

PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS

Dogs and Fort Foster

Shaye Robbins <[REDACTED]>

Mon 5/10/2021 11:54 AM

To:town comments <tcomments@kitteryme.org>;

Hello,

Fairness in Payment:

- As you review the proposed ordinance I ask that you consider how users of our parks and lands are paying for that privilege
- Per the recommendation of the Parks Commission in 2019, approx \$15,000 is being 'taken' from gate fees to pay for a police presence specific to Dog Owners. This is not recaptured in any manner.
- At this point a resident of the Town of Kittery is paying property taxes and for a permit to use the Fort during the summer. Taxes are true regardless of using the parks and lands or not.
- At this point, a person from out of Town can easily use Fort Foster for nothing year round. All the off leash dog hours are pushed to before and after hours creating a dog park for non-residents paid for by residents.
- Non-Residents whose only interest in Fort Foster is 'off leash' time, have no incentive to buy Fort Foster stickers, residents with dogs are not asked in any way to offset this expense.
 - Example: At our water front and harbor we ask people to pay for launching, for boat owners to pay additional fees to offset expenses. Dog patrol policing is an expense.

Residents have no priority or privilege for taxes paid:

- No privilege has been retained for those who live in Town and bear the utmost responsibility for the upkeep of the community.
- Non-residents are given the same privileges as a person who is a resident and is not using the Fort or Beaches for off leash time. Residents however pay taxes regardless
- This means in our budgeting process \$15,000 is not available for any other department and is not recaptured in direct or indirect benefit. (Being dog friendly, while not having local privilege, is not a benefit to a municipality.

Our community has been and will continue to be generous:

- I remind the Council, that the Town of Kittery residents are paying within their taxes for the purchase of well located, conservation lands for example Brave Boat Harbor reserve. This is also an area that allows off leash walking for dog owners, and is private land that is not requiring the Town of Kittery to pay for police presence. This land is open to anyone the private land owner (Kittery Land Trust) allows.

Not all Dog Owners are equally responsible:

It is never the dog that is the issue; it is the owner who does or does not view their use of public lands as a privilege. We will not ever be able to weed out every bad or disrespectful owner. However, Our community

benefited greatly this year by having on leash only during Covid. Those not wishing to be asked to control their dogs while walking, and were not paying any money, were very loud on social media that they would not return to Fort Foster or Sea Point beach until they could walk with their dogs off leash and it was free. It was a pleasure this year to walk in the park with the remaining Dog owners following the request to keep dogs on leash. Let's keep those folks, and weed out the others.

Suggestions:

All areas where "off-leash" is stated or allowed, replace with UNDER VOICE CONTROL. Off leash suggests a level of wild abandon, and no responsibility.

The council decided to remove any reference to an amount of distance a dog could or could not approach a person opting instead for the nebulous "approach" I suggest a specific distance away from another walker be reinstated- 10 ft. This gives a person walking a manner in which to communicate "10 feet please".

Table 1:

Fort Foster Winter- Under Voice Control Before 10 AM with appropriate Fort Foster sticker or other payment method.

Fort Foster Summer: On Leash Town of Kittery Residents Only with appropriate Fort Foster Sticker (provide a benefit for Town of Kittery people) Reduce need for police presence for dog related issues during the day, while also be able to directly trace known residents with stickers, registration, dog registration etc. This (to me) could be under voice control, and would not require day time leashing for Kittery resident dogs. This is a limited number of known dog owners.

Keep the Town of Kittery Resident Dogs Only on Sea Point Beach during the summer. Provide a benefit to our community residency. This can be easily traced through car registration.

IF NOT: Start requiring payment for parking as they do at ever other community that you named in the research. Ogunquit is a \$35.00 per day parking for the beaches. York is \$2.75 an hour for beach access. (and going up)

NOTE: Town of York, Ogunquit, Wells, Portsmouth and Hampton I MUST PAY TO PARK MY VEHICLE TO ACCESS ANY BEACH ALL SUMMER LONG at ALL TIMES OF DAY.

Again: The question is who is paying for this?

Thank you

Shaye Robbins

General Public Discussion

Kittery Land Trust on Norton Road

Deb Hartman <[REDACTED]>

Mon 4/26/2021 7:00 PM

To:town comments <tcomments@kitteryme.org>;

Hello,

The access to the Norton Road KLT has become a nightmare during the pandemic.

The traffic, speeding on our quiet dead-end,

dog owners leaving their bags on our property, too many vehicles, it just hasn't ended.

Please consider re-routing these folks to Bartlett Road or Brave Boat Harbor Road.

Thank you,

Deb Hartman

Sent from my iPhone

Concerns regarding fires on Seapoint Beach

TODD THAYER <[REDACTED]>

Mon 5/3/2021 8:32 AM

To:town comments <tcomments@kitteryme.org>;

Good morning. My wife Debbie and I live on Seapoint Beach. We're one of the 3 houses to the left of the ocean front parking lot that own a small slice of the beach itself. I'm reaching out to you to express our concerns over the number and size of the open fires occurring on nearly a nightly basis. I'd like to share my experience from last night 5/2 and ask you for some guidance on how to move forward. Late afternoon we noticed a large group of people setting up for a party in front of our house. I was not planning to intervene until we saw the amount of wood they were planning to burn. I went down to the beach, explained that this was private property and while the owners welcome people to enjoy the beach they don't want people having bonfires. Thankfully they had not lit their fire yet. They asked where they could burn and I said "anywhere on the other side of the parking lot." What I wanted to say was that the town actually doesn't allow fires on the beach but there were already three others burning so telling them that didn't seem like it was going to lead to anything positive happening. Thankfully they moved.

This morning I went for a walk and took these pictures.







This is what I am trying to avoid and it happens all the time. Had I not intervened this mess would all be on my property. I don't even have the means to clean it up. I can't exactly throw all this half burned lumber and pallets in the back of my station wagon and take it to the dump. Now before I go any further I want to assure you that I am not "one of those guys". My wife and I have no issues sharing our slice of the beach with everyone else. We consider ourselves very lucky to live in this location and want others to enjoy it too. Our issue is the open fires at night.

I'd like to work with you to find a solution for this. If the town wants to allow this type of thing can we restrict it to the section of beach to the right of the parking lot? If the town wants to enforce the existing no fire policy on all of Seapoint let me know if I can help.

PS: this was particularly disheartening to find this morning because my wife and just helped with the beach cleanup on Saturday morning.

Thanks for your help with this.

Todd Thayer

Fort Foster walk/bike in pass for residents

Kevin And Susan O'Maley <[REDACTED]>

Mon 5/3/2021 3:35 PM

To:town comments <tcomments@kitteryme.org>;

Dear Town Council,

For the past 7 years my family has been able to purchase walk/ bike in passes into Fort Foster when purchasing the season pass. Walk/ bike passes were only 50 cents per pass. One of the great perks of living in Kittery was the ability to ride our bikes or stroll our grandkids into the park. In fact, we rarely drive over even though we purchase a season pass. We often pack our dinner and ride our bikes in on warm summer nights. We walk our grandson in at least once a week to play on the playground.

Please consider reinstating the opportunity for Kittery residents who buy a season pass to also be allowed to purchase walk/ bike in tickets.

Thank you!

Susan O'Maley

Sent from my iPad