

WINNIPEG NETWORK OF DOG OWNER GROUPS INC. (WINDOG)
FEBRUARY 2, 2016 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report provides an overview of WINDOG's activities in 2015 and its priorities for 2016.

Results

1. New Off-Leash Area Stewardship Group

2015 was a year of growth for WINDOG as Brenda Leipsic Dog Parkers became the newest members of the coalition.

WINDOG thank Maple Grove Dog Park Co-Chair, Rosalyn Jones- Smith, and Brenda Leipsic's former Chair, Kevin Kushnier, for their dedication in establishing the new club. Over the past two years, Rosalyn and Kevin spent countless hours at the dog park promoting the benefits of off-leash dog park stewardship groups, mobilizing dog owners and selling Brenda Leipsic Dog Parker memberships to dog park users.

As founders and first incorporators of Brenda Leipsic Dog Parkers, Rosalyn and Kevin developed the structure of the organization and created by-laws to establish the legal framework. They guided the new Board through its first AGM, and its first spring clean-up and fall BBQ fundraiser. Kevin's initiative in reaching out to real estate developer, Andrew Marquess, was instrumental in securing land for a temporary off-leash area to replace Brenda Leipsic Dog Park during construction of the bus rapid transit line through the Parker Wetlands.

2. WINDOG's "I own a dog AND I Vote" Campaign

In 2015 the Board began to see the results of WINDOG's successful campaign to elect a dog-friendly City Council. Through the efforts of volunteers, WINDOG was able to inform and engage dog-loving voters, influence candidates, and elect a dog-friendly City Council.

Over half City Council - Mayor Bowman and Councillors Allard, Browaty, Lukes, Orlikow, Mayes, Morantz, Pagtahan, Sharma, and Wyatt - are self-declared "dog-friendlies" who have publicly endorsed WINDOG's model for off-leash dog parks.

3. Downtown Dog Park

In March 2015, just five months after the municipal election, the City moved forward on the Mayor's campaign promise to establish an off-leash park at The Forks. Council allotted \$300,000 for this purpose, consultants were hired, potential locations were identified and stakeholder meetings were held.

4. New Dog Park for Transcona

In March, City Council also approved a new dog park for Transcona. Northwoods Dog Park is the second new dog park Council has approved for Transcona in the past two years.

Using the Transcona Devonshire Dog Park model introduced by Councillor Russ Wyatt, City Council requires Northwoods' developer, Northwoods Grassie, to set aside land for an off-leash dog park.

Genstar will begin constructing the one-acre Devonshire neighbourhood dog park this spring. The developer will install chain link fencing around the perimeter, plant trees, construct a small dog enclosure, and install underground waste bin(s), waste bag dispensers, and other amenities. There is minimal expense to the City (\$1500 for design and signage.)

Genstar gives all the credit for the new park to Councillor Wyatt, saying, "Dog parks simply weren't on our radar. If it weren't for the Councillor, this never would have happened."

5. City Recognizes WINDOG as Off-Leash Area Stakeholder

In 2015 the City recognized WINDOG as the official off-leash area stakeholder for Winnipeg's dog community, inviting the Board and the Winnipeg Humane Society as subject matter experts, to provide input into the design of the new downtown dog park.

WINDOG was also invited, as a stakeholder, to provide input into the plan for an off-leash dog park (or parks) to replace Charleswood.

Advocacy/Lobbying

As 2015 began, WINDOG actively lobbied the City and the Province regarding two important issues.

1. Brenda Leipsic Dog Park

WINDOG lent its voice to an unsuccessful campaign to save the Parker Wetlands. At the request of Brenda Leipsic Dog Parkers, WINDOG joined the Winnipeg Humane Society, the Parker Wetlands Conservation Group, dog owners and private citizens, in appealing the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship's decision to issue environmental licenses to the City for the development of the Southwest Rapid Transit Corridor through the Parker Wetlands, and the Minister's decision not to recommend a public hearing for the project.

As a result of the appeals, the Province required the City and MB Hydro to submit reports detailing the potential impact on the wetlands and identifying endangered species before any work could begin.

The Province recently announced that - despite the licenses being under review - they remain valid, and the City and Hydro can legally start work. Manitoba Hydro will begin construction in early February.

