2011, the Parks and Recreation Commission approved the concept of a privately funded El Dorado Dog Park (EDDP).....and Friends of El Dorado Dog Park (Friends) agreed to undertake a fund raising campaign to cover all costs associated with the construction and maintenance of EDDP.

Costs/Amounts to be borne by Friends (including parking and access, ADA requirements, fencing, pay gates, irrigation, grass or DG groundcover, amenities)

Friends would need to submit plans for that site to City Development Services Bureau (DSB) which would apply the CEQA L(California Environmental Quality Act) checklist to the site to determine the appropriateness of the site and plan for the need for a Categorical Exemption or Declaration of Negative Mediation to the project.....**Friends would be responsible for all costs associated with this process.**

Staff has concerns over potential administrative and financial impacts including:

Friends says they will be responsible for maintenance and upkeep, but this can be a 24-hour job, and it is not expected that volunteers/staff will be present during all hours of operationThe Recreation Dog Park has been identified as a site that is not being maintained.

Currently Rangers and ACS officers are impacted by budget and cannot be present at EDNC as often as needed. Who will be responsible for issues that arise at the dog park (i.e.: dog fights, vandalism,)?

Comments:

Mr. Chapjian said in March 2011, the Commission approved the concept of five acres for a dog park in El Dorado Regional Park. The Friends of the El Dorado Dog Park requested a dog park with sufficient size, five acres if they could get that. **They wanted sufficient parking, proximity to existing facilities, and the ability to add amenities in the future, all at their own expense including maintenance for at least two years.**

Mr. Livingstone said.....Regardless of the site chosen, there are certain requirements be placed on the Friends group. Regardless of the site, we would need to have sufficient parking without impacting current uses. It would have to have all ADA accessibility and sufficient fencing. We would require eight foot fencing. If we go into either the Tree Farm or the Azteca yard, we would require Friends to pay for the purchase of an armed gate. If it is in one of these two areas we would recommend St Augustine Bermuda grass and as few trees and little shade as possible to dry up anything that needs to be dried up. **We would come up with what one year's worth of maintenance would be and require Friends have three years of maintenance costs put in escrow.** Once you have chosen a site, Friends would have to come up with a specific plan to submit to the Development Services Department, which would apply to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Since dog parks are common uses in parks, they don't see any issues, but they would be the ones to determine any issues such as grading away for drainage. **Friends would be responsible for the cost. We are recommending a two-year timeline for Friends to come up with funds or the project will stop.**

It was moved by Commissioner Saltzgaver and seconded by Commissioner Goldberg to approve the staff recommendation and move forward with the potential dog park in what is being called the tree farm maintenance yard with the understanding that this continues to be a conceptual approval contingent upon funding and other required approvals. The motion carried unanimously.

Prior to 11-10-11 News – City of Long Beach Posted by Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske

We also encouraged the residents wanting a park to form a non profit organization **so they could raise funds to build and to maintain a dog park.** And they did. They became the Friends of the El Dorado Dog Park.

11-11-11 News – City of Long Beach Posted by Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske

Thank you to everyone who joined me at the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting yesterday.....**Now comes the hard part—raising private money to construct and maintain the dog park.**

11-11-11 LBReport news article:

Friends of the El Dorado Dog Park likes the area south of the access road (indicated on O'Donnell's emailed newsletter) and doesn't favor the sites suggested by Councilwoman Schipske. "The alternatives aren't a good fit. There's no room for parking and the dog park will definitely need parking. **Since we're putting our money up to build it, we need a location that's a good fit and the other locations just aren't a good fit,**" Ms. Matthiensen told LBReport.com.

In its mission statement, the group says, **"While our immediate goal is to raise funds to create, maintain and improve a spacious off-leash dog park in El Dorado Regional Park,** we hope, in addition, to make this park more than just a field of fenced grass and trees.

11-16-11 Gazettes.com El Dorado Dog Park Approval Moves Issue Forward by Jonathan Van Dyke

The biggest step moving forward, organizers (Friends of El Dorado Dog Park) said, was to start raising money to build and create a worthwhile park--**the approval from the Parks and Recreation Commission has been contingent on private park funding.**

11-17-11 Long Beach Post By Judy Crumpton and Kate Karp

A considerable number of Long Beach residents roundly gnawed on bones of contention during the Long Beach Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine's (PRM) November 10 Commission meeting. A highly contested recommendation for approval of developing an area of El Dorado Park into the **privately funded** El Dorado Dog Park (EDDLP developed into a near-harangue that might have inspired the Music Man's Meredith Willson to write another folksy musical.

FEDDLP (Friends of El Dorado Dog Park) agreed to undertake all costs of the park through sponsorships, memberships, and fun-raisers.

11-19-11 Gazettes.com Environment

Matthiensen said the group's eventual goal would be to raise about \$100,000 for improvements to begin a process to make a "Disneyland of dog parks."