On January 21, 2016 the City closed Brenda Leipsic Dog Park. Brenda Leipsic's Board is working with the City on the design of a new off-leash area. The City anticipates the new park will open in the fall of 2019. It will be roughly half the size of the existing one. In the meantime, an "unofficial" temporary dog park has been established on private land own by real estate developer, Gem Equities.

2. Comprehensive Off-Leash Area Management Plan

In January 2015 WINDOG sent a formal request to Mayor Brian Bowman and Council requesting that funds be allocated in the City of Winnipeg's 2016 capital budget for a comprehensive management plan to guide the future development and management of Winnipeg dog parks.

In March, on the eve of City Council's special meeting to approve the 2015 Operating Budget and 2016-20 Capital Budget, WINDOG's Board was informed that there might not be enough support on Council to approve funding for a downtown off-leash dog park or for a comprehensive off-leash dog park management plan.

In response, WINDOG contacted the Mayor and all of the Councillors and asked them to approve both budget items.

Several Councillors responded, confirming their support. And for the first time ever, City Council allotted significant funding to improve and expand Winnipeg's off-leash recreational green space, approving \$300,000 for the creation of a downtown dog park and \$100,000 to develop a comprehensive off-leash area management plan.

3. Public Consultation

There has also been a significant shift – if not in public policy – at least in practice, as the City began consulting stakeholders regarding dog park matters. The City held public consultations, exploring ways to replace Charleswood Dog Park, which will be closed to make way for the William Clement Freeway.

WINDOG participated in the Charleswood public consultation and provided feedback on options for creating a dog park (or dog parks) to replace the existing one. WINDOG advocated for its 3-tiered model of neighbourhood, community and regional off-leash dog parks. Using this model, WINDOG's position was that Charleswood should be replaced with a dog park of the same size, within the Tuxedo-Charleswood ward.

Tuxedo-Charleswood Councillor Marty Morantz indicated his support for this proposal. The Councillor has spoken publicly in support of the Transcona Devonshire model of having developers establish off-leash parks in new subdivisions at their own cost.

In November the City invited WINDOG's Board to participate, as subject matter experts, in a stakeholders meeting to plan the new downtown dog park.

As an advisor for the creation of a downtown dog, WINDOG recommended that the City create a neighbourhood park (or parks) to serve the residents who live downtown rather than creating a high-profile "destination" park at The Forks. WINDOG recommended fencing, lighting and shade trees as priority amenities. WINDOG provided off-leash area research and management resources to consultants and City administration.

The City will move ahead with public consultations on the downtown dog park in 2016.

Responsible Dog Ownership

WINDOG has a mandate to promote responsible dog ownership. In 2015 member clubs collaborated to fund and reprint Pet-iquette, a guide the health, safety and dog park etiquette that is distributed to new dog owners and novice off-leash area users through veterinarians, shelters and rescues. Ten thousand brochures were published.

Outreach

WINDOG's website and Facebook page are the main tools the coalition uses to inform and win the support of Winnipeg's dog loving voters, raise public awareness about off-leash area issues and WINDOG's three-tier dog park model, and educate the general public about the value of off-leash green space to the wider community.

WINDOG's efforts to have a physical presence in the community have been challenging. Over the past two years Directors and volunteers set up promotional booths at the Humane Society's Paws in Motion; Manitoba Pet Expo; Winnipeg Dog Fest; Little Mountain and Maple Grove dog clubs' annual barbecues; they also did pop-up events at local dog parks.

The Board made a formal presentation about WINDOG – who we are and what we do - to Brenda Leipsic Dog Parkers Board and encouraged the group to join WINDOG.

In September, WINDOG got plenty of air time as Winnipeg's number one ranked morning radio show broadcast a special two and a half hour program from the Winnipeg Humane Society on how dogs are changing the city. CBC's Information Radio solicited input from WINDOG regarding Winnipeg dog parks, the WINDOG three-tiered model, our involvement in the municipal election campaign and our impact on the outcome of the election.

WINDOG reputation as the "go to" group for dog park advice continued to grow. This year we responded to several requests from Winnipeg dog owners who wanted to know how to establish an off-leash dog park in their neighbourhood.

Often it was City Councillors who refer their constituents to WINDOG. Recently Devi Sharma referred an Amber Trails dog owner. WINDOG recommended that Amber Trails residents work together to establish a group and that the group petition City Hall for a neighbourhood dog park. As a lobby organization, WINDOG offered its assistance in making a presentation to Council in support of the Amber Trails request.

Communications

WINDOG's website and its tethered email system were instrumental in launching the coalition, enabling the Board to establish a very sophisticated, professional online presence during the 2014 municipal election campaign. Much of the credit for this goes to a corporate sponsor who donated state-of-the-art software, and generously waived the \$5000 website design fee and the annual hosting charges.

The website was very effective in raising public awareness, creating credibility for a small unknown fledgling organization, and helping WINDOG elect a dog-friendly Mayor and Council.

In 2015 WINDOG was forced to address two major communications issues – the email system was compromised and hackers took down WINDOG’s website.

At the time Kilcona Park Dog Club was experiencing the same problems with its email system. As a result, KPDC decided to migrate its website and email accounts to a virtually hack-free site that is managed and monitored 24/7.

KPDC donated a portion of its new web hosting space to WINDOG. The donation saves WINDOG approximately \$150 per year.

Board Administration

In 2015 WINDOG’s Board and Volunteer Manitoba undertook a review of the by-laws. As a result the by-laws underwent a major overhaul.

One of the most significant amendments was to have each Member club appoint two representatives instead of one – a regular and an alternate. This intent of this amendment was to create a larger pool of experienced people to draw from when there is turnover on the Board.

Another major amendment gave the Board the flexibility to confer member status on new clubs at any time during the year, instead of only at the AGM.

The Board also developed a draft outlining WINDOG’s membership application process.

The Future

1. Off-Leash Area Management Plan

In 2016 Winnipeg will begin the process of developing a comprehensive off-leash area management plan if City Council approves funding in the capital budget this spring. WINDOG will be at the table, urging the City to adopt our 3-tier model of neighbourhood, community and regional dog parks.

WINDOG will also propose that dog parks be reserved for the exclusive use of dogs and dog owners, in the same way that Winnipeg’s skateboard parks, toboggan hills, soccer fields, and golf courses are reserved for those activities.

For safety, WINDOG will propose that Winnipeg follow the lead of many North American cities in passing legislation that would prevent unsupervised children from entering an off-leash area.

Finally, WINDOG will advocate that the creation of neighbourhood dog parks in established areas of Winnipeg and new residential developments must be priorities.

2. 2018 Election

For organizations that make advocacy a priority, an election campaign is the perfect opportunity to get their voices heard and lobby for change. Winnipeg's next municipal election is just two and a half years away.

WINDOG needs to build on its success in electing a dog-friendly City Council in 2014. There are several wards in the City without dog parks and there are several Councillors for whom off-leash dog parks are a very low priority.

If WINDOG is to be successful in convincing elected officials to create high quality dog parks we need to be passionate, prepared and pro-active.

If WINDOG want Winnipeggers to value dog parks and City Council to fund them at adequate levels, the coalition needs to do three things:

- Expand its membership base by helping new dog park clubs organize;
- Raise WINDOG's profile by having a presence in the community and at community events;
- Raise awareness of the importance of dog parks to the entire community by speaking to the media and having a presence in the community.

WINDOG's 2016 Board – newly expanded from four to eight Directors - has much greater capacity to take on those challenges, ensuring that City Council makes dog parks a priority, that it creates high quality off-leash areas - especially in areas of the city that have none – and that it funds all of Winnipeg's dog parks adequately.

Appendix A MINUTES

Annual General Meeting

February 2, 2016, 6.30pm
131 Provencher Boulevard, Winnipeg

In attendance/ Club:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Dan McInnis | Brenda Leipsic |
| • Donna Henry | Kilcona |
| • Jeff Henry | Kilcona |
| • Jordan Lobe | Little Mountain |
| • Kristy Greening | Little Mountain |
| • Colin Lang | Maple Grove (electronic attendance) |
| • Kathy Debec | Maple Grove |
| • Tara Everett | Maple Grove |
| • Rosalyn Jones-Smith | Maple Grove |

1. Adoption of agenda (Donna)

- No additions

2. Introduction of WINDOG Board and Directors of member organizations (Donna)

3. Adoption of the minutes of July 5, 2015 AGM (Donna)

- Moved to adopt: Jordan
- Seconded: Colin
- Carried 3 yea (Dan abstained- wasn't present at last AGM)