1-24-12 Fiscal Year 2011 Year-End Budget Performance Report

To Mayor/Council From John Gross, Financial Management

In FY 11, the City continued to feel the impact of the aftermath of the worst recession since the Great Depression and the slow, uncertain recovery afterward. At the end of the fiscal year, unemployment within the City reached 13.4 percent, compared to the national average of 8.8 percent. Declines in core General Fund revenue (e.g. property tax, oil production tax, parking citation and UUT revenue, among others) in the first half of FY 11 led the City to hold department budgets at their mid-year estimates-to-close (ETCs). In general, departments were able to manage their budgets within those guidelines and total revenue for FY 11 ended up exceeding expectations, allowing the FY 11 General Fund to be balanced.

The discipline shown by the City Council in adopting the budget, and a mid-year adjustment along with steps taken by Management, resulted in a good ending to the FY 11 year for the General Fund. This progress and discipline in recent years will serve as an excellent foundation for what may be even more difficult decisions needed for the future.

3-9-12 Email from Drew Satariano (Partners of Parks) to Leslie Hunsaker

.....I met with Patrick O and the Eldo dog ladies last night. Patrick has some seed money (70k) for them, but only if they work with POP. He will do all he can to get this thing off the ground.....

3-12-12 Reply from Leslie Hunsaker (cc Robert Livingstone & John Keisler)

You might want to meet with the Friends group to remind them of the MOU & review POP's rules & regs with them so they know how they can & can't spend the \$. The Council member will need to have a check cut to POP with the restriction that the funds go to the El Do Dog Park.....

3-12-12 Reply from John Keisler (cc Livingstone, Satariano, Sandra Gonzalez)

Thanks for the update. If the Councilmember is using his Uplands Oil Funding, the money is in the CIP Budget and any expenditures related to the project will need to be charged against CIP.....

I am going to guess that the City Manager's Office, Budget, and Accounting would be resistant to cutting a check to POP from the CIP fund.

April 28, 2012 Your Long Beach City Budget Update From Councilwoman Schipske

I am taking our economic situation very seriously. But we need to step back and think what type of message is continually coming out of City Hall to the community—residents, businesses and potential businesses.

The message is negative and pessimistic. A potential deficit has been announced almost every year that I have been in office.....

The City Manager and Mayor have proposed and made serious cuts to core services—police, fire, parks and recreation and library. Infrastructure repair is behind.

Streets particularly need fixing.....

June 18, 2012 Council Budget Oversight Committee (DeLong, Lowenthal, O'Donnell)

One-time Uplands Oil Funds – Project Status

Infrastructure Repairs:

Council District 4 (O'Donnell)

El Dorado Dog Park Budget \$31,300

Project estimated at **\$65,000**; balance funded by the District's discretionary infrastructure budget.

WELCOME TO (THE FUTURE) EL DORADO DOG PARK!

El Dorado Dog Park will be a 1.6 acre off-leash dog park located in El Dorado Regional Park adjacent to the SPCLA in the City of Long Beach. The dog park is supported by the **Friends of El Dorado Dog Park**, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization comprised entirely of volunteers and dependent on **donations**.

7-9-12 Email from Frances McFate to Gerrie Schipske
Once again Long Beach has lost sight of what's important

After reading this article (LBReport.com) I am absolutely appalled that the City of Long Beach would allocate public funds for this purpose. We have an incredible number of streets, sidewalks and other areas utilized by many Long Beach residents that are in dire need of repair and you are going to give money to a dog park that is used by very few – what are you guys thinking? Not only am I upset by this move, but **it's my understanding from prior public meeting regarding this issue, that "friends of the dog park" were going to have to raise their own money – what happened to that plan? The fact that this "gift" wasn't publicized sooner seems to be that it was an "under-the-table" transaction.** So much for faith in our city government.

7-9-12 Reply from Gerrie Schipske

.....I have stated repeatedly that the City should not spend money on a dog park when we cannot take care of what we have already.

******I have copies of the above documents which I am happy to furnish for your review or you may request them from the City for your files.**

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Lejins
POB 15027
Long Beach, CA 90815

7-7-12 LBREPORT.com

Proposed El Dorado Park Dog Park, Previously Described As Facility To Be Built/Run With Privately Raised Funds, Quietly Slated To Receive At Least \$31,300, Perhaps Up To \$65,000, From 4th Council District Infrastructure Funds

(July 7, 2012, noon) -- **LBReport.com** has learned that a proposed El Dorado Park dog park, publicly described as a project that would be built and operated using privately raised funds, has been quietly slated to receive at least \$31,300 and as much as \$65,000 in FY12 City of Long Beach budgeted money.

A document attached to agenda materials for the June 18, 2012 meeting of the City Council's Budget Oversight Committee (DeLong, O'Donnell, Lowenthal) indicates that 4th district Councilman Patrick O'Donnell has allocated \$31,300 from his district's \$500,000 share of FY12 uplands oil revenue -- which could be used for 4th district infrastructure items including repairing sidewalks, potholes or other needs -- for the proposed dog park. Parks & Rec documents and staff had indicated that the proposed facility would be built and operated with funds raised by a private 501(c)(3) entity, "Friends of El Dorado Dog Park."