4. 2015 Annual Report (Donna)

- See attached slide material (Schedule A)

- Discussion regarding pet-iquette brochures. Maple Grove has a lot of extra brochures from the last printing, which they don't want to throw away- would be a waste. Don't throw away- still good for distribution. There ought to be a system for distribution. There is a list of locations. Maple Grove will have to review. Jeff- keep in mind that there are target audiences for this material- 1st time dog owners and the businesses that encounter these owners such as vets and rescues.
- Moved to adopt report: Jordan
- Seconded: Colin
- Carried unanimously

5. Treasurer's 2015 Report (Dan)

- See attached material (Schedule B)
- Moved to adopt report: Dan
- Seconded: Jordan
- Carried unanimously

6. Auditors' Report (Dan)

- Frank Mahovec as auditor
- See attached material (Schedule C)
- Moved to adopt report: Jordan
- Seconded: Colin
- Carried unanimously

7. Bylaw amendments (Donna)

- Moved to adopt: Colin

- Seconded: Jordan
- Carried 3 yea (Dan abstain- wasn't involved in amendments)

8. Election of the 2016 Board of Directors (Rosalyn)

- President
 - i. Colin nominates Donna
 - ii. Jordan seconds
 - iii. No further nominations- Appointed by acclimation
- Vice-President
 - i. Jordan nominates Colin
 - ii. Donna seconds
 - iii. No further nominations- Appointed by acclimation
- Secretary
 - i. Donna nominates Jordan
 - ii. Colin seconds
 - iii. No further nominations- Appointed by acclimation
- Treasurer
 - i. Jordan nominates Dan
 - ii. Donna seconds
 - iii. No further nominations- Appointed by acclimation
- Other Directors
 - i. Kristy, Kathy, Jeff
 - ii. Brenda on behalf of Brenda Leipsic? Unsure at this point
 - The Board agrees to accept that these names have been put forward as additional directors.

9. Appointment of two qualified individuals to review the 2016 books

- Discussion regarding appropriate suggestions:
 - i. Frank Mahovec
 - ii. Charlotte or Phil
 - iii. Cathy Kelly's husband
 - iv. Karla Pelletier
- Agreed that these individuals will be approached and that 2 of these 4 will be accepted.
- Moved to accept the list of potential individuals: Dan
- Seconded: Jordan
- Carried unanimously

10. Open discussion – off-leash dog park news, issues, etc.

- i. Jeff- opportunity for board training through Volunteer Canada (VC)
 - Kathy- did not like past experience with VC.
 - Jeff- They will do group training- they will cater the program to a particular group.
 - Donna- Volunteer Manitoba also has some great programs. Suggested that she could advise of opportunities.
- ii. Donna and Jeff- bag dispensers at Kilcona
 - They are tracking bag use now for their new installed, sponsored bag dispensers
 - Trying to track pick up ratio to determine if there has been an improvement- should be able to track volume of waste at spring clean-up
 - Current cost is \$270.00 US (\$380.00 CDN) for 4,000 bags
 - Dispenser cost- can provide a breakdown, 6 installed for \$1,800.00 with signs, so \$300.00 per box. Actual cost of box was about \$110 each.
 - There exist American studies which show an improvement
 - Bags are biodegradable- must be stored indoors. Begin to decompose after one year- this is what makes them biodegradable.

- iii. Dan- Brenda Leipsic notice of AGM/ membership drive
 - April 16th, Saturday, 12pm-4pm
 - Winnipeg Humane Society for the meeting, then to park for clean-up.
- iv. Rosalyn- Animal Services licensing campaign support by member clubs
 - Recent owner backlash regarding door-to-door license checks.
 - Discussion- it is not actually door-to-door, but rather enforcement officers have been directed to spend their “down-time” after a call in the neighbourhood checking in with owners whose licenses have lapsed (database search for that block, for example).
 - Had discussion with Leland Gordon of Animal Services.
 - Looking to have clubs put a positive spin on licensing enforcement because of the good things licensing does, such as improving animal claim rate.
 - Not looking at anything formal, but the negative adoption by owners is bothering Rosalyn and she hopes to address it.

11. Adjournment

- Moved to adopt: Jordan
- Seconded: Dan
- Carried

Note: Audio was taken of the meeting, and can be made available.

Appendix B