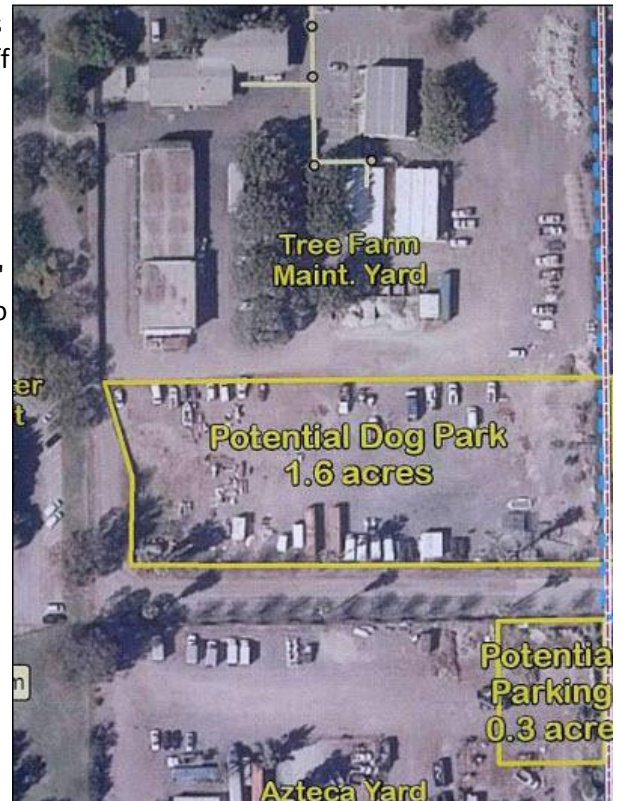
On the third page of a five page document (applicable citywide) titled "One-Time Uplands Oil Funds - Project Status," a line item under 4th district infrastructure projects indicates that "El Dorado Park Dog Park" has \$31,300 budgeted, with \$0 spent as of May 31, 2012 and \$31,300 remaining to be spent.

In addition, under "status as reported by departments," the line item indicates "Project is estimated at \$65,000; balance funded by the District's discretionary infrastructure budget." (**LBReport.com** is in the process of confirming the budget source for what appears to \$33,700 in additional public money [producing the total of \$65,000]).

As previously reported by **LBReport.com**, on November 10, 2011, LB's Parks & Recreation Commission voted 7-0 to support a Parks/Rec staff recommendation to locate a potential dog park in El Dorado Park at the former "Tree Farm" site (maintenance yard north of access road to the Animal Control facility).

Parks & Rec staff's agenda memo said the proposed facility would be [agenda memo text] "funded by Friends of El Dorado Dog Park" and recommended that the City Council authorize the city manager to sign necessary documents with the private group "to allow for third party development, maintenance and solicitation of funds for the proposed use for a period of three years."

Parks & Rec staff's memo recommended "a timeline of two years by which Friends must provide into an escrow account, the funds necessary to build the EDDP [El Dorado Dog Park] to specifications created by the City, as well as an amount equal to three years of maintenance costs. Pending approval of a sponsorship policy for PRM [Parks, Rec & Marine], staff recommends affirmation of the Commission's prior approval of Friends soliciting donations and sponsorships on behalf of a City-approved project."



The proposed dog park item sparked controversy pro and con, producing a room-filling public turnout (roughly 80 people at its height for the Rec Commission meeting),

Parks & Rec Commissioner Harry Saltzgaver made the motion to approve staff's recommendation "with the understanding that this continues to be a conceptual approval contingent upon funding and other required approvals."

Four days earlier, roughly 60 people (also pro and con) ignored rain and a chilly wind to hear Parks & Rec staff unveil its recommended location for the dog park during a Sunday morning Nov. 6 outdoor on-site meeting ("Let's Meet for the Mutts") previously scheduled by Councilman Patrick O'Donnell.



LBReport.com provides archival video of the Nov. 6 on-site meeting at which LB Parks & Rec's senior staffer Bob Livingstone described the funding and financial obligations to be undertaken by "Friends of El Dorado Dog Park" in order for the project to proceed. His statements were made in the presence of Councilman O'Donnell and Friends of El Dorado Dog Park president Mary Matthiensen. **To launch video, [click here](#).**

Eight months earlier at the March 17, 2011 Parks & Recreation Commission meeting, minutes indicate the "total cost of the project, including fundraising and first year maintenance, is estimated at \$150,000, which is not currently available through City sources...Partners of Parks and Friends [of El Dorado Dog Park] have agreed to work together to obtain park construction funding through donations and sponsorships." Parks & Rec. Director George Chapjian said the Department was [quoting minutes] "in cutback mode and cannot take on more cost."

Developing.